Research Paper

Discovering the Customer Insight using Netnography and Photography Methods

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Abstract

Gaining customer insight is the driving force of companies. Today, with the advent of social media platforms, especially Instagram, gaining customer insight has taken on a new form. The purpose of this study is to discover the customer insights of Callista on the Instagram platform, through a combination of netnography and photography methods. The comments and images of the company's Instagram page posts were used to collect data because their sales are based on the web. The results showed that the communication content created by the company, which is in three categories of relational, promotional, and organizational, is simultaneously needed for the company's better and more effective advertising. The analysis of metaphors also showed that by focusing on the three metaphors of transformation, connection, and journey, the company was able to create a good image of its brand in the minds of the audience and attract its customers well. A good insight goes beyond what consumers say and can influence future choices, attitudes, and behaviors; Break the principles of companies, and lead to significant operational improvements by creating the vision to provide new types of customer service and high-quality products.

Introduction

Companies need a broader view of the need and want of customers due to the increasing advancement of technology. Understanding the motivation of consumers to choose the platform of social media, as well as their activities in it, helps companies to identify what the wants of customers are and what successes they need Because consumers usually make different purchasing decisions with online options. Therefore, if managers want to understand how to achieve higher customer value (Slater & Narver, 2000) and the types of values that lead to a meaningful experience and an emotional relationship of loyalty, they need deeper insight and intelligence from the customer (Barnes & Wright, 2012). Since the publication of Theodore Levitt's original Harvard Business Paper in 1960, researchers have agreed that there is a gap between how managers view their customers' wants and needs and the customers' actual wants and needs (Schauman et al., 2021).

On the other hand, the rapid development of information technology (IT) and information and communication technology (ICT) has enabled customers to express a large number of their concerns and expectations online, which is accepted as a valuable resource for product designers (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017). Digitalization is changing the assets, competencies, and value creation of the customer insight function (Einhorn & Löffler, 2021). Since a deep understanding of customer needs, wants, and aspirations are useful in creating new business models for business (Teece, 2010), it makes sense to consider developing a deep customer understanding, however, it has been found that only a few small and medium-sized companies can use customer online insights to innovate in design; In fact, companies need more than just customer data (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017). Compared to the usual customer survey data, a large amount of data is available online, which can enable product designers to understand customer insights (Liu et al., 2020).

For several years, various companies have started to use the market workspace or the so-called marketplace. In this space, it provides a platform as an intermediary so that people, as recipients and buyers of a product or service, have access to a large number of businesses offering their product or service. The innovative capacity of platforms has revolutionized many sectors of the economy. For this reason, many authors cite this new business model as a hallmark of contemporary capitalism (Langley & Leyshon, 2017; Schneider, 2018). Therefore, platform economics is expected to bring countless benefits to consumers. Consumer-based network power enables them to influence the market by distributing, modifying, and enhancing digital content (Labrecque et al., 2013). Therefore, company managers can have detailed plans for the production and development of products as well as their advertisements by analyzing customer insights towards advertising images.

In social media and platform business, a data-rich environment allows companies to gain insight into customer behaviors by ensuring that data is collected and by using customer feedback on advertising images. One of the most popular platforms is Instagram, which is a social network for sharing images and videos. This application allows its users to share their images and videos on other social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. In addition to operating on their site, many companies have started advertising and producing content on this platform. User feedback is one of the key features of this platform that allows companies to persuade and gain customer

insight. Therefore, it seems necessary to investigate the discovery of customer insights through digital platforms, which are considered rich sources of data.

Past research has investigated the impact of CRM 2.0 on customer insight (Greenberg, 2010), Cloud-based big data analytics for customer insight-driven design innovation in SMEs (Liu et al., 2020), the role of consumer insight in creative advertising development (Parker et al., 2018), combining redistributed remanufacturing with customer insights in small and medium-sized businesses with qualitative methods and an inductive approach (Soroka et al., 2017), using digital analytics to Creating consumer insight (Gupta et al., 2020), providing a deep customer insight design thinking framework and deep customer insight innovation through a case study (Garrett & Wrigley, 2019; Price & Wrigley, 2016), a storytelling approach in customer insight management (Stone et al., 2015), gaining customer insights with the help of reflective thinking (Schauman et al., 2021), extracting customer insights from the Twitter page using wordclouds and netnography (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017) and discovering management practices for production and the use of customer insight with the case study method (Said et al., 2015). However, no research was found that investigated and analyzed customer insight with a combined method of photography and netnography in the digital space. Because in the photography method, the researcher and the participant, as actors who are directly involved in the research process, explain and understand the reality (Close, 2007). The researcher clearly understands the customer's perception of the images. Also, the use of images as motivators for interviews lies in the fact that much of communication is non-verbal, and image scans serve as points for examining customer insights (Ball & Smith, 1992); In this way, decisions will not be based solely on textual content.

