



**UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND LAW**

**Consumer engagement in online brand communities:**  
*A netnographic study on Gymshark's Facebook brand page.*

**Master's Degree Project in Marketing and Consumption**

**Graduate School**

**Authors:**

-Winnie Apaza

- Tasnim Jahan

**Supervisor:** Eva Maria Jernsand

**2021**

**Abstract:** Consumer engagement on online brand communities has increasingly become a field of interest among marketers. As the process of online consumer engagement is different from traditional ones, it continued to impose challenges to the marketers to take different strategies. For the online consumer engagement, it has become necessary for marketers to build a two-way communication with consumers in order to analyze their responses and produce resourceful insights. In online brand communities, consumers' responses can be measured through content. The content can be generated by different content creators and it has different characteristics that are connected to consumer engagement. Using consumer engagement as a theoretical framework, the current study scrutinizes consumer engagement with the content, considering content characteristics and type of content that are created by three types of content creators such as firm, influencers and consumers. The study identifies that firm generated content are able to create higher consumer engagement in comparison with influencer or consumer generated content. It also analyses consumer engagement that tends to increase when the content integrate humors, emotional appeals or they are in the form of polling or contests. The analysis discovers caption as an element of content characteristics which sheds new light on this research field. This research provides new insights to practitioners and marketers how they can design social media content, which context of the content they should include and which content creator's post they should share in order to maximize online consumer engagement with their brands.

**Keywords:** online brand communities, content creators, content characteristics, consumer engagement, influencer generated content, firm generated content, consumer generated content.

## **Table of Content**

<b><i>Chapter I: Introduction</i></b>	<b>1</b>
<b><i>Chapter II: Theoretical Framework</i></b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.1 Online brand communities</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.2 Consumer engagement in online brand communities</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.3 Online content creators</b>	<b>4</b>
2.3.1 Firm generated Content	5
2.3.2 Consumer Generated Content	5
2.3.3 Influencer Generated Content	6
<b>2.4 Characteristics of Online Content</b>	<b>6</b>
<b><i>Chapter III: Methodology</i></b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3.1. Research Design</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3.2. Selection of case company</b>	<b>11</b>
3.2.1 Gymshark	11
<b>3.3. Data Collection</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3.4. Data Analysis</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3.5 Ethical considerations</b>	<b>15</b>
<b><i>Chapter IV. Findings</i></b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.1 Post Analysis</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4.2 Eight posts with highest engagement</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4.3 Bottom eight posts with lowest engagement</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4.4. Overview of responses</b>	<b>23</b>
<b><i>Chapter V: Discussion</i></b>	<b>25</b>
<b><i>Chapter VI: Conclusion</i></b>	<b>30</b>
<b>6.2 Contribution to the theory</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>6.3 Practical Implications</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>6.4 Limitations and future research</b>	<b>33</b>
<b><i>List of references</i></b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>40</b>



## **Chapter I: Introduction**

Consumers are progressively using social media to meet their consumption-related demands, notably as becoming a member of a brand community, accessing product information, and seeking assistance through social interaction on consumer choices (Gavilanes, Flatten and Brettel, 2018). This is due to the fact that online brand communities allow users to access content, engage with one another and share knowledge (Jang et al., 2008). Consequently, content is the most significant factor affecting brand community engagement (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013). Consumer engagement with a brand was previously thought to be defined by the total number of consumers who are connected to brands on their online platforms or who generally follow or like their official brand page. But at present, the actual consumer engagement is measured by the likes, shares or comments on messages or posts created by firms (ibid). Jayasingh and Rajagopalan (2015) also ascertains that the fundamental causes for consumer engagement on online brand communities such as Facebook are content-related. Consumer engagement is vital to any organization's success because it contributes to the formation of close bonds between seller and customer in relational exchanges (Sashi, 2012).

We live in a digital world where the phenomenon of social media has changed the way companies and consumers communicate and engage into conversations and content. Customers' relationships with products, brands, and firms have become stronger due to the use of social media over the last decade (Jaakonmäki, Müller and vom Brocke, 2017). However, companies and marketers struggle to recognize what drives user engagement, making it difficult to create meaningful content for their social media marketing campaigns (Ibid). Hence, in recent years, there has been an increasing interest in this field of study.

Content appears in the form of news, infographics, photos, videos and reviews (Maciá, 2013 and Balas, 2019). It can be created and shared either by the firm (Antikainen, 2007), influencers (Freberg, 2011) or consumers (Wang and Rodgers, 2011) along their social media platforms (e.g. Facebook , Youtube, Instagram). Consumers' online engagement is the consequence of consumers interaction with content (Schreiner et al., 2019).

Previous literature of consumer engagement centers on investigating customer-brand relationships (Bowden, 2009 and Hollebeek, 2011), drivers that strengthen or weaken consumer's engagement within online communities (Heinonen, 2013 and Jing et al., 2016) influencing factors that engage consumers in online communities (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013) or detailing brand post characteristics (Schultz, 2017). Therefore, this paper attempts at contributing to the brand community literature and addressing the previous research gaps by examining who is responsible for content creation as well as how different content characteristics draw different levels of engagement of the OBC members using Facebook as the selected social media platform to carry out our study since Facebook is commonly used by brand communities and provides an interactive space for its users to access effortlessly to digital content (Hermaren and Achyar, 2018). Also, this research will contribute to the

existing literature that puts in evidence that there is little understanding of consumer responses towards brand's marketing strategies within the Facebook environment and what drives customers to follow or become a fan of an online brand community (Hodis, Sriramachandramurthy and Sashittal, 2015).

Overall, the primary purpose of this study is to examine different types of content in online brand communities and to compare how these generate consumer engagement, by analyzing the Facebook networking site through the case of a fashionable sportswear brand namely Gymshark. Our findings can help businesses improve their social media marketing strategy and gain higher engagement on huge audience platforms like Facebook, which counts with 2.80 billion monthly active users (Statista, 2021), and concentrates over 1.84 billion users visiting their app on a daily basis, being the largest social media platform today (Mohsin, 2021).

To fulfill the purpose of our study, we proposed the following research question: *How does different types of content generate engagement in online brand communities?* , through the case of Gymshark. Throughout the paper, the structure is organized as follows: an overview of the literature used, explanation of the method and data set, findings, discussion of the findings and conclusion highlighting the contribution to theory and practice. Ultimately, the paper concludes with some limitations and recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter II: Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1 Online brand communities**

With the rise of online interactions in the Web 2.0 era, online brand communities (OBC) provide businesses with a number of advantages. These communities are valuable tools for cultivating brand loyalty and improving relationships (Schau et al., 2009). According to Sicilia and Palazon (2008) an online brand community (OBC) is a “group of individuals with common interests in a brand who interact with each other electronically in a platform provided by the company which supports the brand” (p. 257). Digital communities might have been built around ways of consumption, interest or support groups, or virtual environments, while online brand communities are constructed around a brand. Marketers are gradually constructing an online platform for the brand community, which will be used as a marketing tool (McWilliam, 2000).

An online brand community (OBC) is a fundamental platform for enterprises to enhance their authenticity and competitive stance since it also provides the brand the opportunity to reinforce relationships with its end-users and make them be part of the process of creating brand experiences (Tsai et al., 2012). Developing an OBC for marketers entails providing a brand-focused online platform for like-minded customers to share their ideas. In these communities, consumers develop emotional and cultural values (Cova and White, 2010).

Martinez-Lopez et al. (2017) argue that there is an increasing number of consumers that are partaking in online platforms to interact with other users and with brands. Consequently, marketing specialists are focusing endeavors to comprehend how to construct and maintain communities to strengthen customer value. Additionally, their utilization is in accordance with the consumer empowerment approach that allows business to consider their customers as partners in regards to taking decisions, creating new products, safeguarding the brand and reinforcing and forging value (Hassan and Casaló, 2016; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004) in order to increase their customers engagement towards the brand (Ibid).

During the past years, OBCs have reached extensive significance within brands' strategies of either communication or relationship building with their end-users. On account of this, more marketing practitioners and scholars have increased their interest in having a deeper understanding of the aspects that are responsible for OBCs success (Martínez-López et al., 2016). In light of the fact that customers partake in the social platforms/networks overall, particularly in OBC because they have more prominent trust in different customers than the organizations claiming their brand (Kotler et al,2010). Therefore, the study of Hanna et al. (2011) suggest that companies should adapt their business models to take advantage of the accessible potential. This implies actively participating in conversations in online communities committed with their brands (Ibid). Nevertheless, companies do not generally have any idea on how to utilize their online platforms (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Most of the time, the company's activities have a negative effect upon customer brand perception and then, a brand will consider it complicated and sometimes challenging to make its online community a success if its members perceive they are being manipulated (Clemons, 2009). Hence, organizations require to modify their way of interacting with consumers or members of their communities and not only impart information. This aligns with the study of Martínez-López et al. (2016) that stresses that it is fundamental to acknowledge the dynamic followed by the consumers in dealing with the brand which shows clearly how they become co-makers of the brand, having some part of the total brands control (Ibid).

It is worth mentioning that because of the positive predominance towards social media sites, a few organizations started to embrace the appearance of online brand communities in order to enact and develop direct communication with their customers (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). A clear example of this is Facebook with the offer of fan pages alternatives that allow any brand to build up an online brand community for their brand users by having an account in the mentioned networking site (Jayasingh and Venkatesh, 2015).

## **2.2 Consumer engagement in online brand communities**

Vivek et al. (2012) state that consumer engagement can be defined by measuring the depth of consumer's involvement and attachment with the firm's promotional campaigns and activities that are executed either by consumers or the firm itself. From an online brand community perspective, consumer engagement delineates the "interactive experiences" among brand, consumers and other members of the community (Brodie et al., 2013; p.107). Online

communities reinforce consumer relationships with a company's brand by enhancing the dialogue between them (Antikainen, 2007) meaning that online brand communities enable consumer engagement with a two-way communication system. There are several drivers that engage consumers to become a part of an online brand community for instance: social interaction, longing for economic benefits, to enrich self-identity (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), quality of the posts (Lee, Park and Han, 2008). Ashley and Tuten (2015) mention that content create interests in consumers which make them strongly attached to the brand. Considering the importance of content type, there are also other facts that are associated with content and can be analyzed from that angle. Menezes (2013) also emphasizes that online consumer engagement with brand communities is content related. Content in an online brand community can be created and shared by the firm's brand page, consumers and social media influencers and the level of engagement can also be measured by scrutinizing these three types of entities who are behind content creation. On the other hand, there are different sorts of content characteristics that are the elements of different online content ( Schreiner et al., 2019; Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013 and Lee et al., 2018). In the next sections we will discuss the three types of content and characteristics of content in detail, and also describe how they are related with consumer engagement in online brand communities.

### **2.3 Online content creators**

As discussed in the previous section, there are three different types of content creators in online platforms, thus online content can be classified into three different categories according to the creators of the content. Those are firm generated content, consumer generated content and influencer generated content. Consumers tend to be engaged with online brand communities as it is convenient to access information from other consumers through electronic word-of-mouth that ease their buying decisions. According to (McAlexander et al., 2002) word-of-mouth and marketing are two drivers that boost and bolster brand communities. Marketing activities generally are executed by the brand company by creating and publishing content in the community. Antikainen (2007) argues that both the maintainers (the owner/moderator of the firm's brand page) and members consented to the fact that the content that is created by the firm is the source of attraction for community engagement. Firm generated content has several implications for consumer engagement. The content sometimes contains interesting topics, new services for interaction or by posting and inspiring positive word-of-mouth firms that try to attract consumers to their brand page (ibid). On the other hand, the member or the user also creates content in the form of recommendations or shares their experiences. Firms generally target consumers to create content by themselves as they are considered more authentic and persuasive than the primitive type of advertisements (Wang and Rodgers 2011). Moreover, social media influencers generate content to promote brands on social media platforms in order to increase followers and brand acknowledgement (Glucksman, 2017). The content that is created by social media influencers are much relevant to the brand and its community, are able to reach a widespread consumer base and capable of gathering adequate response from the brand community( Smitha, 2014 in Skute, 2014).

### **2.3.1 Firm generated Content**

When the firm creates content for promoting a brand on social media platforms it is then considered as firm generated content (FGC). These sorts of content are commonly generated and shared by the firm's official brand page in social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on (Kumar et al., 2016; Stephen and Galak, 2012). Firms create content to promote their brands through which they grow interest among users, gradually build trust and loyalty and these kinds of content can be in the form of news, infographics, photos, videos, reviews etc. (Maciá, 2013; Balas, 2016). For instance, a short video clip of new product launching or lucrative images of products with new discount offers etc. As firms themselves produce the content it is therefore the nature of the FGC to be more commercial and professionally created (Colicev et al., 2019). At the same time, it permits users to express their opinion and reactions through comments, emoticons and shares (Facebook, 2021).

### **2.3.2 Consumer Generated Content**

Consumer Generated Content (CGC) can be considered one of the fastest means to circulate information about brand and customer insights (Christodoulides et al., 2012). CGC refers to online content that is created by consumers instead of firms themselves (Wang and Rodgers, 2011). Product reviews (positive/negative), consumers' comments, vote/online polling, chat, discussion etc are regarded as CGC (ibid). The main aim is to give consumers access to use any online platform and to share content, or feedback that associates the name of the brand. Henning–Thurau et al. (2004) mention that when consumers (current or previous) or any users who follow the brand in online platform make any comments or statement it is then regarded as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) which is one type of CGC. This type of CGC can be pure reviews or feedback-based which are informative and some of the CGC are generated from consumer opinions and experiences along with information which represent emotional context (ibid). The latter types are mostly observed in social networking sites where consumers participate in open discussions, make comments on posts shared by the firm's brand page or other consumers' posts.

