

The Impact of Social Media on Brand Image: A Study of Higher Education Industry in Sri Lanka

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The basic purpose behind this research is to find out the impact of successful Social web. Companies are constantly monitor its changes of the brand image. However it's also necessary for them to take into account the rapid spread of social media and the rising number of social media users. Each company's aim is to create positive brand image or if not positive, then at least an image that will lead to profitable results, leading positions on the market and opportunities for future growth. Therefore the analysis of social media and what is the effectiveness of social media platforms on organizations image toward brands will provide efficient and helpful insights for companies.

Based on a sample of 200 respondents drawn from students of higher education institutes in Colombo, the study measured the relationship between social media and brand image following the quantitative methodology of conducting research. Researcher utilized the questionnaire method as the mean of primary data collection. Gathered data was analyzed using SPSS software and correlation and regression were used as the main inferential statistics to verify the relationship.

Findings from this study provide some insights for the higher education industry. Firstly, with the use of social media, companies can create and enhance its brand image and subsequently lead to attract customers. Especially in private sector universities need to attract more customers to make the profit. But when it comes to the state universities it is important to create and maintain the relationship between students and university. However, marketers must keep in mind that the Social media is a great tool that influences brand image as social media is two way communication method. While the viral marketing information is seem to be trusted by users, marketers should prioritize and implement them in their advertising strategy.

Key Words: *Social Media, Higher Education Industry, Brand Image, User Generated Content, Social Media Communication*