In the field of seeking consumer insight, ethnographic research plays a special role. Ethnography is one of the observational methods that has recently gained popularity in many research fields (Kelly & Gibbons, 2008), and netnography is an online ethnography that is a qualitative and interpretive research method for studying virtual communities and networks. With the help of netnography, Internet research can be done by actively integrating community members or passively monitoring the community and integrating the collected information, knowledge, and ideas (Kozinets, 2002). Therefore, in the present study, the researchers are trying to investigate the customer's insight towards Callista company by using the qualitative research method in the form of a combination of photography and netnography to enrich the research literature and develop the knowledge of the research method. Because it seems that these two methods can be suitable for checking the Instagram pages of companies that use it for advertising and help us gain customer insight.

Callista is an Iranian brand in the field of cosmetics. Since the import of cosmetics in Iran has a very high figure; It has become a lucrative and attractive industry for other countries. They see Iran as a target market. Although many Iranian brands work in the field of cosmetics; But unfortunately, few people know about these brands. Due to the increase in the price of the dollar and the subsequent increase in the price of foreign products, many cosmetics manufacturers in Iran have used this opportunity and with their advertisements on Instagram, have introduced their brand and created a suitable position for it. Callista is one of the companies that has broken the taboo in this field in Iran and presented different advertisements compared to other brands; Also, its sales are web-based. Therefore, the present study was conducted to answer the following questions:

RQ1 How to identify customer insights in the digital market and meet their needs?
RQ2 What is the insight of Callista customers?

This research paper is structured as follows. First, a review of the literature shows the researchers' previous work on gaining customer insights and examines the need to pay attention to images to collect data. The second research plan is described in detail. Third, the findings of the case study are reviewed. Fourth, the concepts of the existing literature are discussed.

Literature Review

Consumer Insights

Consumer insight is the term used by businesses to gain a deeper understanding of how their audiences think and feel. Analyzing human behaviors allows companies to understand what their consumers want and need and, most importantly, why they feel that way (Berger et al., 2020). Laughlin (2014) surprisingly states that there is still no fixed definition for customer insight that has been used in business for more than 20 years; He defines customer vision as: "If customers are deeply understood, it is possible to change their behavior for mutual benefit" (Laughlin, 2014). Some marketing leaders also equate customer insights with research, data analysis, or database marketing. Few managers seem to recognize the multidisciplinary nature of customer insight or its combination (Laughlin, 2014). Advertising professionals, such as programmers and creators, value the role of customer insight in creatively solving advertising problems. Although customer insight is seen as a valuable aid, another view is that it can establish a customer mentality and lead to a cognitive bias that reinforces only limited views of an issue (Parker et al., 2018).

Digital channels are crucial sources of consumer insights. Many of these channels have been around for over 20 years, but we still usually think of them as new and somewhat mysterious (Chan, 2019). As information abounds in the digital economy, it is easy to miss valuable weak signals often hidden amid the noise. These signals can help companies understand what customers want and spot emerging industry and market disruptions before competitors do (Mckinsey, 2014).

Companies' ability to develop deep customer insights depends on acquiring knowledge about the appropriate techniques and developing the ability to apply them. Traditional market research techniques such as surveys and focus groups have significant limitations (Deszca et al., 1999; Kandybin, 2009) and do not always help customers express their real needs (Healy et al., 2007; Leonard & Rayport, 1997; Roberts et al., 2005). Therefore, some research studies extract customer insights from online customer data, such as customer comments, tweets, etc. (Lim & Tucker, 2016; Liu et al., 2020). Although it is a challenge that developing customer insights is associated with high costs and ambiguity in data analysis (Atuahene-Gima et al., 2005; Cillo et al., 2010; Tandrup et al., 2014).

Various types of research have been done on consumer insights. For example, Zaltman (2003) observed that "managers follow a pattern that prevents them from understanding and effectively serving their customers." They focus more on reason and superficially

examine the customer's feelings (Zaltman, 2003). Martin (2005) has stated that managers are more prone to hard and reliable data by being flexible towards the task and creating emotional value; they tend to use data and numbers. Typically, customer insights can be formed from customer survey data (Martin, 2005). Some researchers have developed different models for identifying customer insights; For example, Chen et al. (2002) proposed a hierarchical method for examining customer preferences from survey data. They then analyzed customer preferences using a neural network; The results help to analyze customer segmentation and market analysis (Chen et al., 2002).In addition, some research studies aim to extract customer insights from customer online data, such as customer reviews, tweets, and so on. Including Gupta et al. (2020), in a study provided a systematic framework for understanding how to use digital analytics in a changing technology environment to generate consumer insights. The proposed framework begins with identifying forces that are outside the system and then leads to the production of specific capabilities by the system. In addition, information capabilities based on data or analysis can lead to insights for decision-making (Gupta et al., 2020).