While discussing consumer generated content on social networking sites specifically on Facebook, Kurian (2016) has characterized social content as a part of consumer generated content. He further mentioned media rich information that includes “photo, video and cartoon” (Kurian, 2016, figure:4) and “textual communication which consists of announcements, creative writing, invitations, status updates, requests, greetings, praise, recommendations, diaries, opinions, random thoughts, gossip, criticism, self-experience, quotations and tags” (Kurian, 2016, figure:5) are two types of social content that are created and shared by consumers on social networking site, therefore are part of consumer generated content. Hashtag is relatively a new form of promoting brands. When brands use hashtags in the posts, it allows consumers to participate in discussions for that particular product or content (Narang, 2021). Therefore, it fosters brand engagement with consumers while

arranging a conversation with them (ibid). According to Conole and Culver (2009), the use of a hashtag is one sort of consumer generated content which consumers commonly share along with posts.

In present, consumer generated content has transformed into a new form where online consumers produce content as responses to brands' promotional activities on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter (Roma and Aloini, 2019). This type of consumer generated content is gathered in the form of consumers' comments or answers when brand companies post any announcements, contests or questions to consumers on social media platforms (ibid). The characteristics of consumer generated content is not always constrained to responding to brands' messages or promotions only, it can also be done by forwarding them to other consumers ( Patterson, 2012; Rachna and Khajuria, 2017).

### **2.3.3 Influencer Generated Content**

In social media platforms, there are people who have huge followers and fan bases because of their popularity. Kietzmann et al. (2011) state that the more the users have connections in the network the stronger their profile are, thus it is expected they have greater influence in that network. They have the power to manipulate user's perceptions through their presences in social networking sites ( Freberg, 2011). Their influences have a tremendous impact on social media that the general users count them as role models as they think social media influencers represent themselves and find their activities, everyday life stories similar to them (Choi and Rifon, 2012). Firms collaborate with social media influencers' content or influencer generated content (IGC) not only to promote products but also to increase the engagement of consumers with the whole brand community (Skute, 2014) and to inspire their emotions toward it. Usually the content that is generated from influencers have organic reach to consumers (Adweek, 2015 in Glucksman, 2017), so the engagement that is established through influencers' content is more natural and somewhat authentic. Sometimes, social media influencers initiate a topic in the online brand community in order to shape consumers' attitude regarding a brand by actively engage them with such content which has a "major impact on how the community is developed and structured, influencing also the brands' online brand equity" (Skute, 2014; p.4).

### **2.4 Characteristics of Online Content**

While describing the meaning of content, Schreiner et al (2019) defined it as one sort of information that the sender addresses to prospective receivers and transmits them through communication channels. To know the detail of online content characteristics, five questions must be answered: 1) who initiates the communication meaning who sends the message or information corporate firms or any other entities, 2) what is the context of such message, 3) through which type of media , 4) to whom meaning the consumers if it done by corporate firms and 5) with what outcome meaning leading to engagement if it is performed in online platforms (Lasswell, 1948; Schreiner et al., 2019; p.4)

Schreiner et al. (2019) and Zhang et al. (2017) propose that topic is one of the characteristics of content. They argue that each content certainly has a topic where firms share brand related information with its consumers (Schreiner et al., 2019) or any promotional campaigns or posts about special events or paid promotions by celebrities (Zhang et al., 2017). Lee et al. (2018) have classified content characteristics into informative and brand personality categories. So it is evident from these author's writings that content can be classified according to the context of the content. Lee et al. (2018) specify that the informative content mainly contains product related information and carries a more direct message. While informative content is more about promotion, the brand personality content encompasses humor and emotional appeal. The brand personality content is able to attach consumers more with the content because they find some sort of authenticity and similarity that matches with their thoughts (Govers and Schoormans, 2005). Informative content which carries direct messages diminishes engagement but when there are special offers or deals it increases the conversion rate meaning consumers at least view the message/post (Lee et al., 2018). In addition to this, content can be a combination of both informative and brand personality (ibid).

According to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013), characteristics of content can be classified into three categories that are related to and determine customer engagement level with Facebook brand page. Those are posting times of content, content type and media type. While describing the content type they have categorized them into entertaining, informative and remunerative (ibid). Their description of informative content matches with what Lee et al. (2018) discuss about informative content as informative content mainly contains brand and product related information. Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013, p.848) outline content that is "written in a form of teaser, slogan, or word play" as entertaining content. They also mention entertaining content that carries no brand related information directly. Cvijikj and Michahelles' (2013) definition of entertaining content reflects the same meaning that Lee et al. (2018) mention in their study while discussing about brand personality content as they both agree on that there are other type of content besides informative content that encompasses humor, teaser thus can be entertaining and are able to draw emotional appeal. Content that is entertaining or in the form of brand personality tends to have higher consumer engagement than informative one (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Lee et al., 2018).

Another characteristic of content is *calls to action* where content is designed in a way that compels consumers to respond and react to that (Stephen et al., 2015). By asking questions or organizing contests, brands somewhat trigger consumers to participate and engage them to like or comment on that content. It is evident that this type of content leads to a greater amount of comments (ibid). De Vries et al. (2012) and Schultz (2017) specify this characteristic of content as interactivity which helps to analyze the content's interaction with the consumers. It can be a contest or any post which seeks consumers' responses/answers (ibid). Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) specify these types of content as remunerative content. These types of content are mostly seen when firms offer any contest through the content or when the content is in the form of sweepstakes (ibid). They also mention that remunerative

content is not able to attain consumer engagement like entertaining or informative content, yet consumers make more comments compared to likes or shares for that type of content.

Schultz (2017) identifies that the *posting time of content* is one kind of content characteristic and it determines the time when the content is created or posted in social media. There are specific times for posting those content when content generates a higher rate of consumer engagement (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Golder et al., 2007). In comparison with weekends, consumers tend to engage with the content on weekdays specifically during peak hours (5 pm-7pm) (Ibid). But according to Schultz (2017), consumer engagement do not make a difference irrespective of the day. It was also found out in the study of Schultz (2017) that brands prefer to share their content mostly on weekdays.

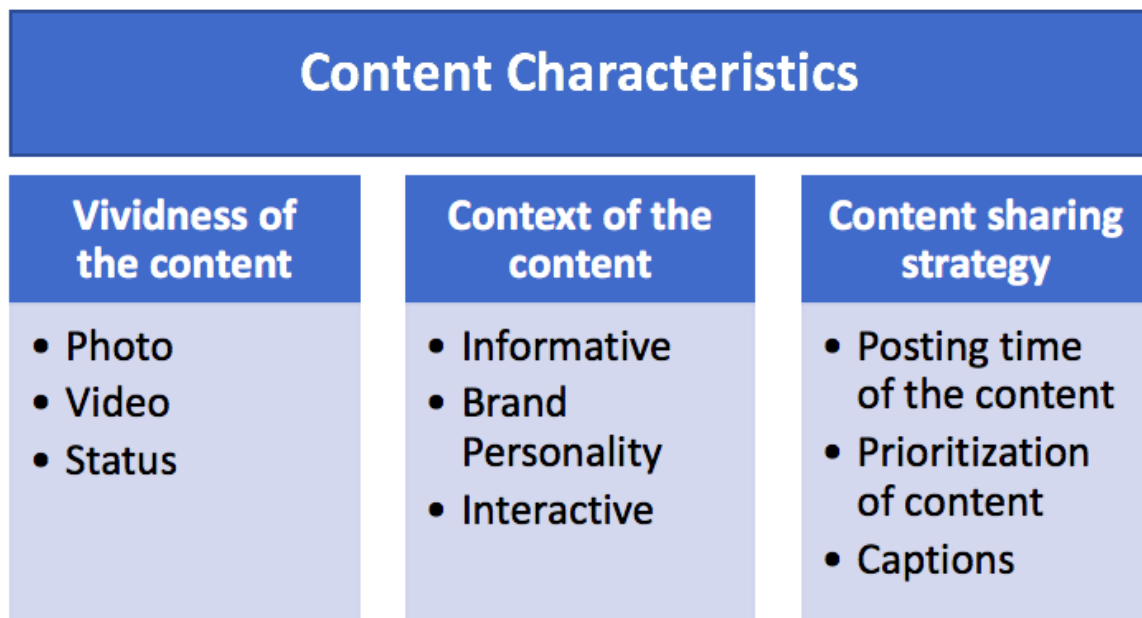
Characteristics of content can also be labeled according to the level of the interactions of content; those may differ according to the media for sharing those content (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013). For instance, content can be created and shared through the form of video, status, photo and link thus different media types attain different levels of association and interaction. Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013, p.847) defined them as “vividness of online content”. The framework of different post characteristics and online engagement outlined by Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) shows that posts that have high vividness generate high levels of engagement. Posts that contain videos and links are considered as high vivid content compared to posts that include pictures and status (ibid). Liu et al. (2017) and Hwong et al. (2017) suggest them as components characteristics of content. Components imply the type of media richness of the content which includes pictures, links, video, emojis or hashtags (ibid).

Hashtag is an octothorpe sign that can be found as a pound symbol in a keyboard and that is written before any message, topic, name, event or theme for social media posts (Olafson, 2020). Hashtags “make it easier to discover posts around those specific topics, because they aggregate all social media content with that same hashtag” (Olafson, 2020, p.1). Using hashtags in the caption helps to connect people into the community through its powerful communicative process (Fedushko and Kolos, 2019) and enhance online consumer engagement (Olafson, 2020).

However, according to Latte (2020) hashtags and emojis are part of caption that are shared along with the content. In addition to this, their research says that a good caption does not only instigate followers of an online community to look-upon a post but also increase consumer engagement (ibid). A firm can choose to insert an appropriate caption with the post to increase engagement. To describe a caption that is attached with a picture, Zappavigna (2016) mentions that a caption illustrates the individuality of a photographer meaning that makes his/her content stand out over others in social media. Hughes (2017) emphasizes that without an appealing and good caption in Facebook content, no marketer can expect a satisfactory consumer engagement. Referring to the previous authors’ quotes, it can be said that captions are able to accelerate consumer engagement and it is dependent on firms how they create strategies to include appropriate captions while publishing content on Facebook.

In social networking sites such as Facebook, a firm's brand page can highlight a particular post on top of all posts to prioritize the content (de Vries et al., 2012 and Schultz, 2017). Thereby, content can be characterized by its position on the site.

Summarizing the literature on consumer engagement and their relations to different sorts of content characteristics, the characteristics of content can be categorized under three main themes (see Figure 1). Those are vividness of the content, context of the content and content sharing strategy. Vividness of the content delineates the media type of the content and intensity of the content to create an image on the consumer's mind. Picture, video and status are the elements of *vividness of content*. Context of the content exemplified by the type of message a content contains. The three types of *context of the content* are informative, brand personality (humours/emotional appeals) and interactive (polling/contest/challenges/calls to action). Content sharing strategy characterizes how the content is shared in a brand community page. *Content sharing strategy* is solely executed by the brand's official page and those are classified into posting time of the content, prioritizations of the content and captions category.



*Figure 1: A typology of online content characteristics (own figure)*

## Chapter III: Methodology

### 3.1. Research Design

The research method applied in our study is a netnography. Kozinets (2010) describes netnography as an online marketing research technique to study behaviors within

communities in cyberspace and develop a better understanding of the social reality in which they are involved.

The conversations that are conceived in online or virtual communities contain a high degree of spontaneity alluded to the voluntary participation of its members/individuals who conceive the content of community information as a natural source of information and trusted by members of a community. To this extent, the ethnographic procedures of research become a discreet and viable means of contemplating communities and the online communication maintained among its individuals (Bengry Howell, Wiles, Nind, and Crow, 2011).

In contrast to other qualitative research methods, a netnography eases the process for researchers to disclose valuable information based on the individual's ideas, insights or opinions about certain subjects (Kozinets, 2010). Moreover, a netnography allows scholars to become deeply involved in a community and acquire a broader interpretation of practices, behaviors and discussions (Bryman and Bell, 2013). Taking into account that we are going through a pandemic, considering the evolution of internet and data technologies (Heinonen and Medberg, 2018) following a netnography demands less exposure to the virus than any other traditional techniques such as a commonly practiced ethnography and focus group would imply. Furthermore, a netnography has developed into a broadly recognized research method along with its particular benefits, such as being less expensive from the data collection approach and less invasive and time-consuming from the conventional ethnography (Addeo et. al, 2020). A netnography is a method that is adjustable and versatile, besides the richness of data source and ease of accessibility (Kozinets, 2015). Therefore, we consider this method to be more suitable, and practical to come up with answers to our research question.

According to Kozinets (2011), we followed four main stages for this study. The first task was to decide on the topic of our research, followed by determining a social networking site on which to perform the netnography analysis. Thus, we picked Facebook due to its leading global position as a social networking site and its widespread popularity (Islam and Rahman, 2017) to be able to analyze the way different types of content generate engagement in online brand communities. It is worth noting that since Facebook provides an interacting environment for its users to access digital content easily, it is frequently used by brand communities (Hermaren and Achyar, 2018). Secondly, Gymshark was chosen to be the particular case study to represent our research based on how they have dominated the social media world (Gilliland, 2019). The next step consisted of the interpretation of Gymsharks facebook content and the main findings obtained along the study, concerning the way the selected company interacted and engaged with their audience online and vice versa, the tone of response from both parties, specially the users responses regarding their content. The fourth step involved a brand analysis disclosure regarding the key following elements: (1) number of followers, count of posts, pictures and videos per month analysed (2) company's interaction with their online community members in the comments segment and (3) brand's type of content and characteristics exposed online.

### **3.2. Selection of case company**

One particular company was chosen to conduct the research in order to be capable of examining findings comprehensively. As a result, Gymshark was selected due to its remarkable performance through all its social networking platforms and its evident use of different content creators along their various social media sites. Apart from that, Gymshark was considered an interesting case to look into since they have managed to challenge a larger industry dominated by established brands such as Nike and Adidas owing to its focused targeting and exclusive goods ( Gilliland, 2019). The criteria considered to come up with this single company was based on its strong online activity, the interactivity displayed, large amount of data available to gather and foremost, how well and relevant this particular case company matches our research focal point and research question.