Photography

With vision becoming the focus of life today (Parker, 2009); Contemporary society is witnessing a visual explosion through images and the immediate and multisensory effects of images (Spencer, 2010). Because, images are attractive and it is almost impossible to spend a day without seeing images (Burgin, 1982). The camera's critical eye is an essential tool in accurately gathering visual information. Because today, we are often weak observers; The camera's precise focus helps us to see more information more accurately (Spencer, 2010). Images have been used in social science disciplines such as visual anthropology, visual ethnography, and visual sociology for nearly a century (Banks, 2001; Collier & Collier, 1986; Harper, 1988). In addition to the mentioned studies, the photography research method has also been used in the studies of the organization. Although, in the studies of the organization, the use of photography is rare, however, this medium also has a history in this field. During the first two decades of the 20th century, workers' movements were photographed using cameras and camcorders to more efficiently analyze and redesign work activities to develop scientific management and study work (Huczynski & Buchanan, 1991). Other studies that use the photography method as one of the types of methodology include cases such as health research methods and organizational research, as well as qualitative research in consumer marketing (Close, 2007). In consumer marketing research methods, the image is used for research in the field of public relations and communication marketing (Daymon & Holloway, 2010).

Types of photography

To introduce photography as a methodology in organizational and management studies, two types of structures are discussed: first, who takes the picture (researcher or respondent); And second, how images are used in these studies. For this purpose, there is a distinction between when the image is used as research data, and the image itself is used as one of the tools for collecting research data (such as image-based interviews). The analysis of these two dimensions creates four different categories of photography in the studies of organization and management, each of which has specific hypotheses and consequences that appear in the research process and the interaction between the

respondent and the researcher. The mentioned division was expressed in Table 1. These categories show how images are used in organizational and management research (Petersen & Østergaard, 2003).

Table 1: Different Approaches to Organizational and Management Photography (Petersen & Østergaard, 2003)

The role of the researchers / Image mode	Taking a picture by the researcher	Taking a picture by the respondent
Image as research data (image analysis)	1. The researcher takes a picture, analyzes it, and concludes based on the picture itself (documentation).	2. The researcher allows the respondent to take a picture but does the analysis herself.
Image as a tool for inference (image display)	3. The researcher takes a picture and discusses the analysis in an interview with the respondent.	4. The researcher allows the respondent to take a picture and discusses for the analysisof the respondent in the form of an interview.

In this research, the fourth category is used as the research method. Participants were asked to take screenshots of Callista advertisements on the Instagram platform web pages that appealed to them and share them with the interviewer. Collier and Collier (1986) argue that a well-conducted field study does not guarantee satisfactory research results; Rather, there is the challenge of interpreting the complexity of field data, which may be more difficult than fieldwork (Collier & Collier, 1986). Therefore, after taking images by the participants, it is necessary to deduce from the images. Image interpretations are numerous and changeable depending on the purpose of the researcher, the view of the participant and the audience, and the chosen interpretive approach. Images show the multiplicity of hidden messages and can engage all the researcher's senses in the process of revealing them. Thus, the analysis and interpretation of photography form a process that transforms and enhances the image from the content to the concept and then to the important subject (Collier, 2001).

Netnography

Netnography is a qualitative and interpretive research method that uses optimized ethnography on the Internet (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017). Research techniques for studying communities and virtual networks, with the help of Internet research, can improve knowledge, and ideas gathered for decision-making by actively integrating community members or passively monitoring the community and integrating information (Kozinets, 2002). Netnography is like mining and exploration platforms. Because it uses many tools such as word count analysis, emotion analysis, and natural language similarities to known routines to gain cultural understanding in a given field (Kozinets et al., 2010). Studying netnography is a way to market research because it is interested in computer-mediated conversations (Bryman, 2011). This method is still a relatively new approach to research, often supporting a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques and tools to exploit the customer mentality in social media.

Netnography helps researchers achieve communicative and cultural understanding (Sandlin, 2007) and, since, a correct understanding of the customer's thought process by mapping customer feedback on social media; Helps to explore the depths of online communication and connect them to the context (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017); This method can be fruitful in marketing research, especially consumer behavior. Since the introduction of netnography by Kozinets (1998), various types of consumers have become online actively and meet their needs in social media to study the "consumer cultures and behaviors of online communities.". Many consumption-related behaviors and activities are reflected online today (Kozinets, 1998). Ahuja and Shakeel (2017) conducted a study aimed at identifying the types of content used by Jet Airways on Twitter, to examine customer insights, and also to create better customer engagement through the netnography method and keywords. Examining customer insights, they found that the organizational content produced by Jet Airways clearly enhances the brand image and significantly contributes to the customer brand equity relied on the organization (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017). Henion and Medberg (2018) also conducted a study to examine online customer information by netnography to use new opportunities to design personal and high-quality services. The findings of this study showed an increase in the popularity of netnography in marketing research, which undoubtedly reflects the intensification of online customer activity (Heinonen & Medberg, 2018).

Methodology

This particular development study takes an inductive approach, which encourages the use of research tools that are capable of providing key qualitative data. The use of qualitative research is appropriate in situations where the researcher's goals are to understand the meaning that research participants give to events and situations and to evaluate the context in which they arise (Maxwell, 2012).

In this study, we used netnography and photography research methods to understand the customer's insight into the content produced by Callista. Because the netnography approach allows for further exploration of the dynamics of a virtual channel, and researchers can use netnography to study a variety of posts in a particular online domain, this analysis will help identify the appropriate type of content typology and consequently lead to a higher level of customer engagement. The typology analysis of Callista page content was done based on the division of relational, promotional, and organizational content (Ahuja & Medury, 2010). Then, netnography analysis of user comments continued until data saturation; Based on this, 2100 comments were randomly collected from Callista's page posts and user comments were analyzed by Atlas.ti software, analysis of the number of words created and super words, as well as content analysis of comments were used.

On the other hand, researcher use data such as images as documents, verification of text reports, recording of an evolving phenomenon, and more in the photography method (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001). Therefore, to examine the attitude of Callista users on the Instagram platform towards the advertising images on the page, the ZMET method was used, which aims to reveal the real and hidden expectations of consumers. Validation studies of ZMET programs show that four to five in-depth interviews that focus on identifying and understanding the main subject of the scan provide up to 90% of the available information from a large number of interviews (Coulter & Zaltman, 1994; Zaltman, 1997), Hence 4 users were selected for collaboration.

We used the ZMET technique to deduce the image. The ZMET mental model, first developed by Gerald Zaltman in 6 Steps in 1994 (Zaltman, 1997) is a mental model that reflects the thinking and behavior of consumers. It leads to the purchase of products and is effective in inferring the image by the researcher.

Step 1- Storytelling. In this step, the participant is asked to describe how each image relates to his / her perception of the value of advertising. Because human memory and communication are story-based (Schank, 1990).

Step 2 - Missed Images. In this step, the interviewer asks the participant if he/she has an impression about the value of the advertisement that he/she cannot find an image for. The participant was asked to discuss this perception and describe an image that illustrates this perception.

Step 3 - Structure Construction. In this step modified versions of the repertory grid technique and laddering method were used as a tool for structural extraction (Gengler & Reynolds, 1995; Reynolds & Gutman, 2001).

Step 4 - **Sensory Images.** At this point, the focus of the interview changed. During this phase, participants were asked to use touch, smell, sound, color, and emotion to describe the advertising effects. Since sensory metaphors are the main mechanisms of unconscious thought discovery (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008; Turner, 1994), this step provides more data.

Step 5 - **The Vignette**. In this step, participants were asked to imagine a short film that describes their thoughts and feelings about advertising. This stage allows new ideas to be extracted because different ideas emerge as different areas of the brain become active (Collins, 1991).

Step 6 - The Summary Image. In this step, the thumbnail image is designed to create an advertising connection by the participants and to create common feelings, to create a combination of their thoughts and feelings related to the advertisement.

Each stage opens a different window of participatory thoughts and feelings, and the use of several stages increases the likelihood of discovering important findings.

Based on the general principle of the above research philosophy, hybrid methods (triangulation) were used for this study. Triangles are often used to represent different data sources or research approaches that will lead to valid results (Patton, 2002). With the triangulation method, the scientific accuracy of the results of the study, which is obtained from the source of data and findings from observation or interview, etc. can be increased. The triangulation technique refers to the use of multiple data sources to plot results about what constitutes truth. The goal of triangulation is to overcome the main (intrinsic) biases that result from applying a method, an observer, or a theory to studies. Applying multiple approaches in one study can increase the reliability and reliability of the information because the strength of one method covers the weakness of the other (Cannon, 2017; Patton, 2002). Peer feedback was used to evaluate the reliability of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). University professors as evaluators evaluated the reliability of the research and the reliability was confirmed.