When conducting a case study analysis, it focuses more attention towards the particular nature and complexity of the studied case, hence it implies a more in detail examination (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Even though there are opposite views regarding if a single case study is enough groundwork to make sweeping assumptions in the findings section, Yin (1994) proposes that the most relevant part for a case study research is how adequately the investigator manages to create a substantial theory out of the information and discoveries; and not so much emphasis if the outcomes could be generalized.

#### **3.2.1 Gymshark**

Gymshark is a fitness gear and accessories company, producer, and online retailer based in the United Kingdom, with deeply engaged customers and social media followers from 131 countries. Ben Francis, the founder and his secondary school mates came up with the main brand business concept in 2012. Moreover, Gymshark has grown from a screen-printing activity in a carport, into one of the quickest developing and most notable brands in wellness (Gymshark, 2021). This constant growth emerges from a dedication to keep generating creative, avant-garde and effective performance wear and a consistently extending social presence, but most essentially from their compromise towards their own Gymshark's vision that defends the idea that they exist to provide the tools that can actually assist individuals to liberate their whole wonderful potential and set their own thoughts in motion. Hence, they are an active community that are committed to keep adapting to the new trends and evolving for their target ( Ibid).

It is worth noting that Gymshark has grown so quickly that it became a \$1.3 Billion brand in late 2020 owing that Gymshark is successful in attracting traffic to its website and boosting sales by carefully comprehending its target group and designing content exclusively for them. (Forbes, 2020). In addition to this, it was one of the earliest adopters of the influencer marketing model in order to collaborate with key collaborators who act as their brand ambassadors to promote their products and values, build long term relationships and encourage different audiences to get attracted to their online content (Ibid). Gymshark influencers strategy concentrate a large followers base mostly within Instagram (Baklanov,2021).

### **3.3. Data Collection**

Data that is copied directly from online community members and already published and stored in those digital platforms is known as archival data (Kozinets, 2010). Manovich (2018) refers to them as contemporary cultural data that are created and available publicly in the form of user generated content such as pictures, videos etc. or interactions with the content such as likes, comments and so on. Evaluating this archival data helps to determine many insights about online cultural context and trends (Kumar, 2020).

In netnographic research, data collection can be carried out either manually or using a software program depending on the preferred data analysis method (Kozinets, 2010). The researchers chose to collect data manually in the beginning as automatic methods can sometimes make it difficult to comprehend cultural context (Kozinets et al., 2014).

The archival data for this study were collected straight from Gymshark's official Facebook page. According to the research proposal data have been categorized under three themes: posts that are created by the admin of Gymshark's Facebook page, posts that are created by Gymshark influencers and posts that are created by Gymshark's Facebook page followers. In order to get a sufficient amount of data, posts from December, 2020 to March, 2021 were selected. They were obtained from the Gymshark Facebook page's wall under the home section, where they share all posts. Apart from that, posts were also obtained from Gymshark Facebook page's community section as this content is mainly created and posted by consumers themselves. During the selected time period, 64 posts were collected. This was implemented by capturing screenshots and copying them into a spreadsheet. Therefore, the data set consisted of 64 posts, as it was identified that among these 64 posts, we found our satisfactory amount of data that covered all the necessary content characteristics that we required for our research purpose. The data collected can be found in appendix A to add to the report's reliability. Among the 64 posts, there were high and low engagement rates. The sample considered representative to make comparisons, analyze its characteristics and reach a comprehensive study was 16 posts out of the 64 data set. These 16 posts comprised the 8 posts with highest engagement and the 8 bottom with lowest engagement.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

The analysis begins with utilizing the collected data consisting of an assortment of public online material such as pictures, videos, dialogues, comments, and posts directly obtained from the selected brand's Facebook page and the publicly involved participants in exchanging conversations within the online brand community. When the 64 posts had been gathered, they were coded and categorized in the spreadsheet. For the analysis of the comments, a content analysis of the textual discourse was done which is commonly applied in a netnographic study to online communities (Kozinets, 2002). In addition, a sentiment analysis was done to determine the tone of the comments (whether they are positive, neutral or negative). The way towards unitizing implied identifying and replicating fragments of text that showed up to be possibly significant for the purpose of our study.

Following the guidelines traditionally set for any qualitative analysis (Wimmer and Dominick, 2001), as mentioned previously a spreadsheet with coding and categorization was prepared to analyze the comments and identify characteristics of the content creators' posts. In each selected post, it was observed and noted whether or not it generates more dialogue and engagement based on the comments and reactions.

Subsequent to the previous stage, an interpretative and explicative approach was undertaken to draw logical assertions (Kozinets, 2012). This method is appropriate for acquiring insights from consumers in terms of comments regarding their own representative experiences and relationship with the company's products. With this in mind, this allows customers to work as self-storytellers because of their own experiences with the brand. By exploring their comments by text, particularly on a social media network such as Facebook, we tried to reveal and determine characteristics, similarities, differences and meanings within the data-set.

The most beneficial advantages of the netnographic research are the compilation of opinions and comments in real time, such as the launch of a new product, which suggests the minimum intrusion of the researcher and therefore more spontaneous and realistic opinions of the informants, also allowing the opportunity to identify how the online community interacts and reacts (Kozinets, 2015).

All the qualitative information is complemented with a series of metrics or quantitative data considered of interest for the case: number of comments, shares and reactions from users and post per month.

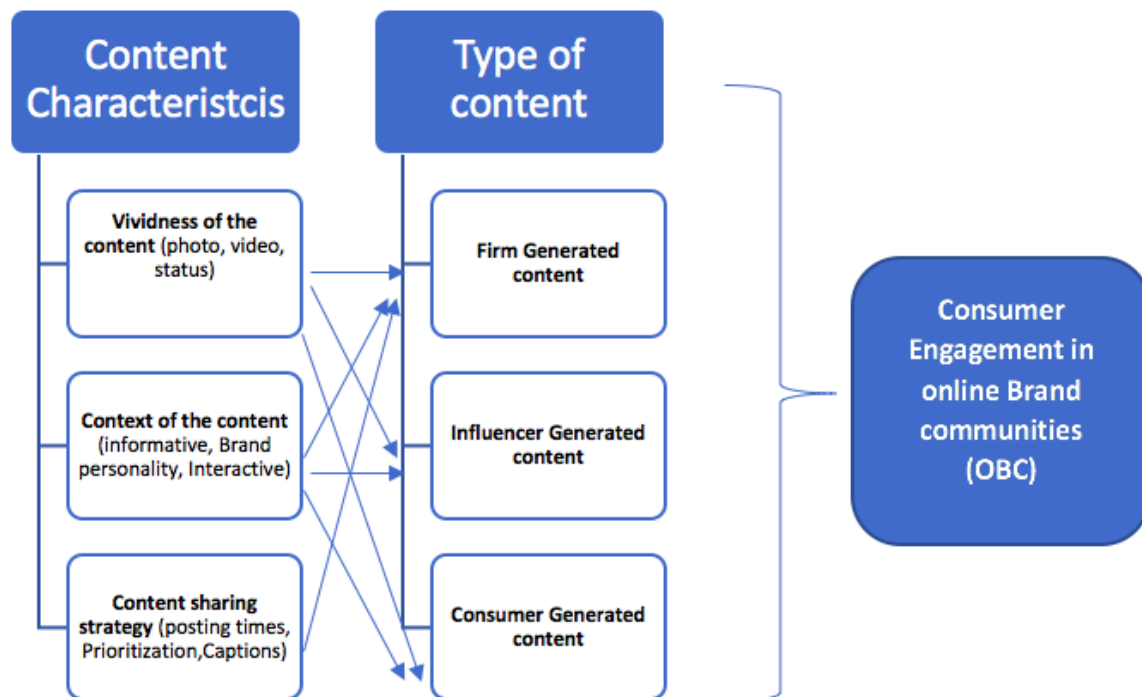
In a preliminary phase of the investigation, a tracing was carried out in order to find out what the chosen company has done on the internet, the response it has had, what people were talking about among its networks regarding the brand or issues related to it. All of this was relevant to be able to contextualize and direct the investigation (Gómez, 2019). Therefore, we made use of an online social media analytical tool namely Social Insider that provides stats and metrics of any Facebook, Instagram and Twitter account. We particularly analyzed Gymshark's Facebook page to obtain reliable metrics regarding their Facebook presence and performance to have a better understanding of its context as well.

### **Measurement criteria for online consumer engagement**

In online brand communities, consumer engagement is commonly assessed in terms of commenting, following, subscribing, sharing, liking, commenting and posting (Jayasingh, 2019). In social media, the level of consumer engagement is evaluated through click-through rates, page views (Lehmann et al., 2012), page engagement, page likes, post engagement, etc (Facebook Business, 2021). Barger et al. (2016) specify that consumer engagement can be measured according to their reactions and actions to content that are visible in the official brand page of a firm in any form of social networking site. They divide these actions in four main categories: 1) reacting to content (emoticons, ratings etc.), 2) commenting on content (Facebook /Instagram comment section, Twitter replies), 3) sharing content which can either

be carried out by firms or consumers (Twitter retweets, YouTube video share, etc.) and 4) posting consumer generated content (product reviews, any post shared by consumers in their Facebook timeline or Instagram profile).

In short, different types of content have different characteristics that generate different levels of engagement. Therefore, we have developed a framework to demonstrate the associations among online content characteristics, content type and consumer engagement in online brand communities (see Figure:2).



**Figure 2: Conceptual framework for correlations of online content characteristics, content type and consumer engagement in online brand communities (own figure)**

As the aim of the study is to analyze and make comparisons among different types of content that are created and shared by Gymshark Facebook page, its influencers and consumers therefore engagement rate by posts (ER post) formula was chosen to measure them under the same scale. This formula calculates engagements by followers on a particular post (Sehl, 2019). Engagement rate by posts helps to measure the rate at which followers engage with the content. The formula is the following:

$$\text{ER post} = \text{Total engagements on a post} / \text{Total followers} * 100$$

Total engagement on a post on Facebook is the sum of reactions (like, love, laugh, sad, care and angry), shares and comments of a post (Sehl, 2019). Total followers are those who follow the Facebook page at the time when the post is shared (ibid).

There are other formulas to measure engagement rate for instance engagement rate by reach to calculate how many people are exposed to post meaning at least view the post and then

interact with the post. However, ER post enables users to identify the rate at which consumers engage with the content (Sehl, 2019). Besides, as we are not the administrators of Gymshark official Facebook page, hence we are not authorized to access the data for reach per post as a third party that otherwise requires in the engagement rate by reach formula (ibid).

To measure the level of engagement rate in Facebook, it is recommended that if a post obtains a 1% engagement rate or above that, it is a sign of a good engagement (Leander 2011 in Jaffar and Eladl, 2016). The post has an average engagement rate if the percentage remains in between 0.5 and 0.99, and less than 0.5% shows a low engagement rate (ibid).

### **3.5 Ethical considerations**

Social research is generally performed on people who are participants of a research (Vilma, 2018) as well as it can be executed by collecting data from mass-media (Byman, 2012). It is stated in the study of Byman (2012) that some particular ethical rules have to be maintained and followed while conducting social research. Diener and Crandall (1978) propose four aspects in social research that researchers should be careful about: whether there is harm to participants, whether there is an absence of informed consent, whether there is a breach of privacy and whether any falsehood is committed. As the proposed analysis method, here is netnography, the aforementioned statements are also relevant with it since it is a part of social science and thus considered one kind of social research (Kozinets, 2015). Kozinets (2010) also identifies four ethical issues netnographers should take under consideration during any online research. Those are whether the online community will be considered as a public or private setting, how to obtain informed consent from members of the online communities, the obligation of preventing harm to members and how to represent information that are associated with participants of the research (Kozinets, 2010). The chosen setting of this study is public and it is not required to have informed consent from the online content or message posters when it is publicly available (Sudweeks and Rafaeli, 1995). Minimum cloaked identity situation is applied here (Bruckman, 2006) where participants (here members who post content or make comments on posts) names have been altered and direct quotes have been used. Thereby, selected procedures fulfill ethical standards for examining public media content and texts.

## Chapter IV. Findings

### 4.1 Post Analysis

Gymshark had over 1,904,783 fans in April 2021(Gymshark Facebook,2021). According to Socialinsider (2021), Gymshark uploads an average of 16 posts per month which is consistent with our own data collection. Their preferred time of posting is from 16h to 17h CET (Central European Time). Generally, the days they register the highest engagement are Wednesday and Thursday (ibid.). The type of content they post more often per month are pictures, followed by videos and status.

Among the analysed 64 posts originated from Gymshark Official Facebook Page, it was discovered that the majority of content were pictures (22), followed by pictures with polling (16), videos (14) and status (12). Most of their content is posted on weekdays, mainly Wednesdays and Thursday. Moreover, the type of content with most engagement were pictures, followed by pictures with polling, status and videos (see Table 1).

Type of content	Sum of Type of post	Sum of Total Engagement
Picture	22	576 133
Picture with polling	16	232 310
Status	12	31 442
Video	14	22 277
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>862 162</b>

*Table 1: Overview of engagement by type of content on Gymshark Facebook page.*

It was observed that Gymshark is an active online brand community posting every other day, if not every day. Hence, they made 16-17 posts per month. Through the different content observed on their official Facebook page, it was shown that most of the posted pictures displayed quotes of empowerment, motivation towards doing sport, having an active lifestyle, some with a humoristic nature to try out new exercises or routines and encouraging messages for users to tag their friends to relate to their quote. Moreover, Gymshark posts pictures with polling in order to crowdsource ideas and responses and measure consumers' preferences according to specific reactions. A few illustrations of this are the following posts:

“Would you rather workout at home on your own (like reaction ) or workout in a really busy gym (heart reaction)”(Gymshark Facebook, 30 January 2021),

“It's leg day. What are you training first?": Squat(Like reaction), Deadlift (heart reaction), Step ups ( I care reaction), Lunges( Laugh reaction ), Kick back (surprise reaction) (Gymshark Facebook, 8 January 2021).

As table 1 shows, this picture with polling type of content leads to high consumer engagement. Gymshark also uploads status as a media type that generates the third most engagement among its users. This particular sort of posts generally comprises a humoristic style, motivational, encouraging, optimistic, expressive and informative in regards to starting a gym session or physical state after a long workout routine. Some examples of this type of status are :

“Exhausted , just thinking about cardio”( Gymshark Facebook, 7 January 2021),

“Them: tell me your wildest fantasy, Me: I walk into the gym, no one is there, I have the whole gym to myself”( Gymshark Facebook, 27 March 2021).

One example of an encouraging type of status is the following:

"In case no one told you today, you're doing great"(Gymshark Facebook, 5 December 2020).

Regarding the videos, the type of content that Gymshark presents to their users are made either by their influencers, consumers/followers or Gymshark own marketing staff. It was seen that most of the videos were executed by the influencers, followed by their own consumers/followers and the particular firm during the period that we conducted our study. Overall, the videos address meaningful topics such as anorexia, self-body image issues, disability and fitness. Through their videos, they are able to raise awareness and communicate a storyline in order to connect with their audience through common experiences and inspirational stories.

When the content is produced by their influencers, they suggest for instance, an effective ab circuit and gym routines as a real burner, promote to join the challenge of 66 days to form a habit and change their lives #Gymshark66 and some are inspirational since the influencers shared encouraging messages and their journey with fitness.

When consumers/followers were the content creators at Gymshark Facebook page, these posts were empowering and motivational since they are conventional customers who showed how far they could get within sports and physical training with perseverance and determination to achieve their goals. The firm generated videos were humoristic and stimulating to keep trying to achieve your goals as well. For instance one video has a gymnast trying to make an air flip and failing in her first attempts but after practice, she is able to achieve it. Hence the caption they shared was the following: “If at first you don't succeed try, try and try again” (Gymshark Facebook, 27 February 2021).

## 4.2 Eight posts with highest engagement

Appendix B shows the highest rate of engagement, as well as the total engagement. The top eight posts are composed majorly of pictures that display short text captions or messages that transmit self belief, self motivation, strength, determination in order to connect and inspire their members within their online brand community. The creator behind these successful posts is the firm itself, Gymshark. They uploaded this content in the afternoon ranging from 4pm to 5pm CET on mostly weekdays, specially Wednesdays and Thursdays .

### Post 1. React with a Like if this is you: Trending Meme ( The food I eat and the body I want)

In this particular post, Gymshark is the responsible of the content uploaded which is a picture of a trending meme that is authentic and appeals to their users humour with a playful caption such as

“React with a like if this is you”(Gymshark Facebook official, December 3, 2020).

The picture shows in the middle a main cartoon that alludes to be ‘me/we or everyone who relates to it’ who has clear goal ahead which is the ‘body I/we want’ but there is another cartoon behind the main character that pulls him back which makes reference to ‘the food I/we eat’. Since this post obtained the highest rate of engagement, it is noticeable that it obtained a successful response from their community members. Regarding other characteristics, this content was uploaded on a weekday such as wednesday. Also the post caption comprises an emoji with the thumbs up sign.

Regarding the comments section in this post, they have a hilarious and optimistic tone since most of the respondents show agreement to the post. Therefore, it received over 126324 likes that reacted positively towards their caption, which shows they feel connected with the trending meme since they experience the same type of dilemma of having a fitness goal but still by following their food choices make them go backwards against their goal. Some of the users also engage in the comments section by sharing their workout routines and tagging their friends to relate with the humoristic post.

Examples of some of the most relevant comments are:

“Replace ‘the food I eat’ with ‘the couch I lay on’ and it will be a little bit more accurate” ( Michelle).

“This is my soul after my cheat day” (Simone).

### Post 2. Would you rather: 100 burpees everyday( if that give like reaction) or never workout again (if that give love reaction)

This post is composed of a picture with polling for online users in the community to express their specific response by giving either a like  reaction (yes) or love  reaction(never again)

to the caption if they would rather workout through 100 burpees per day or not work out ever again. This content was posted on a Saturday and its caption gathered two specific emojis, the sign of thumbs up and the red heart. This type of content was made by the firm and it achieved the second largest rate of engagement.

The reactions it received were mixed. Most of the members showed clearly that they would rather do 100 burpees with 126091 likes, while 42000 members suggested by their love reaction that they would not work out ever again. Regarding the comments, many said they hate or dislike burpees while some of them wrote they really like it and they will choose burpees anytime over not doing workout at all. Others replied with funny comments, pictures of themselves at the gym and other only emojis. Some representative comments with most reactions within the community were:

“ I could never workout again! I figure that burpees will eventually get easier over time!” (Jazmin)

“ I’ve been doing 100 burpees a day for the whole month of March and I have gotten much stronger. When I first began it took me about 35 minutes to complete and today it only takes me 8 minutes #noexcuses” ( Jennifer)

### Post 3. There is no better feeling than people noticing your progress.

The third post comprises a picture that has an encouraging message such as “*There is no better feeling than people noticing your progress*” that reached a high rate of engagement. The caption for the picture was “ @tag someone’s progress you’ve noticed” ( Gymshark Facebook, 6 February 2021). This post was uploaded on a Wednesday. The content of the picture is observed as inspirational and appeals to their member’s emotions and feelings. Its message made users feel effortlessly the same way towards the idea and expressed their support for that post by either commenting positively or sharing it with their friends. Therefore, it achieved a great level of engagement. Although, there were a few comments that agreed to certain extent and said that the best feeling is self-acknowledgement and self-validation for individual progress. Most of their members seemed to be explaining their own views toward the post. Some relevant responses were:

“It’s a great feeling. It lets you know that others know about your hard work. It feels good to be appreciated, especially when you’re succeeding”( Jon)

“Except when You start noticing your progress, now, that’s called growth” (Cris)

### Post 4. Working on bettering myself over everything else.

This post displayed a picture generated by Gymshark with a encouraging and self-belief and empowering message such as “*Working on bettering myself over everything else*”, that appeals directly to their community’s emotions and ideas. This post was uploaded on a Thursday and it did not register a caption.

Regarding the comments, most of them were related to how the followers were making efforts to bring better changes in their lives and health. Some other comments gave love and smile emoticons. Gymshark showed a charismatic approach with this post as the previous ones. At the same time, there were few users who elaborated on the message and suggested another approach to the message such as the purpose of bettering themselves and shared their viewpoints, personal experiences and thoughts.

The firm also seemed involved in responding to personal revealing comments such as one made by a follower who shared how he was struggling to work on himself since he was also trying to recover physically and mentally after having a car accident to which Gymshark showed condolence through comment. A representative comment was:

“Working on bettering myself for my daughter” ( Kera)

#### Post 5. \*Walks out of the gym\* Me: Can't wait to go workout again

The picture used in this post was generated by Gymshark. The message exposed was “*Walks out of the gym\* Me: Can't wait to go workout again*” is, which was compelled to make users feel similar to the caption and motivate them to react if they agree or not. It has an humoristic style that makes users effortlessly connect with the content. This particular picture was posted on Thursday, and it gathered a significant amount of shares and comments from their members.

The comments section showed mixed responses. The majority agreed with the feeling of the post and some others disagreed and shared their opinions and personal preferences regarding working out. There were a few that suggested they would rather go back to the gym than working showing how committed and passionate they are with their workout routine.

#### Post 6. In a complicated relationship with the gym

In this post, the content was generated by Gymshark and posted into the platform on a Wednesday. It was composed of a status that got high engagement. It was a playful status that obtained positive reactions, comments and shares from their members since it addressed a realistic status of the sort of relationship that many users have towards going to the gym. The caption of the status was “*with the gym*” in order to specify to whom the firm has a complicated relationship.

Most consumers replied with funny comments and happy emojis. Some others tagged their friends on Facebook to relate with the content.

#### Post 7. Remember we all start somewhere! Mason is such an inspiration

This post comprises a video made by a consumer/follower of Gymshark that was posted on a Wednesday. The caption which is “ Remember we all start somewhere! Mason is such an inspiration 🏋️‍♂️” comprised an emoji of feats of strength which could be perceived as perseverance and strength. It reached a high level of engagement. It was a video that showed Mason’s body transformation along his journey of working out and fitness. It received many encouraging responses since most of the comments were related to praising Mason who put a great effort to transform his body into a healthy shape by working out in the gym in a challenge period of two years. Some of the followers tagged other people to get motivated in the comment sections and connect with his empowering story.

Post 8. “Everyone’s dream is to get married”. No, it is to have a home gym.

This type of content is generated by the firm and it is a picture with an intriguing caption that can be open to debate if users take it literally. It didn’t contain any emoji in the caption itself. This post was shared on the Facebook platform on Thursday. The content of the post led their users to feel attached to the caption and express their viewpoints. One member commented that she is married and has a home gym and a gymshark closet so it is possible to have it all and posted a picture of her Gymshark wardrobe. Some others share their experiences related to their personal dreams such as having a pool, working out with their partner, having a huge gym. Some shared they already have it all and a family with kids. Post picture of how their customized home gyms look like. One member commented asking for people to give them luck to get any of those alternatives at least .

### **4.3 Bottom eight posts with lowest engagement**

Appendix C shows the top eight posts that generated the least engagement. Overall, these consisted of videos, which storylines and concise captions send messages of perseverance, strength, hard-work, encouragement, self-discipline, self-belief and empowerment to overcome any limits and fear to achieve significant results. This type of content originated from either the firm Gymshark or their influencers that are recognized athletes or passionate about fitness.

Post 1. This is spectacular. We are huge fans of this! Go girl

This post consisted of a video generated by a consumer/follower which obtained low engagement despite its captivating and inspirational message uploaded on a Thursday. The caption of the video was as follows: “ *This is spectacular. We are huge fans of this! Go girl* 🌟”, which contain an emoji of a glowing star in the end of the caption.

She is a little girl who is a gymnast and manages to make a lot of air flips and demanding gymnastic maneuvers with complete serenity and confidence. The few members who commented tagged their friends and it seemed that they were intrigued to try out lifting challenges and others seemed familiar with the maneuvers, thus they praised the little gymnast.

Post 2. They say it takes 66 days to form a habit. We believe it takes 66 days to change your life. Sign up for #Gymshark66.

The video in this post was generated by Gymshark through a compilation of consumer and influencer content shared with their community on Thursday. The video has a message of encouragement towards their community to encourage them to sign up for the challenge of 66 days to form a habit of exercising and changing their lives. The video's caption made use of one of the most popular brand hashtag #Gymshark66 throughout their community. This post surprisingly didn't gather much engagement, but despite that all its reactions were positive. Some members commented giving thanks to Gymshark for sharing such an inspiring video and challenge, others tagged their friends on Facebook and invited them to join the challenge.

Post 3. "People let fear hold them back from being great" - Roland Pollard. Watch this story of a father-daughter relationship and their journey with Gymnastics and Cheer.

This post displayed a video generated by an influencer named Roland Pollard who incited the community to let the fear behind and pursue their greatness by featuring an empowering video with his daughter and sharing their journey with gymnastics. The video's caption was descriptive and not didn't influence emojis but just text. This post was shared on Friday and captured some positive reactions, shares and comments. Despite the fact that there were not so many members engaged in this particular post, the few members involved commented showing their support and gratefulness towards the story behind the video and the inspiration they transmitted.

Post 4. Rock bottom is where most people find their purpose, just ask Austin. Because when we're at our worst, all we can do is become better.

This post comprises a video that is an influencer type of content uploaded on their platform on Tuesday. The caption of this post is only text with no use of emojis or hashtags. The content incites people to give thought to the message of not giving up despite the hardship of the past. Unfortunately, this video didn't receive much comments, reactions and shares from Gymsharks community. The member who commented showed love, respect for the influencer.

Post 5. We are live with Sophie Butler and Milly Pickles, talking about disability and fitness

This post was posted on a Thursday and generated by influencers such as Sophie Butler and Milly Pickles, two recognized athletes. The post caption was as follows: "We are live 📺 with Sophie Butler and Milly Pickles, talking about disability and fitness📺", showing emojis according to the message conveyed, first the *film projector* and then the *feats of strength* . The post displayed a video to raise awareness regarding the struggles that disable people have

to go through when they go to the gym. The response was positive and supportive from the audience. Some shared the video and commented how important the message they shared in the video was and opened their minds regarding the complexities people in wheelchairs face. They pointed out they were raising awareness. Others suggested that the video and information provided was eye-opening about the narrow opportunities that gyms offer to disabled people based on their experiences while others show appreciation for the video and for addressing that topic.

Post 6. "100 years and I'll be dead, but my name will stay here." Jalen Walker knows that his legacy will live on outside the ring, the same as his father's and his father's before him

The video displayed in this post is generated by an influencer named Jalen Walker and was posted on a Monday. The message from the video endorses willpower and perseverance of hard work. Among the few comments, there were members who showed a love reaction and praised the influencer for the video and message.

Post 7. Gymshark #Gymshark66 Shoulder day

The post featuring this post comprised a video generated by a consumer/follower that showed his shoulder day routine within their Gymshark 66 days challenge. This post was uploaded on Wednesday and included a popular brand hashtag #Gymshark66, which was promoted by the firm to motivate their members to become part of the challenge of changing their bad habits in 66 days and experiencing a personal change and sharing their routines through use of the hashtag. This video obtained very low engagement.