Results

Results of the Netnography Method

Previous research has shown that the communication content of a brand created by an organization on social media can be classified into organizational, promotional, and relational content (Ahuja & Medury, 2010). Organizational content can be defined as what is specifically driven to share news about organizational growth, new projects and actions, corporate activities for corporate social responsibility, and achievements. Promotional content can be defined as content that shares information about product features, prices, new products, product comparisons, advertising campaigns, and responding to any product-related complaints. Relational content also shares information with customers about topics that are of great importance to customers and represent the sensitive aspect of the organization (Ahuja & Shakeel, 2017). Accordingly, Callista's Instagram page posts were analyzed and their content was coded in Atlas.ti software. As a result of netnography analysis on Callista's Instagram page, Table 2 presents the relational, promotional, and organizational content of Callista Company.

Table 2: Categorization of Relational, Promotional, and Organizational Content (Ahuja & Medury, 2010) of Callista Company

Relational content	Promotional content	Organizational content
• Photography Contest • Yalda Night celebration with an award • Cosmetic training • Confectionery training • Health education in the Coronavirus crisis • Celebrating the beginning of the school year • Skin health education tips • Valentine's Day • Book introduction • Contest with likes and comments • Awareness of women on the day of Elimination of Violence against Women • Celebrating the Day of Girls • Earth Day • Color tutorial • International Unicorn Day (Children's Cartoon Day) • Award on World Emoji Day • Creating a page called CALLISTA_FRIENDS and attracting more followers	• Special offers to start the seasons • Celebration of 100k followers and giving discounts to up to 100 people • Product color testing • Matching the colors of the products together and presenting the package • Callista Smile • Callista Style Charm • Show Your Art • Comparing the lightness of products with floating in the water • Coronavirus does not pass through healthy skin! • Compare products with sweets • Use of vitamin E in some products • The color coordination of products with the color of the seasons • Holding events with celebrities • Introducing popular products • Generating content with influencers	• Date of production of new products • No animal testing for the health of products • Granting more agencies throughout Iran

Creating Wordclouds

The wordclouds were also generated using customer comments on Instagram and showed the keywords shown in Figure 1. These wordclouds, produced in 2100 comments, depict a very interesting phenomenon. As the picture shows, "price, I'm satisfied, excellent or awesome, order, beauty" are among the most repetitive words, which clearly shows the customer's good insight into Callista products; It also shows that the company's advertising has been able to persuade, attract and buy customers.

Figure 1: Picture of Callista Company's Wordclouds

Results of the Photography Method

To analyze Callista Company's advertising content, initially, the images prepared from the Callista Company page by 4 participants were analyzed using the ZMET approach. In this method, a set of metaphorical terms of the participants was considered as a basis for extracting a set of thematic categories. To do this, the researchers individually reviewed the metaphorical expressions, created a thematic categorization, and identified the salient metaphors that participants used to describe different aspects of their insights into advertising. Of course, this process was repetitive, because all three researchers in the present study were involved in a joint analysis in which they compared, discussed, and combined their subject categories, and each metaphorical phrase was assigned a subject category.

The next step was to abstract thematic categories into conceptual metaphors (Lakoff et al., 1999). Conceptual metaphors serve as a useful mechanism for organizing and reducing data, in some cases the words of the participants and in others the labels designated by the research team.

Finally, the three authors examined thematic categories and conceptual metaphors to identify deep metaphors in the data. Metaphorical themes exist on the surface of conceptual metaphors and are not completely hidden in our subconscious. Metaphorical themes reflect lenses called deep metaphors. Deep metaphors represent a higher level

of abstraction than conceptual metaphors and are the main concepts of a tendency that can act as an organizing framework for the system of lower-order concepts (Lakoff, 1993). Consumer conceptual metaphors are used to identify their deep metaphors, and deep metaphors are used to evaluate and test new concepts, company image, development, evaluation of communication programs, and better packaging design (Riessman, 1993; Stern, 1995; Stern et al., 1998).

Therefore, in the present study, to better understand the participants' perceptions of Callista advertisements, a narrative analysis of the stories in the text of the interview was performed. Narratives were then analyzed to identify metaphors used to discuss participants' thoughts and feelings about advertising. Researchers have focused on metaphors because thought is primarily metaphor and imagination (Lakoff et al., 1999; Ortony, 1993), and by analyzing metaphors, customer thinking can be better understood (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 1999; Coulter & Zaltman, 1994; Zaltman, 1997). Given the seven deep metaphors of "balance, transmission, journey, connection, container, resource, and control" in consumer research (Zaltman & Zaltman, 2008); In the present study, deep metaphors were placed in three categories: transmission, journey, and connection. The table 3 shows some examples of the narrations of the participants and their analysis.

Table 3: The Narration of Participants and Its Analysis

Conceptual metaphor (Narrations)	Thematic category	Deep metaphor
Seeing this image, I want totake the balloon thread andrelease it (Image No. 1).	Non-product related experiences	Connection
Seeing this image, I enteredthe colorful world of my childhood like a doll (Image No. 2).	Intrusive advertising	Journey
Seeing this image, I feel like Iam floating on water (Image No. 3).	New ways to think aboutproducts	Transmission

Image No. 1

Image No. 2

Image No. 3
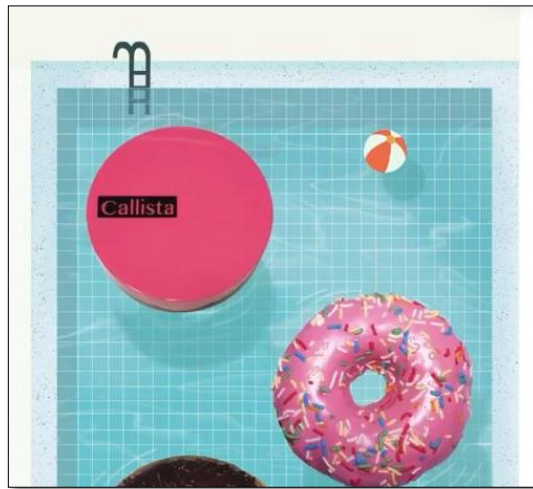
In the present study, after analyzing the consumer insights of Callista products, a summary of thematic categories, conceptual metaphors, and deep metaphors derived from the data were presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of Thematic Categories, Conceptual Metaphors, and Deep Metaphors

Conceptual metaphor	Thematic category	Deep metaphor
Consulting, education, reasonable price, Iranian goods, excellent quality, beautiful, style, competition, celebration, color, shine, natural, book introduction, vitality	New product introduction information Product usage information Product comparison information Product selection support information New ways to think about products, related to the product Product-related experiences, and in some cases, non-product-related experiences	Connection
Floating in Love, Callista Girl, Nostalgia, Everything Pink, Colorful World, Juvenile, Cartoon, Unicorn	Advertising as Entertainment Advertising everywhere Intrusive advertising Repetitive ads Manipulation and deception of advertisements Encouraging shopping and materialism Advertising as fuel for the economy	Journey
Stress relief, packaging, no animal testing for the health of products	Depict fundamental changes	Transmission

Discussion

The digital revolution has presented many ways for managers and business owners who can easily obtain data from many of their customers and gain customer insights by analyzing them. The availability of data and information, by monitoring and measuring all activities, allows for a change of perspective and a full understanding of the activities, thus countless competitive advantages, and accurate and true knowledge of the business. And can be used as a tool to gain customer insight. We used the Instagram platform to gain customer insight because the Instagram platform is a huge source of information through which we can discover the feelings and insights of consumers. At present, paying attention to online data is an integral part of marketing research in gaining customer insight. Based on this data, marketers can predict customer behavior, consumption, and choices; And improve their decision-making processes and strategic planning. The following are the results of the study in response to the research questions:

To respond to RQ1, the results of the study showed that, since social media posts with images are more popular than posts without images, and images with special features, high quality, and professionalism lead to more interaction (Li & Xie, 2020). Nowadays, the use of the photography research method in discovering customer insights is more effective than other methods (third-party data, situational analysis of anecdotal experiences, passively collected behavioral data, real-time user testing, and predictive models). Image as a tool to create interaction between the viewer and the image has different meanings. By using symbols, these tools express the psychological feelings of people that can be used to gain customer insight (Shirkhodaee et al., 2019).

Given that understanding, customer insights will create value for companies and customers (Gupta et al., 2020) and brand equity stems from customer perceptions; managers need to be able to improve this special value at the customer level. We gained in-depth insights from the company's customers by reviewing 2100 comments on Callista's Instagram platform. Through analysis of promotional images and access to a wide range of consumer comments, managers can constantly monitor their customers' activities, constantly browse their information, and regularly receive feedback from their customers, thus keep up their connection with customers. Digitalization has paved the way for managers to develop flexible, group-oriented, and coordinated communication skills.