Post 8. "My fave workout leggings thank you Gymshark #seamless"

The picture in this post was generated by a consumer/follower that showed her favorite Gymshark workout leggings and shared on Tuesday. The content of the message appeared to use the hashtag of seamless to emphasize that particular attribute of the leggings. This post seems to promote the brand and shows acknowledgment of its great quality in one of their products, among the comments, there were few that were positive and the members who engaged in the post, commented with emojis and supportive messages.

#### **4.4. Overview of responses**

After analyzing the 64 posts and its respective comments, we identified that many of the comments emerge from the members reacting positively to Gymshark content by liking, loving, tagging someone else and sharing their posts. There were hardly any negative replies per post and in case there were, they consisted of customers asking for a refund of their order, getting data on when they could get more information about their shipping order, logistic issues, etc. Gymshark normally seemed to respond quickly and expressed the necessary apologies and provided a polite friendly answer to give confidence to their members that they would follow up on their case. To those posts that got greater engagement, most of their

members expressed replies showing appraisal, support to Gymshark with happy emojis, gifs, tagging their friends to relate with Gymshark messages and even at times taking up the initiative of sharing their own personal pictures as part of their reply to prove a point and interact with other member within the community. With this in mind, it is interesting to observe that engaged customers take more initiative in the word-of-mouth communication by tagging their partners and friends or sharing the post when it has an informative and inspirational message.

Many members reacted positively to Gymshark's inspirational pictures, which included comments such as: “Working on bettering myself over everything else” ( Gymshark Facebook, 25 February 2021). Gymshark’s online members replied thoughtfully on this comment, sharing their own personal experiences to express how that message connected with their own efforts to bring better changes in their lives and health. Some other comments gave love and smile emoticons. There was one particular comment that got the most reactions, when a member expressed that he was trying to recover physically and mentally after having a car accident to which Gymshark showed condolence through a comment, where it showed Gymshark endeavours to connect with their followers are successful. Generally, the most “relevant responses” were characterized by showing a good attitude towards the brand content, especially when the content shared were pictures with captions of motivation, strength, empathetic and encouragement. For instance to the content posted through pictures with polling such as : “Would you rather 100 burpees everyday if that give a like reaction or never workout again if that, give a love reaction.” (Gymshark Facebook, 6 February 2021). Their online members responded based on their preferences giving the specific reaction to it. Thereby , there were mixed responses from consumers. Many said they hate or dislike burpees while some of them wrote they really like it and they will choose burpees anytime over not doing workout at all. Others avoided the question and just replied with funny comments, gifs and emojis.

What is noticeable from the posts with the least engagement, is that there were few members who reacted, commented and shared these video-posts in comparison to the pictures-posts that achieved greater engagement in the brand community. Despite this, the comments from the members were in the majority positive, giving compliments and showing appreciation towards their inspirational videos and storyline behind. For instance to the video made by their influencer Roland Pollard, displaying his father-daughter relationship and their journey with Gymnastics and Cheer, some members from the few comments tagged their friends on to spread the message, one comment was an inquiry and one consumer thanked Gymshark and the influencer for sharing such an inspiring video of hard work and willpower. Similarly, another influencer video from Hanna Oeberg in reference to adding a simple yet effective ab circuit to the end of any home workout for a real burner, received replies of support, encouragement to work out and follow the example of the video. Also, some members decided to tag their friends to put in practice the show workout. Generally, Gymshark empathetic messages and thought-provoking questions through their different types of content helped participants further their socialization efforts and have more fun doing so. It is observed that captivating information feeding and continuous two-way contact are crucial for

members who choose to immerse themselves in interactions for intrinsic pleasure to maintain a positive sense of flow.

## **Chapter V: Discussion**

### **5.1 Online brand communities**

From the findings, it is clear that Gymshark's Facebook is an active highly involved online brand community since they frequently deliver different types of content (posting 16-17 times per month) through videos, pictures, polls or status to promote a sense of community among its online members. Moreover, the content displayed has quotes of empowerment, willpower and self-courage that are aligned with member's values and ideas and let them feel connected and motivate them to comment or react to their posts. This is consistent with Cova and White (2010) who argue that creating an online brand community (OBC) for marketers requires arranging a brand online space where like-minded consumers can share their thoughts and express their emotional and cultural values. Gymshark Facebook page exposed their unified efforts to deliver a strong community presence by their continuity in uploading posts and allowing and encouraging their users to partake in their online networking platform through sharing their experiences, comments, reactions, videos and pictures of their fitness journey or their experience with Gymshark fitness sportwear which shows to be in line with Martínez-López et al., (2016) that stressed how critical it is for brands to recognize the dynamic that users follow with firms, as it demonstrates how they become co-makers of the brand, controlling a portion of the overall brand influence.

### **5.2 Correlations of online content characteristics, content type and consumer engagement in online brand community**

#### *Vividness of the Content*

The picture and status forms of content are mostly created by Gymshark. Contrary to that, influencer generated content were mostly in the forms of videos, while consumer generated content were mainly in the forms of video.

After observing all the posts with higher engagement rate, it was revealed those content were all in the form of pictures followed by status. On the contrary, the least engagement posts revealed that most of the content was in video forms. Although Cvijikj & Michahelles (2013) suggested videos as high vivid content, which generally increases consumer engagement, that has not been proven in this study.

The findings thus contradicts Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) study since the picture and status-based content in this study generated higher engagement. Perhaps, many consumers viewed the content but did not engage through likes, shares or comments. However, the results may differ regarding Gymshark's social media presence on other platforms.

#### *Context of the content*

From this study, it was observed that picture and status content which includes humor,

fictional characters, motivational quotes make consumers either react or respond on the posts higher than brand related information-based content. The results are consistent with Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) and Lee et al's (2018) explanation of brand personality and informative content where they state brand personality content usually obtains higher consumer engagement than informative content. However, when the content was in video formats although having the similar humoristic or inspirational messages, they did not obtain that much engagement compared to picture format content. Consumers' response towards brand personality-based content when they share their own personal experiences to express how that message connected to their lives and lifestyles, while expressing their opinions that either agree or disagree with the post, the explanation of their thoughts with long texts in the comment sections clearly indicate that they find some kind of authenticity with the content and the brand as well. This sort of context of the content somewhat touches their emotional state and thoughts which can be linked to the explanation by Govers and Schoormans (2005) about brand personality content and its ability to acquire higher consumer engagement.

The results have unearthed that the Gymshark as a firm mostly create picture-based brand personality content while its influencer particularly create video-based brand personality content. Consumer generated picture or video-based content either with brand personality or information context were identified less in numbers.

From the study it has identified that there are other sorts of picture format content which include questions and polling that seemed to have gathered huge amounts of comments and reactions from consumers. The result is also consistent with Stephen et al. (2015) findings who emphasize through calls to actions how firms crowdsource ideas and responses from consumers. By asking questions or organizing contests, there are other kinds of picture and video-based content where the context is either contests or challenges in order to encourage consumers to participate in those. These sorts of content were also able to generate a good consumer engagement that are in line with the recommendations of De Vries et al. (2012) and Schultz (2017) where they state that brands somewhat trigger consumers to participate and engage on that content by arranging contests. The findings have disclosed that the Gymshark as a firm mostly create picture-based interactive content followed by video-based interactive content. Its influencers were observed to create video-based interactive content. The interactive content created by consumers were in the form of video. To sum up, it can be said most of the interactive content were created by Gymshark as a firm.

Although the rate of consumer engagement on interactive-based content were slightly lower compared to the picture-based brand personality content, they showed a good engagement rate in general. Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) explanation on interactive content is marginally proven here as not all interactive content found to attain more comments as compared to reactions and shares. Moreover, the engagement rate is only lower when they are compared to brand personality-based content but higher when they are compared with informative content.

#### *Content sharing strategy*

Almost every of Gymshark's posts were published on weekdays during peak hours (4 to 5 pm

CET) which indicates Gymshark's strategic approach of posting content at selected days of the week and particular time of the day. This is much similar to Schultz's (2017) study where it was identified brands mostly posted content during weekdays. From the analysis it cannot be confirmed that posts shared during weekdays obtained greater engagement that are mentioned by Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) and Golder et al. (2007) but after observing most of its highly engaged content it can be said that all those posted during weekdays.

No content was identified to get pinned and highlighted by Gymshark on top of all the content for prioritization in any day hence it is evident that they do not follow prioritizing strategy for sharing content that are discussed by de Vries et al (2012) and Schultz (2017) in their studies about content's position on the brand page.

Most of the content on Gymshark's Facebook page is created by influencers, consumers or Gymshark itself displayed with captions that are suitable for the post. Irrespective of the content type, whether it is video picture or status, Gymshark includes a good caption along with them. Captions that are shared along with the content by Gymshark Facebook page can be compared to headlines of newspapers which give hints to the consumer what is inside the content and highlights the context of the content. As a result, consumers receive a clear message. From the perspectives of consumer engagement, this is an intelligent effort by Gymshark as Stephen et al. (2015) state that message clarity is important and it depends on consumers' capability to process the message. By providing a clear message Gymshark makes it easier for the consumer to process the received message. Similarly, whimsical wordings and exciting ideas for consumers in the caption to ask them how they may respond to the content make Gymshark's content interesting to consumers which can be linked to the explanation of Hughes (2017) that an appealing and interactive caption is important for social media content for consumer engagement.

It is hard to compare how much consumer engagement increases by using captions in this study, as almost every content shared by Gymshark includes captions. However, when Gymshark asked to tag someone or organize challenges by inserting a hashtag, the number of comments were found higher and hashtag captions seemed to increase consumer generated content as responses. Therefore, confirming Latte (2020) and Hughes's (2017) discussions about using caption increases consumer engagement to some extent. But content that had captions along with hashtags found to generate least consumer engagement compared to content that had text or emoticon-based captions. And the findings are the same for all types of content, whether they are created by Gymshark as a firm, the influencers or consumers. Hence, rejecting Fedushko and Kolos (2019) and Olafson (2020) references that using hashtags in the captions for the content enhance online consumer engagement

Gymshark's empathetic approach toward the consumers through the content and consumers' lively participations via comments makes Gymshark as an interactive online brand community. Gymshark's prompt responses to consumers reveals how much they value consumers' involvement in this community. From the comment where Gymshark gave condolence to consumer or the responses where they politely handled consumer complaints and gave online assistances or the comments where Gymshark replied humorously, it is

proven Brodie et al.'s (2013) explanation on consumer engagement in online brand communities which they termed as “ interactive experience” (p.17) between brand and community members. Similarly, enthusiastic responses from the consumers where they shared their own views, opinions, and own experiences irrespective of the content type and the context of the content, it is evident that they are engaged with the content as well with the brand and community. Hence, affirming Ashley and Tuten (2015) and Menezes's (2013) discussion about the importance of online content and its association with consumer engagement.

### **5.3 The remarked characteristics of FGC, IGC & CGC and a comparative analysis on how Gymshark's content creators execute and generate consumer engagement**

#### *Firm Generated Content (FGC)*

Gymsharks follows a well-thought-out approach for content creation on Facebook. Most of the content is produced by Gymshark as a firm. The content is in the forms of photos, status and videos the same as discussed by Kumar et al. (2016), Maciá (2013) and Balas (2016) about FGC as they mention photo, video and status as the characteristics of FGC. Gymshark as a firm mostly creates picture and status-based content enclosed with brand personality context. The humoristic, motivational or optimistic content connects consumers strongly with the content as they feel these types of content represent their thoughts (Govers and Schoormans, 2005), what they usually do in their practical lives, how it is possible to reach the goals even being average human beings. Very few content were found which have brand or product related information or promotional campaigns. Therefore, Gymshark mostly chooses an indirect way to engage consumers with the Facebook brand community instead of delivering brand related direct messages through content. The video-based content does not give the impression of commercialism but more professionalism thus partially supporting Colicev et al.'s. (2019) discussion on the nature of FGC tends to be commercial and more professionally created. From the engagement metrics, it was evident that there was more consumer engagement when the content was created by Gymshark brand itself than other creators' content. This is also in line with the study of Antikainen, (2007) who highlights that firm generated content is the main antecedent of community engagement.

#### *Influencer Generated Content (IGC)*

Gymshark's IGC are mostly in the form of videos and the context of the content were observed as brand personality. The content made my influencers guide viewers and followers by recommending practically result-oriented abs workout, diet- plan and effective gym-instruments usage techniques to promote life-changing routines by growing a healthy lifestyle habit. The concept of Gymshark's influencer generated content is to introduce a life-changing habit that inspires more people to adopt such a fitness challenge that actually burns calories to bring their body back into shape or an effective abs workout video that is easy to follow at the end of any home workout. Certainly, the videos were inspiring enough to encourage some of the members to tag their friends to show their workout. Gymshark's consumers tagging their friends on Facebook and sharing their willingness to try the workout moves with their friends

for real that are posted by influencers or praising the influencers to create such inspirational videos are the indications of how organically influencer's content are able to connect with consumers. This is also in accordance with the explanation by Adweek (2015 in Glucksman, 2017) who mentioned about influencers to have organic reach to consumers. In general, Gymshark Influencers' creative content and constructive communication techniques are used for various types of engagement to enhance the pro-active participation level of the members to socialize even further to enjoy the overall experience. There are some content where Gymshark utilizes influencers for creating videos to show their own life events, what they went through on their journey with workout and healthy lifestyle. Consumers' responses and feedback in comment sections disclose how these iconic figures have an enormous impact on their social life. Comments made by consumers show how they find their daily activities and common life stories more relatable with influencers' shared content. All these are confirming what Choi and Rifon (2012) state that people consider these social media influencers as their idol or role model. The different topics for the content that are initiated by the Gymshark's influencers navigate consumers' emotions toward the brand by actively engaging them with the content that has a huge effect on enhancing brand community development and restructuring the market. This is in line with Skute's (2014) explanation on IGC's influence on developing and structuring online brand communities.