By promoting beauty products and using deep metaphors, Callista has been able to convince buyers in many ways, by "transforming" an ordinary product into something extraordinary. In a 2011 article for the Journal of Consumer Research, Trampe et al., (2011) wrote, "One of the strengths of the advertising industry lies in its ability to turn ordinary objects into highly desirable products" (Trampe et al., 2011). We used the photography method to analyze the advertising images taken by the participants in the study, and performed a narrative analysis of the stories in the text of the interview with the ZMET technique.

First, we asked the participants to describe the content of each image, then talk about the images that they had in mind but could not find an example of. When the participant finished talking about the picture, another probe such as "Can you tell me a little bit more about ..." was used, followed by an alternative probe. We found that this probing

process had to be continued at least 4 or 5 more times until the interviewer was deep enough. We then asked participants to use touch, smell, sound, color, and emotion to describe advertising effects. For example, participant number 2 said, seeing picture number 3, I imagined myself in a bakery. Participants were then asked to describe their thoughts and feelings about the ad as if it were a map or a movie. Finally, each contributor created an image that summarizes the images they brought. Then the researchers extracted metaphors by summarizing the steps of the ZMET technique. The analysis of the metaphors showed that Callista focused on connection, journey, and transformation metaphors. To use the deep metaphor of connection, the company advertises advice, education, reasonable prices, Iranian goods, excellent quality, beauty, style, competition, celebration, color, shine, natural, book introduction, and vitality. Often, these keywords describe the appearance capabilities of the product. For example, attractive words like "natural" or "natural appearance" suggest that the product increases the assets which the consumer already has, or the slogan of "Iranian goods" stimulates the feelings of consumers by reviving the passion of patriotism, make the consumers feel they are one with the brand and finally have a constant connection with the company. Callista has made good use of this metaphor by presenting empirical marketing campaigns that invite consumers to participate with brands and products in stores.

To use the metaphor of the journey, Callista has turned his ads to "floating in love, Callista girl, nostalgia, everything pink, colorful, juvenile world, cartoon, and unicorn". In fact, by producing a variety of promotional content in the form of attractive images using cheerful colors, Callista seeks to create a feminine and attractive image of its brand in the minds of the audience, engage more sincerely with them, and thus more sales and revenue and has attracted its customers so well.

To use the deep metaphor of transformation, the company has turned its ads to "stress relief, packaging, and no animal testing". Transformation is just a metaphor that appears in the products that meet the deep needs and wants of the consumer. For example, Callista, by emphasizing not conducting animal testing, in addition to paying attention to the needs of customers in the field of beauty and health, pays special attention to their needs and wants for social responsibility towards animals. In some cases, the beauty industry uses keywords to convince consumers about the value of a product.

To respond to RQ2; 1) There are a large number of followers on Callista's Instagram page (101,000 people); 2) analysis of generated wordclouds (Figure1); 3) Metaphors obtained from the interview; 4) Alignment of the results obtained from the two methods of netnography and photography, indicates the existence of a positive relationship between the company and customers and increasing their number. The number of followers on Callista's Instagram page is more than other brands of Iranian cosmetic products, and the number of followers is also growing, which shows the positive insight of the audience and the attractiveness of the page for them. Super words also confirm this. For example, the most repeated words in the wordcloud include "price, I'm satisfied, excellent or awesome, order, beauty". The words I'm satisfied and excellent or excellent indicate the positive feedback of the customer towards the products. The repetition of the words price and order shows that the advertisement is attractive to the page visitors because it has stimulated them to ask about the price and order of the products. Repeating the words beauty also shows that the company has been able to convey the sense of the value of beauty to the audience. Because marketing is providing

value to the customer, not providing goods. The analysis of the images on Callista's Instagram page indicates that some images are designed in such a way that they engage the audience's mind and the audience seeks to establish the relationship between those images and their experiences by seeing them. On the other hand, the use of happy and lively colors, the celebration of Girl's Day and World Unicorn Day, etc., in the images takes the audience back to their childhood and brings back memories for them. Also, designing creative images and creatively simulating product images causes transformation in the audience's mind and creates a spark in his mind; In addition to creating a connection between the product and the mind of the audience, it surprises him. Therefore, it is recommended that the company hire a strong team to monitor its customers' data, continuously measure its activities, and design its plans by understanding the customer's vision.