It was found that this both-way communication and free-flow of information sharing plays a vital role as the members feel highly involved. It gives them a sense of congenial satisfaction for unfurling positive energy among other members by educating, exposing and improvising with self-generated ideas and content. Before the analysis it was expected that a popular social media influencer with a larger audience possesses the ability to manoeuvre more engagement in social networking platforms as stated by Freberg (2011). However, as compared with the firm generated content, Gymshark's influencer generated content does not make much engagement hence refuting Freberg's (2011) statement. As most of Gymshark's ambassadors are popular in other platforms like Instagram or Twitter than Facebook, it can be assumed that this could be one of the reasons to have less engagement in the Facebook community in terms of likes, shares and comments.

#### *Consumer Generated Content (CGC)*

According to Kurian (2016) who categorized CGC into media rich information such as photo, video etc. and textual communication for instance invitation, praise, tag, self-experience & opinions both are observed in CGC that are shared in Gymshark's official Facebook page. As discussed before Gymshark mostly creates and shares picture content that includes questions and polling and these types of content generate more engagement than any other content. Consumers in turn reply to those posts to share their opinions and thoughts in comment sections. According to Wang and Rodgers (2011) and Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) this is one sort of CGC. Moreover, when the picture content contains funny or trending memes or questions with multiple choices, engaged customers take an extra initiative in the word-of-mouth communication by tagging their friends on Facebook or sharing the post. This is much similar to Patterson (2012) and Rachna and Khajuria (2017) who describe sharing or

forwarding content to other consumers can be regarded as one form of CGC. Gymshark receives a huge number of comments with posts containing polling, challenges and contests thus confirming Roma and Aloini's (2019) statement in this regard who stresses that consumers' comments or answers when brand companies post any announcements or contests are one kind of CGC. Apart from that when the videos comprise motivational and inspirational themes and are shared by Gymshark those CGC received higher consumer engagement. One of the content from the highest engagement posts ( see: Appendix B, post number 7 ) demonstrates that it was created by a consumer who showed in his video how he lost his weight and gained a healthy body shape within two years of workout at Gym. This is indicating that brand personality-based video generated by consumers are able to create higher consumer engagement than other forms of CGC.

Gymshark also encourages consumers to use hashtags along with brand name by arranging contests or challenges which allows consumers to replicate the challenge, participate in the discussion and share their own content using the same hashtags. This findings is consistent with Narang (2021) and Conole and Culver's (2009) discussion where they highlight that when consumers share content that has the brand's hashtags along with them , it is then considered as CGC. By engaging consumers with such kinds of posts Gymshark actually promotes its brand name.

There are also consumer created content that are visible in Gymshark's official Facebook page where consumers post directly to the Facebook community section. This type of content is mostly in picture formats and only a few of them are video formats. In comparison with two types of consumer generated content it was found that when Gymshark initiates the content creation process and consumer then responds consecutively, it builds more consumer engagement. However, in general CGC found to have the lowest consumer engagement among the three types of content.

## **Chapter VI: Conclusion**

This paper analyzed how different types of content generate engagement in online brand communities of a sports apparel firm such as Gymshark. Following a netnography research method in their official brand Facebook page led us to answer our research question.

Firstly, it can be concluded that the generators of content at Gymshark's official Facebook page were mainly the firm itself, followed by the influencer and then consumers displaying different context for the content such as humoristic, motivational, brand information and crowdsourcing of consumer ideas or feedback in accordance with a content sharing strategy (posting time of the content, captions,emojis and prioritization of content). By following our own conceptual framework based on previous literature, the evidence from this study suggests generally that the level of engagement generated within the online brand community was determined by who was the creator of the content (CGC, IGC, FGC) and the way content characteristics were applied (vividness of content, context of the content and the content sharing strategy).

The study showed that the majority of users in the online communities want to be amused, feel connected and encouraged by the posts that appear on their timeline, which is primarily accomplished by content with emotional appeal. This is in accordance to Lee et al (2018) discussion of how content that expresses brand personality through appealing to emotions and humour is capable to create a higher attachment to consumers since the individuals can recognize more authenticity and similarities with their own thoughts. Additionally, our results indicate that when the transmitted messages, particularly through pictures and status conveyed quotes, emojis and characters that promoted values such as perseverance, hard-work, self-belief, achievement or success and will-power, there was a higher level of engagement. Consumers' response towards brand personality-based content was more accessible since they were willing to openly share with others their own personal experiences to express how that message connected to their lives and lifestyles.

Also, it can be concluded that picture-based content achieved a higher engagement rate, contrary to what Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) who considered picture content as leading to lower consumer engagement. It was identified that most of the posts were picture-based content with humour and emotional appeals, as well as other types of picture format content carried out polling or questions (interactive content) that were expressed in an entertaining way, hence received lots of comments, shares and reactions from their online members. This conclusion confirms Stephen et al. (2015) study that emphasized 'calls to actions' and its relevance with consumer engagement.

Furthermore, this study revealed that despite videos being considered as high vivid content that generate high consumer engagement (Cvijikj and Michahelles ,2013), this was not evident in the case of Gymshark since their video-based content showed the least engagement, despite conveying humoristic and inspirational messages. Therefore, it was discovered that picture-based brand personality content has a significantly higher engagement than video-based brand personality content. Overall, personality-based content achieved the most consumer engagement, followed by the interactive content with pictures with polling and lastly, informative content that promoted the use of brand apparel pieces. Furthermore, it can be concluded that Gymshak as a firm mostly creates picture and status-based content, rather than creating informative or promotional content since Gymshark focuses more on brand personality content. The humoristic, motivational or optimistic content is applied more often since it connects consumers strongly with the content instead of delivering brand related messages to promote purchase of their products. Another significant conclusion that emerge from this study is that despite scholars mentioning that the use of hashtags in generate higher engagement; in Gymsharks case, this was not evident since the post that attracted the higher engagement mainly gathered fun and empowering captions that arouse conversations or feedback from their online members.

Finally, to conclude there were higher levels of consumer engagement when the content was created by Gymshark brand itself (FGC) than other creators' content. Regarding the influencer generated content (IGC) revealed at Gymsharks Facebook page, it was mainly through video formats and their way of connecting with their community members was

through introducing life-changing habits that could inspire them or others to adopt such a fitness challenge or workout routines. However, despite their influencers' popularity in other social media platforms and efforts to connect with their audience, they did not reach much engagement compared to the firm generated content. Additionally, the consumer generated content (CGC) achieved quite high engagement when the displayed content is in the form of video revealed a consumer journey to become fit and change their lifestyle appealing to the emotions with an inspirational and hard work caption.

## **6.2 Contribution to the theory**

This study sheds new light in the research area of consumer engagement in online brand communities, an area that has achieved increasing significance in recent years. The analysis focused on online content characteristics and type of content that are generated by three content creators are two key areas of online brand communities that are correlated with consumer engagement. The research contributes additional insights in the theories of factors that influence the level of online customer engagement written by Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013). Their study includes content that is only created by the firm and lacks to investigate the engagement over the content that is created by the consumers in the online brand community. This study explored one step further and incorporated not only consumer generated content but also influencer generated content in the assessment to understand if they show similar results.

Furthermore, this study contributes to the research regarding characteristics of online content. Zhang et al. (2017), Hwong et al. (2017) and de Vries et al. (2012) discuss different types of content characteristics that affect consumer engagement with brands in the online community. Lee et al. (2018), Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013), Schultz (2017), Liu et al. (2017) and Stephen et al. (2015) also argue the same about content characteristics and their associations with consumer engagement specifically in online communities like Facebook. Nevertheless, they did not explore deeper whether consumer engagement that are dependent on different content characteristics actually diverge if they are generated by different content creators. By adding this insight into theories this research also discovered that only firm generated content have one additional characteristic which has been categorized under content sharing strategy theme (see Figure:2).

Besides, this study has introduced caption as an element of content characteristic for online consumer engagement. Hughes (2017), Fedushko and Kolos (2019) and Olafson (2020) emphasize caption and its important role to increase consumer engagement but their studies have not stated if that caption could be an element of content characteristics. The above-mentioned previous authors who explained different sorts of content characteristics also did not specify caption as an element of content characteristics and their relations to online consumer engagement in their research.

### **6.3 Practical Implications**

This research also has repercussions for practitioners and marketers who want to further develop their online brand communities, and provides suggestions to enterprises in order to improve their social media performance through the creation of more appealing and entertaining content as for instance through more pictures or pictures with polling accompanied by captivating humoristic captions in order to appeal like-minded consumers and create further interactions in their OBC, which in consequence would increase their consumer engagement like the case of Gymshark. Our findings can assist social media marketers and individuals in determining the best effective strategy for engaging online communities and consequently help them achieve their marketing goals.

Then, the value of experience co-creation with community members should be recognized by brands and marketing managers in order to get more authentic and inspirational content from them, since these community members must be considered an integral component of the brand. This study also lays the groundwork for future social media engagement studies since this particular paper used Facebook as its focal social network and followed a netnographic methodological approach.

### **6.4 Limitations and future research**

Since this research focuses on a particular case, the scope of generalization in this paper is limited. As a result, the findings of this study may not be applicable to other firms in the sector. In order to draw more certain conclusions a larger sample size will be recommended.

As above mentioned, we are not the administrators of Gymshark official Facebook page, hence we were not authorized to access the many engagement related data that are associated with the post. If we were able to know the data for reach per post, then we could have also evaluated how many consumers actually view the post and out of them how many consumers get engaged with the post.

The analysis was conducted only over the fitness apparel and accessories brand firm's Facebook page thus limiting the research in the industry domain to one particular area. Having said that, this limitation has come up with a new prospective topic for future analysis where it would be interesting to include different brands from the same industry or different industries in the study to compare if they show similar results for consumer engagement in online brand communities like Facebook.

Also, further study might delve into other social media sites like Instagram, Tiktok, YouTube, and others to provide a more complete picture on how different content creators generate engagement within their online communities.

## List of references

- Addeo, F., Delli Paoli, A., Esposito, M. and Bolcato, M., (2020), Doing Social Research on Online Communities: The Benefits of Netnography, Athens Journal of Social Sciences-Volume 7, Issue 1 – Pages 9-38, Retrieved from <https://www.athensjournals.gr/social/2020-7-1-1-Addeo.pdf>
- Antikainen, M. (2007). The Attraction of Company Online Communities - A Multiple Case Study. 10.13140/RG.2.2.36568.90883.
- Ashley, C., and Tuten, T. (2015). Creative strategies in social media marketing: An exploratory study of branded social content and consumer engagement. *Psychology and Marketing*, 32(1), 15-27.
- Balas (2019). Firm Generated Content in Social Media Marketing . Retrieved from [https://www.balas.org/resources/Documents/2019 Conference Files/Firm Generated Content in Social Media Marketing and its impact on Brand Image, Purchase Intention and eWOM for.pdf](https://www.balas.org/resources/Documents/2019%20Conference%20Files/Firm%20Generated%20Content%20in%20Social%20Media%20Marketing%20and%20its%20impact%20on%20Brand%20Image,%20Purchase%20Intention%20and%20eWOM%20for.pdf).
- Baklanov, N. (2021). Gymshark Instagram Influencer Marketing Strategy. Retrieved March 24, 2021, from <https://hypeauditor.com/blog/competitor-research-of-gymshark-instagram-influencer-marketing/>.
- Barger, V., Peltier, James W and Schultz, Don E, 2016. Journal of research in interactive marketing, pp. Journal of research in interactive marketing.
- Bengry Howell, A.; Wiles, R.; Nind, M. and Crow, G. (2011). A Review of the Academic Impact of Three Methodological Innovations: Netnography, ChildLed Research and Creative Research Methods. National Centre for Research. Economic and social research council. 137. Retrieved from <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/1844>.
- Bryman, A. (2008), *Social Research Methods*, 3rd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Bowden, J. (2009), “The process of consumer engagement: A conceptual framework”, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 17 (1), 63-74
- Brodie, Roderick and Juric, Biljana and Ilic, Ana and Hollebeek, Linda. (2011). Consumer Engagement in a Virtual Brand Community: An Exploratory Analysis. *Journal of Business Research*. 66.
- Brodie, R. J., Ilic, A., Juric, B., and Hollebeek, L. (2013). Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(1), 105-114.
- Bruckman, Amy (2006) “Teaching students to study online communities ethically,” *Journal of Information Ethics*, 15 (2): 82–98.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Business Help Center. (n.d.). Retrieved February 20, 2021, from [https://www.facebook.com/business/help/735720159834389?helpref=faq\\_content](https://www.facebook.com/business/help/735720159834389?helpref=faq_content)

Choi S.M., Rifon N.,J. (2012). It Is A Match: The Impact Of Congruence Between Celebrity Image And Consumer Ideal Self On Endorsement Effectiveness. *Psychology and Marketing*, 29(9), 639-650. doi: 10.1002/mar.20550.

Christodoulides, G., Jevons, C., and Bonhomme, J. (2012). Memo to Marketers: Quantitative Evidence for Change. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 52(1), 53-64.

Chua, A.Y.K. (2011), "How web 2.0 supports customer relationship management in Amazon", *International Journal of Electronic Customer Relationship Management*, Vol. 5, No. 3-4, pp. 288-304.

Colicev, A., Kumar, A. and O'Connor, P., 2019. Modeling the relationship between firm and user generated content and the stages of the marketing funnel. *International journal of research in marketing*, 36(1), pp.100–116.

Conole, G., and Culver, J. (2009). *Cloudworks: Social networking for learning design*. Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 25(5).

Cova, B. and White, T. (2010), "Counter-brand and alter-brand communities: the impact of Web 2.0 on tribal marketing approaches", *Journal of Marketing Management*, Vol. 26 Nos 3/4, pp. 256-270.