Implications

The success of a business and its expansion, especially in social media and digital marketing, depends on knowing the customer's insight and taste. Today, understanding customer insights has taken on a new shape due to the key role of the Internet and technology in people's daily lives. Insight systems and engagement systems activated by multiple customer interactions result from the entanglement of physical and digital contexts. Therefore, companies must design a combined approach to bridge disconnected contexts, capture new opportunities, and provide customer engagement along the entire journey (Mele & Russo-Spena, 2021). In this study, we showed how a company, especially in the field of cosmetics, can use new technologies to gain customer insight and through it, find many opportunities to attract customers.

Although in traditional cosmetics marketing there are many such opportunities to attract customers, social media opens up new channels for companies. Selling and advertising on social media have made the process of collecting data from customers easier. Because it is easy to receive customer feedback compared to traditional methods. For example, customers can register their opinions about the product on the company page with very little time and even without cost. Based on this data, companies can improve their marketing mixes over time. Our study of Callista showed; Aware of the customer's vision, the company has produced colorful, happy, and fancy content and has a special focus on specific colors that are attractive to women. The focus on creative ways of marketing and selling products, such as the use of children's cartoons, is also evident. Callista Company uses people who are fully acquainted with the product specifications and know the needs and wants of customers to market and sell its cosmetic products, and based on the knowledge of the customer needs, they market cosmetic products at the right time and place and in the proper way. Also, considering that elegance and beauty are the main pillars of cosmetics marketing, Callista has used them well. Here are some suggestions on how to improve customer insight for cosmetics brands:

Making cosmetic instructional videos leads to viral created content and introduction to a wide range of consumers. It also helps the potential customer to learn how to use the product, as well as the desire to buy that product. In particular, the role of beauty bloggers can be used to introduce the product and create the customer. Since selling cosmetics equals selling beauty, conveying a beauty message through images can also be effective in attracting customers.

In the current research, the cosmetics industry in Iran, which is influenced by Islamic culture, was conducted, so one should be cautious in generalizing the results to other industries or other countries. Future studies are also needed to discover other ways to obtain customer insight through digital channels, and in future studies, one can focus on longitudinal research with content analysis or discourse analysis approaches and examine and analyze customer insight over a period of time. Given Since the focus of the current research was on the cosmetics industry, it is necessary to examine the customer's insight concerning other businesses.

Practical Implications for Asian Business

The cosmetic industry is one of the world's biggest industries, responsible for the manufacture and distribution of cosmetic products. Due to increased exposure to the world of beauty, beauty consumerism is at an all-time global high. With an emerging middle class and a steadily increasing disposable income among consumers across the Asia-Pacific region, the consumption of beauty products has skyrocketed, propelling the Asia-Pacific region into the top spot of the cosmetics market across the globe. The region's digital revolution has also aided the surge in beauty product consumption, as consumers are purchasing more goods online. Increased social media penetration throughout the region has too impacted the cosmetics industry, as consumers are more likely to purchase products that have been endorsed and reviewed by social media influencers. Asian consumers are known to thoroughly research products before buying; however, they are also open to purchasing products that they have not previously tried. (Statista, 2022). Therefore, companies active in the cosmetics industry in this region are looking to gain customer insight to better understand their needs and want to have more market share, sales and profit. This qualitative study helps to fill the theoretical gap by using the theoretical contribution of Callista's Instagram page users to gain customers' insights. Our main focus to gain customer insight was to investigate the metaphors of Callista company's image-based advertising on the Instagram platform. Because with technology-oriented marketing communication, the methods of gaining customer insight have also changed.

Social networks are often image-oriented and the audience's attention is attracted by the visual stimulus. So, they have a good fit with the beauty section. Platforms like Instagram provide an opportunity for businesses to create virtual "stores" and "product displays" through their content. Since social media focuses on interaction and conversation with the audience, cosmetic companies in Asia should try to engage users and connect with audiences who like their products. Companies can build this connection by responding honestly and friendly to their comments in a "non-sales" tone. In this way, they can better understand the needs and wants of customers.

Also, to create more and better interactions with customers, companies should promote cosmetics and health products on Instagram with visual, video, or graphic content using quality and creative photos and attractive images for the audience. They can preferably use photos with a monochromatic background (white or neutral colors and light tones) to attract the audience. Each caption for an Instagram post has a title of 5 or 6 words. The appeal of the headline is that it can ultimately convince the audience to read the rest of the caption. The caption should be brief and practical so that the audience can read it and start writing comments within thirty seconds.

Finally, sticking to a specific style of content is helpful. All existing elements should be combined in terms of style, color, size, and shape. Showing product details in photos evoke a real image for the audience. Knowing the audience and acting based on their wishes is also important.

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