Clemons EK, Barnett S, Appadurai A (2007) The future of advertising and the value of social network websites: some preliminary examinations. In: *Proceedings of 9th International Conference Electronic Commerce (ICEC '07)*, ACM. New York, pp 267–276.

de Vries, L., Gensler, S., and Leeﬂang, P. S. H. (2012). Popularity of brand posts on brand fan pages: An investigation of the effects of social media marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 26(2), 83–91.

Diener, E., and Crandall, R. (1978). *Ethics in Social and Behavioral Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dolan, R., Conduit, J., Fahy, J., and Goodman, S. (2016). Social media engagement behaviour: a uses and gratifications perspective. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 24(3–4), 261–277. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2015.1095222>.

Engagement Rate - Overview, Formula, and Example. (2020, February 16). Retrieved from <https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/knowledge/ecommerce-saas/engagement-rate/>

Facebook (2021). Facebook statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.oberlo.com/blog/facebook-statistics>

Fedushko, S., Kolos, S. (2019): Effective Strategies for Using Hashtags in Online Communication. figshare. Journal contribution.

Forbes(2020) How Gymshark Became A \$1.3 Billion Brand, And What We Can Learn. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jodiecook/2020/08/17/how-gymshark-became-a-13bn-brand-and-what-we-can-learn/?sh=6fbb16b576ed>

Freberg, Karen et al., 2011. Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public relations review*, 37(1), pp.90–92.

Gavilanes, J. M., Flatten, T. C., & Brettel, M. (2018). Content Strategies for Digital Consumer Engagement in Social Networks: Why Advertising Is an Antecedent of Engagement. *Journal of Advertising*, 47(1), 4–23.

Gilliland, N. (2019). Five marketing lessons from the success of Gymshark. Retrieved from <https://econsultancy.com/five-retail-lessons-sportswear-brand-gymshark/>.

Glucksman, M. (2017). The Rise of Social Media Influencer Marketing on Lifestyle Branding: A Case Study of Lucie Fink, Strategic Communications, Elon University.

Golder, S.A., Wilkinson, D.M., Huberman, B.A., 2007. Rhythms of Social Interaction: Messaging Within a Massive Online Network. In: Steinfield, C., Pentland, B.T., Ackerman, M., Contractor, N. (Eds.), *Communities and Technologies 2007: Proceedings of the Third Communities and Technologies Conference*, Michigan State University 2007. Springer, London, London, pp. 41–66.

Gómez, C. (2019). Ethnography in market research. 10 (23), 146-157.

Govers PC, Schoormans JP (2005) Product personality and its influence on consumer preference. *J. Consumer Marketing* 22(4): 189–197.

Gymshark (2021). About us. Retrieved from <https://row.gymshark.com/pages/about-us>

Gymshark Facebook (2021). Home Page. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/Gymshark/>

Gummerus, J., Liljander, V., Weman, E., and Pihlström, M. (2012). Customer engagement in a Facebook brand community. *Management Research Review*, 35(9), 857–877.

Hanna R, Rohm A, Crittenden VL (2011) We're all connected: the power of the social media ecosystem. *Bus Horizons* 54(3): 265–273

Hennig-Thurau, T. et al., 2004. Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet? *Journal of interactive marketing*, 18(1), pp.38–52. Heinonen, K. (2011), “Consumer Activity in Social Media: Managerial Approaches To Consumers’ Social Media Behavior”, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 10(6): 356-364

Heinonen, Kristina. (2013). *Consumer Engagement In Online Communities*.

Hermaren, V., and Achyar, A. (2018). The effect of firm created content and user generated content evaluation on customer-based brand equity. *INOBI: Jurnal Inovasi Bisnis Dan Manajemen Indonesia*, 2(1), 86–100.

Hollebeek, L. (2011), “Demystifying customer brand engagement; exploring the loyalty nexus”, *Journal of Marketing Management*, 27 (7/8) 785-807

Hodis, M. A., Sriramachandramurthy, R., and Sashittal, H. C. (2015). Interact with me on my terms: a four segment Facebook engagement framework for marketers. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 31(11–12), 1255–1284.

Hughes, A. (2017, July 10). Captions Are Just As Important As The Visuals. Retrieved from <https://omnidigitalmarketing.co.uk/captions-just-important-visuals/>

Hwong, Y.-L., Oliver, C., van Kranendonk, M., Sammut, C., and Seroussi, Y. (2017). What makes you tick?: The psychology of social media engagement in space science communication. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 68, 480–492.

Islam, J., Rahman, Z. (2016). The transpiring journey of customer engagement research in marketing: A systematic review of the past decade. *Manage. Decis.* 54 (8), 2008–2034.

Jaakonmäki, R., Müller, O., & vom Brocke, J. (2017). The Impact of Content, Context, and Creator on User Engagement in Social Media Marketing. *Proceedings of the 50th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (2017), (January). <https://doi.org/10.24251/hicss.2017.136>

Jaffar, A. A., and Eladl, M. A. (2016). Engagement Patterns of High and Low Academic Performers on Facebook Anatomy Pages. *Journal of Medical Education and Curricular Development*.

Jang, H., Olfman, L., Islang, K., Joon, K. and Kim, K. (2008), "The influence of online brand community characteristics on community commitment and brand loyalty", *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, Vol. 12 No. 3, pp. 57-80.

Jayasingh, S., and Venkatesh, R. (2015). Customer engagement factors in Facebook brand pages. *Asian Social Science*, 11(26), 19–29.

Jayasingh, S., 2019. Consumer brand engagement in social networking sites and its effect on brand loyalty. *Cogent business and management*, 6(1), pp.Cogent business and management, 01 January 2019, Vol.6(1).

Jing, Z., Sotheara, H. and Virak, M. (2016). Virtual Community Engagement on Facebook Brand Page. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 2(1), 7-13.

Kang, M., Shin, D. H., and Gong, T. (2016). The role of personalization, engagement, and trust in online communities. *Information Technology and People*, 29(3), 580–596.

Khajuriaa, I., and Rachnab, D. (2017). Impact Of Social Media Brand Communications On Consumer-Based Brand Equity. *Indian Journal of Commerce and Management Studies*, VIII(3), 124-131.

Kietzmann JH, Hermkens K, McCarthy IP, Silvestre BS (2011) Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Bus Horizons* 54(3):241–251

Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H., Setiawan, I., 2010. *Marketing 3.0.: From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit*. John Wiley and Sons, Hoboken, NJ.

Kozinets, R. V. (1999). E-tribalized marketing?: The strategic implications of virtual communities of consumption. *European Management Journal*, 17(3), 252-264.

Kozinets, R. V. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using Netnography for marketing research in online communities. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39, 61-72.

Kozinets, R.V. (2010), *Netnography. Doing Ethnographic Research Online*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Kozinets, R., Dolbec, P. and Earley, A. (2014). Netnographic analysis: understanding culture through social media data. In *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis* (pp. 262-276). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Kozinets, R.V. (2015), *Netnography: Redefined*, 2nd Ed., Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA.

Kumar, A., Bezawada, R., Rishika, R., Janakiraman, R., and Kannan, P. K. (2016). From social to sale: The effects of firm-generated content in social media on customer behavior. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(1), 7–25.

- Kumar, V. (2020). What is Cultural Data? At its most simple, cultural, divide and segment cultural data. Retrieved from <https://medium.com/@vishalkumarlondon/what-is-cultural-data-89c18612b109#:~:text=>
- Kurian, J. (2016). User-generated content on Facebook: Implications from the perspective of two organisations. *First Monday*.
- Lasswell, H. D. (1948). The structure and function of communication in society. *The Communication of Ideas*, 37, 215–228.
- Latte, D. (2020, June 13). 8 ways to write better social media captions. Retrieved from <https://www.digitallatte.in/digital-marketing-blog/8-ways-to-write-better-social-media-captions/>
- Liu, J., Li, C., Ji, Y. G., North, M., and Yang, F. (2017). Like it or not: The fortune 500's Facebook strategies to generate users' electronic word-of-mouth. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 73, 605–613.
- Lee, J., Park, D.-H. and Han, I. (2008) 'The effect of negative online consumer reviews on product attitude: An information processing view', *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 7(3), pp. 341–352.
- Lee, J., and Hong, I. B. (2016). Predicting positive user responses to social media advertising: The roles of emotional appeal, informativeness, and creativity. *International Journal of Information Management*, 36(3), 360–373.
- Lee, D., Hosanagar, K. and Nair, H., 2018. Advertising Content and Consumer Engagement on Social Media: Evidence from Facebook. *Management Science*, 64(11), pp.5105–5131.
- Lehmann J, Lalmas M, Yom-Tov E, Dupret G (2012) Models of user engagement. In: Masthoff J, Mobasher B, Desmarais M, Nkambou R (eds) *User modeling, adaptation, and personalization. lecture notes in computer science*. Springer, Berlin 7379: 164–175
- Leung, X. (2012). The Marketing Effectiveness of Hotel Facebook Pages: From Perspectives of Customers and Messages.
- Manovich, L., 2018. The science of culture? Social computing, digital humanities and cultural analytics.
- Martínez-López, F. J., Anaya-Sánchez, R., Molinillo, S., Aguilar-Illescas, R., and Esteban-Millat, I. (2017). Consumer engagement in an online brand community. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 23, 24–37.
- Menezes, R. (2013). Advantages of strong brands on customer reach and customer engagement on social media marketing (Master's thesis). Erasmu University. Netherland. Retrieved from [http://www.clementvallois.net/download/2013\\_21.pdf](http://www.clementvallois.net/download/2013_21.pdf)
- McWilliam, G. (2000). Building stronger brands through online communities. *Sloan Management Review*, 41(3), 43-54.
- Mohsin, M. (2021). 10 Facebook statistics every marketer should know in 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.oberlo.com/blog/facebook-statistics>
- Narang, P. (n.d.). How Brands are Doing Hashtag Marketing? Retrieved March 12, 2021, from <https://www.socialpilot.co/blog/how-brands-are-doing-hashtag-marketing>
- Olafson, K. (2020, October 07). How to Use Hashtags: A Quick and Simple Guide for Every Network. Retrieved from <https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-use-hashtags/>

Patterson, A. (2012). Social-Networkers of the World, Unite and Take Over: A Meta-Introspective Perspective on the Facebook Brand. *Journal of Business Research*, 65, 527-534

Pletikosa Cvijikj, I. and Michahelles, F., 2013. Online engagement factors on Facebook brand pages. *Social Network Analysis and Mining*, 3(4), pp.843–861.

Pöyry, E., Parvinen, P., Malmivaara, T., (2013). Can we get from liking to buying? Behavioral differences in hedonic and utilitarian Facebook usage. *Electron. Commer. Res. Appl.* 12, 224–235.

Pulizzi, J. and Handley, A. (2015). B2C Content Marketing 2016: Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends— North America. Available at: [http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2016\\_B2C\\_Research\\_Final.pdf](http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2016_B2C_Research_Final.pdf).

Reitz, A. et al., 2012. Online consumer engagement: Understanding the antecedents and outcomes, pp.ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Rodgers, S. and Y. Wang. (2011). “Electronic Word of Mouth and Consumer Generated Content: From Concept to Application.”.

Roma, P., and Aloini, D. (2019). How does brand-related user-generated content differ across social media? Evidence reloaded. *Journal of Business Research*, 96, 322-339.

Sashi, C.M.(2012). Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media , *Management Decision* 50(2), 253–272.

Schau, H.J., Muniz, A.M. and Arnould, E.J. (2009), “How brand community practices create value”, *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 73 No. 5, pp. 30-51.

Schreiner, M., Fischer, T., and Riedl, R. (2019). Impact of content characteristics and emotion on behavioral engagement in social media: Literature review and research agenda. *Electronic Commerce Research*, 1-17.

Schultz, C. D. (2017). Proposing to your fans: Which brand post characteristics drive consumer engagement activities on social media brand pages? *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 26, 23–34

Sehl, K. (2019, April 10). 6 Ways to Calculate Engagement Rate on Social Media (Free Calculator). Retrieved from <https://blog.hootsuite.com/calculate-engagement-rate/>

Sicilia, M., and Palazón, M. (2008). Brand communities on the internet: A Case study of Coca- Cola's spanish virtual community. *Corporate Communications*, 13(3), 255-270.

Skute, I. (2014). Brand Equity and Co-Creation Potential in the Social Media Environment: an Analysis of Brand Engagement with Community Influencers.

Social Insider (2021). Gymshark Facebook overview. Retrieved from [https://app.socialinsider.io/dashboard?appview=projandprojectname=Gymsharkandview=profileandprofile\\_id=129669023798560andplatform=fbandsection=overviewandds=1616713200000andde=1619301599999](https://app.socialinsider.io/dashboard?appview=projandprojectname=Gymsharkandview=profileandprofile_id=129669023798560andplatform=fbandsection=overviewandds=1616713200000andde=1619301599999).

Stathopoulos, I. and Harrison, K. (2003), “Study at master's level by practising physiotherapists”, *Physiotherapy*, Vol. 89, No. 3, pp. 158–169.

Stephen, A. T., and Galak, J. (2012). The effects of traditional and social earned media on sales: A study of a microlending marketplace. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49 (October), 624–639.

Stephen, A., Sciandra, M.R., and Inman, J. (2015). Is it What You Say or How You Say It? How Content Characteristics Affect Consumer Engagement with Brands on Facebook. Behavioral and Experimental Finance (Editor's Choice) eJournal.

Sudweeks, F. and Sheizaf Rafaeli (1995), "How Do You Get a Hundred Strangers to Agree? Computer-Mediated Communication and Collaboration," in Computer Networking and Scholarship in the 21st Century University, Teresa M. Harrison and Timothy Stephen, ed. New York: SUNNY Press, 115-36.

Vilma, Ž. (2018). Implementing Ethical Principles in Social Research: Challenges, Possibilities and Limitations. Vocational Training: Research And Realities, 29, 19 - 43.

Wimmer, R. and Dominick, J. (2001). Introduction to research in mass media. Mexico: International Thomson Editores.

Yin (1994) Case study research: design and methods. 2. ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 26

Zappavigna, M. (2016). Social media photography: Construing subjectivity in Instagram images. Visual Communication, 15(3), 271-292.

Zhang, Y., Moe, W.W. & Schweidel, D.A., 2017. Modeling the role of message content and influencers in social media rebroadcasting. International journal of research in marketing, 34(1), pp.100–119.

## Appendix

### *Appendix B: The eight posts with highest engagement shared by Gymshark on their official Facebook page*

N° post	Media type	Post creator	Date	Description of Post	Total Reactions	Total Engagement	Engagement Rate
1	Picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 30, 2020	Caption: React with a Like if this is you: Trending Meme ( The food I eat the body I want)	<b>216074</b> (126324 🍷 likes, 83000 🗨️haha, 5000 ❤️ love, 986 🥺sad, 600 care, 135 🤔 wow and 29 🤔 angry )	<b>275074</b> (216074 reactions+ 4000 comments+55000 shares)	14,82%
2	Picture with polling	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 6, 2021	Caption: Would you rather 100 burpees everyday if that give like reaction or never workout again if that give love reaction.	<b>163891</b> (126091 likes, 42000 love, 1400 haha, 157 care, 110 wow, 58 cry and 36 angry)	<b>175752</b> (169852 reactions+3600 comments + 2300 shares)	9,40%

N° post	Media type	Post creator	Date	Description of Post	Total Reactions	Total Engagement	Engagement Rate
3	Picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 23,2020	Caption: @tag someone's progress you've noticed: There is no better feeling than people noticing your progress.	<b>101475</b> (75000 likes, 25000 love, 816 care, 117 haha and 34 sad)	<b>126975</b> (101475 reactions+ 1500 comments + 24000 shares)	6,84%
4	Picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 25, 2021	Caption:Working on bettering myself over everything else.	<b>68240</b> (48674 likes, 19000 love, 512 care, 40 haha, 8 sad and 6 wow reactions)	<b>70932</b> (68240 reactions+ 192 comments + 2500 shares)	3,78%
5	Picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	March 4,2021	Quote:*Walks out of the gym*ME:Can't wait to go workout again	<b>50000</b> (37000 likes,5200 hearts, 7200 haha and 700 care)	<b>58300</b> ( 50000 reactions+2100 comments+6200 shares)	3,10%
6	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 16,2020	In a complicated relationship with the gym	6600 (3972 likes, 2100 haha, 419 love, 52 care, 51 sad and 8 wow)	7966(6600 reactions+ 366 comments+1000 shares )	0,43%
7	video	Consumers /Followers	February 24, 2021	Caption: Remember we all start somewhere! Mason is such an inspiration	7483(7379 likes, 92 love, 10 wow and 2 care reactions)	7609 (7483 reactios+47 comments+79 shares)	0,41%
8	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	March 18,2021	Everyones dream is to get married. No, it is to have a home gym.	4743( 3700 likes,828 hearts, 196 laugh, 19 care, 1 wow reactions)	6743 ( 4743 reactions+1000 comments+1000 shares)	0,36%

*Appendix C: The eight posts with lowest engagement shared by Gymshark on their official Facebook page*

N° post	Media Type	Post creator	Date	Description of Post	Total Reactions	Total Engagement	Engagement Rate
---------	------------	--------------	------	---------------------	-----------------	------------------	-----------------

N° post	Media Type	Post creator	Date	Description of Post	Total Reactions	Total Engagement	Engagement Rate
1	video	Consumers /Followers	February 11, 2021	We are huge fans of this! Go girl	422 (315 likes, 87 love, 15 wow and 5 care)	484 (422 reactions+26 comments+36 shares)	0,0002569%
2	Video	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 28, 2020	They say it takes 66 days to form a habit. We believe it takes 66 days to change your life. Sign up for #Gymshark66 here: <a href="https://gym.sh/FB66">https://gym.sh/FB66</a>	252 (175 likes, 74 loves, 2 cares and 1 wows)	342 (252 reactions+34 comments+56 shares)	0,00018420200%
3	Video	Influencer	February 19, 2021	"People let fear hold them back from being great" - Roland Pollard. Watch this story of a father-daughter relationship and their journey with Gymnastics and Cheer.	226 (155 likes, 67 loveS and 4 cares)	255 (226 reactions+ 7 comments+ 22 shares)	0,00013591100%
4	Video	Influencer	February 23, 2021	Rock bottom is where most people find their purpose, just ask Austin. Because when we're at our worst, all we can do is become better.	213 (161 likes ,51 loves and 1 care)	250 (213 reactions+10 comments+27 shares)	0,00013325100%
5	Video	Influencer	March 18, 2021	Caption-We are live with Sophie Butler and Milly Pickles, talking about disability and fitness	111 (72 likes, 36 loves, 3 cares)	138 (111 reactions+19 comments+8 shares)	0,00007314500%
6	Video	Influencer	February 15, 2021	Caption- "100 years and I'll be dead, but my name will stay here." Jalen Walker knows that his legacy will live on outside the	86 (71 likes and 15 loves)	104 (86 reactions+8 comments+10 shares)	0,00005543200%

N° post	Media Type	Post creator	Date	Description of Post	Total Reactions	Total Engagement	Engagement Rate
				ring, the same as his father's and his father's before him			
7	Video	Consumer/followers	February 17,2021	Gymshark #Gymshark66 Shoulder day	37 ( 31 likes, 4 hearts, 1 care, 1 wow)	86 (37 reactions+7 comments+42 shares)	0,0000461%
8	Picture	Consumers /Followers	March 23, 2021	My fave workout leggings thank you Gymshark #seamless	47 ( 35 likes, 8 hearts+4 care)	57 (47 reactions+10 comments)	0,00002992%

**Appendix A: Data collection of 64 post from Gymshark Facebook page throughout 4 months**

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
1	Picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 30,2020	Picture Trending Meme ( The food I eat the body I want)	275074
2	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 6, 2021	Picture Detail of the post ( Would you rather 100 burpees everyday if that give like reaction or never workout again if that give love reaction)	175752
3	Picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 23,2020	Picture There is no better feeling than people noticing your progress	126975
4	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 25, 2021	Picture Working on bettering myself over everythingelse	70932
5	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	04-Mar	*Walks out of the gym*ME:Cant wait to go workout again	58300

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
6	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 16,2020	Status In a complicated relationship with the gym	7966
7	video	Influencer	February 24, 2021	Video Remember we all start somewhere! Mason is such an inspiration	7609
8	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	18-Mar	Everyones dream is to get married. No, it is to have a home gym.	6743
9	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	31-Mar	Life is short until youre doing a plank	5447
10	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	30-Jan	Would you rather: Workout at home on your own( like) or Workout in a really busy gym(heart)	5354
11	video	Influencer	February 4, 2021	Video When your neighbours are watching and you want to show them you've been lifting heavy 🏋️	4657
12	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	08-Jan	Its leg day. What are you training first?: Squat(Like), Deadlift (heart), Step ups ( I care), Lunges( Laugh), Kick back (surprise)	4191
13	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	20-Jan	Someone who needs to read this today :You dont need to prove anything to anyone other thna yourself	3930
14	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	16-Jan	everyone who likes this will make gains this year	3928
15	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	06-Jan	picture of before and after Influencer John Glaude (@obese_to_beast )	3868

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
16	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	19-Mar	Does pineapple belong on pizza? Yes(like) or NO (laugh emoji)	3447
17	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 18,2020	Picture Would you rather... always forget headphones for the gym (press like) or always forget water for the gym (press haha).	3391
18	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	07-Jan	Status : Exhausted , just thinking about cardio	3132
19	video	Influencer	22-Jan	Anyone else? Or is this just me?: @richard_duchon (Influencer) Reference to cooking spinach	2865
20	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	24-Mar	i wonder if the weights at the gym miss me as much i miss them	2763
21	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	27-Mar	them: tell me your wildest fantasy me: I walk into the gym, no one is there, I have the whole gym to myself ☹️	2724
22	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 11,2020	Picture What's your favourite machine at the gym Give Like -Leg press machine Give Love- Rowing Machine Give Haha- Vending Machine	2704
23	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 3,2020	Picture tag your gym pals me at 13: can't wait to be older, travel the world, do crazy things every day me now: can't wait to go gym after wrok, binge netflix and go to bed.	2567
24	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 21, 2021	Picture Don't do it to prove them wrong, do it to prove you right.	2491
25	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 3, 2021	Picture/status No Gym workout shaming this year, becoming fit looks different for everyone	2425

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
26	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	26-Mar	Picture with conversation	2275
27	status	Firm generated-Gymshark	20-Mar	The fact that I have more clothes to gym in than I do to go out says a lot about me as a person	2214
28	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	28-Jan	quote regarding: theres nothing better than people realizing the progress	2092
29	Picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 17,2020	Picture Through tough time comes tough people	1999
30	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 5,2020	Status incase no one told you today, you're doing great	1998
31	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	23-Jan	Would you rather: wear latex to a yoga class (like) or Wear 5 sweatshirts to run(heart)	1977
32	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 31,2020	Picture give like if (Worki out in a gym where no re-racks their weights )or give haha( work out in a gym where everyone corrects you form.	1873
33	Video	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 27, 2021	Video If at first you don't succeed try, try and try again	1825
34	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 4,2020	Picture Everyone has a first day! Share with us where you are on your journey ☐ (Caption_ When did you first start working out? Give- Like- Today is my first day Love - The last few months Haha- 1-5 years ago Care- 6-10 years ago Wow- 10+ years ago.	1808

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
35	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 17, 2021	Picture sort of trending memes ( me: *goes to make a shake* the scoop in my protein powder. )	1710
36	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	11-Mar	Who can relate?. You cant felt true pain until you have accidentally. Whats missing? Stood on lego(like) Kicked a weight (laugh)	1477
37	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 26, 2021	Picture/Poll What are you training today? Give Like- Legs Love- Upper Body Haha- Cardio Wow- ABS	1422
38	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 2,2020	Status you're not hungry, you're bored	1411
39	Status	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 24,2020	Status Gym Dropping the art of finding an opportunity in any conversation to reference your recent gym session	1322
40	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	25-Mar	<u>Tag @someone that needs to hear this today: You can do this</u>	1233
41	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 18, 2021	Picture Single , Taken ..What is missing ( Focusing on the Gym then give like/ Dating my Duvet then give Haha.	1225
42	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	21-Mar	Poll:Whats missing? Like (extra weights) Extra fries(laugh)	1176
43	video	Firm generated-Gymshark	06-Mar	I'm relating to this so much rn. Running alone vs urnning pat other people (Influencer)	1133
44	video	Influencer	15-Jan	Add this simple yet effective ab circuit to the end of your home workout for a real burner with @hannaobeberg (Influencer)	1130

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
45	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	01-Jan	Areyou taking part in Gymshark66? Yes like, No heart	1075
46	video	Firm generated-Gymshark	10-Mar	Tag someone who always struggles. Video of waking up after a leg day -MEME	987
47	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 20, 2021	Picture Tag a friend and if they don't reply in 5 minutes they owe you a Gymshark order	919
48	status	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 19,2020	Status if 2020 was a day at the gym which one would it be ↓□	893
49	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	17-Mar	Some #motivation for your Wednesday. A joggin machine picture with the quote next to it saying "Dont let anyone walk over you"	701
50	status	Firm generated-Gymshark	February 12, 2021	Status/Picture Success doesn't come without failure, so don't let failure come without success. #Gymshark66	666
51	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	21-Jan	What are you binging on Netflix? React below. Post about Its your rest day, you can only choose one: The office (US) (like)or Bridgerton(heart)	637
52	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	14-Jan	Opportunity doesn't wait #Gymshark66	633
53	picture poll	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 10,2020	Picture Why does the gym- ( In the form of google search) Make men grunt? (give like) Have abandoned weights all over the floor? ( give love) Love me more than my bf.gf ( give care) Have treadmils (give haha) Do me like that ( give wow)	620

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
54	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 12,2020	Picture Imagine you have just meal prepped and there's free pizza delivered to your door.... Wat do you do?	565
55	picture	Firm generated-Gymshark	18-Jan	Introducing the Gymshark66 Amazon Alexa Skill! Picture of alexa and message to send to her to start Gymshark66. Would you like : Challenges(like)Motivation(h eart) or Fun(laugh)	510
56	video	Influencer	13-Jan	This video contains footage and conversation about anorexia that some people may find distressing. @rena_serena (influencer)	498
57	video	Consumers /Followers	February 11, 2021	Video We are huge fans of this! Go girl	484
58	video	Consumers /Followers	February 17,2021	Gymshark #Gymshark66 Shoulder day 📸	86
59	picture	Consumers /Followers	March 23, 2021	My fave workout leggings thank you Gymshark #seamless👏👏	57
60	video	Firm generated-Gymshark	December 28,2020	Video They say it takes 66 days to form a habit. We believe it takes 66 days to change your life. Sign up for #Gymshark66 here: <a href="https://gym.sh/FB66">https://gym.sh/FB66</a>	342
61	video	Influencer	February 19, 2021	Video "People let fear hold them back from being great" - Roland Pollard. Watch this story of a father daughter relationship and their journey with Gymnastics and Cheer. Watch this story of a father-daughter relationship and their journey with Gymnastics and Cheer.	255

No	Type of post	Creator of the post	Date	Description	Total Engagement
62	video	Influencer	February 23, 2021	Video Rock bottom is where most people find their purpose, just ask Austin. Because when we're at our worst, all we can do is become better.	250
63	video	Firm generated-Gymshark	18-Mar	We are live with Sophie Butler and Milly Pickles, talking about disability and fitness	138
64	video	Influencer	February 15, 2021	Video caption- "100 years and I'll be dead, but my name will stay here." Jalen Walker knows that his legacy will live on outside the ring, the same as his father's and his father's before him.	104