



Instagram as a Disclosure, Interaction and Advertising Tool? A Multi Country Study from the Perspective of Digital Marketing

Claire EilaneSilva Mendes¹, Hellen Maura Pereira de Sousa Nunes², Maíra Araújo Teles³,
Sabrina Avelino deAlbuquerque⁴, Flávia Lorenne Sampaio Barbosa⁵,
Fabiana Pinto de Almeida Bizarria^{6*}

^{1,2,3,4,5}Universidade Federal do Piauí – UFPI. Teresina/Piauí.

⁶Faculdade Luciano Feijão e Professora Colaboradora PPGP/ UFPI. Fortaleza/Ceará.

***Corresponding Author:** *Fabiana Pinto de Almeida Bizarria*, Avenida Cajazeiras, 501, (José de Alencar) Casa 14, Bairro: Lagoa Redonda, CEP 60831-310, Fortaleza, CE, Brasil

Abstract: *The research aims to understand how companies, considered small businesses, use information technology through social networks, especially Instagram, in the perspective of digital marketing of their businesses. The qualitative approach, has as outline the multicase study with four small companies, being three of women's fashion and one of makeup and accessories, located in the interior of the state of Piauí, based on the research analysis themes: tool, dissemination, interaction (with technology and with the public) and advertising. As results, the Instagram was presented as a marketing tool in stores, representing useful and viable instrument for the dissemination and sales of products, being, also, a means and a tool to attract new customers for its boosting capacity and associated credibility. On the other hand, because of the cost-benefit of the network, they adhere to the use for the ease of access, without greater professionalization of its use. There is an opportunity for analysis and reflection before the need for planning and monitoring, which may suggest skills and knowledge that the professionalization of this activity makes possible. On the other hand, the interaction with the public needs to raise important social issues, such as, for example, generational changes implying behavioral dynamics in transformation.*

Keywords: *Digital Marketing, Social Network, Instagram.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Considering the information processing in an increasingly digital scenario, the future of marketing presents itself associated with the digital transformation in an increasingly globalized economic context, resulting in behavioral changes related to consumption, for example (Cobra, 2006). The relationship with IT, therefore, enhances the reach of people and understanding of this new consumer profile (Kotler & Keller, 2018). Moreover, because of the Internet, services and products can be inserted, as well as new business models (Bhaskaran, 2013, Lee, Trimi & Kim, 2013).

Thus, information technology is recognized as fundamental in the business field (Rezende, 2002), including as support in the purchase decisions of a company, contributing to the performance and business development. With expanded use since the 1960s, IT advances with the use of computers, data processing and technological advancement of society (Xu, Zhang & Li, 2016). According to Labarca (2008), IT tools can be strategic in achieving goals from the perspective of greater security, flexibility, and innovation.

In this scenario of the popularization of the digital age, marketing is driven by new technologies and media, which advance in the configuration of digital marketing, with frequent use of social networks, especially Instagram (Turban & Volonino, 2013), considered practical and easy platforms, besides transmitting information quickly (Kwayu, Lal & Abubakre, 2018). Digital marketing also contributes to the development of entrepreneurship, since access to digital media enables a better understanding of market demands (Kotler & Keller, 2018). Therefore, as Andrade Yejas (2016) state, digital marketing, as a set of strategies and information, supported by the Internet, aims to offer products and services to reach more customers. Thus, the relationship between marketing and, it has been increasingly widely used by companies, in business environment that expands its digital scope

(Sibanda & Ramrathan, 2017).

For Kotler and Keller (2018), digital marketing contributes in four perspectives: (i) due to the low costs, it can be used by small, medium and large companies; (ii) by virtual space, there are no limits for dissemination, compared to other media, for example, printed material; (iii) it is possible to have greater security in relation to the retrieval of information; and (iv) it is possible to understand the purchase process with greater privacy and speed. Thus, as a coherent and effective set of actions, it has the function of dealing with and attracting customers generating visibility of companies, brands and products, with a focus on leveraging sales, customer engagement, product knowledge (Torres, 2010).

On the other hand, online social networks have become, interactive platforms with a wide variety of services. From the first version, Friendster (2002), through Orkut (2004-2014) and, today, Instagram (2010) has had more efficient recognition to a company's marketing. Data from Forrester (Elliott, 2014), for example, shows that the platform has achieved a higher percentage of user engagement compared to other social networking services.

A favorable aspect to the use of social networks, such as Instagram, is the analysis of metrics, which allow mapping preferences, ideas, acts and connections of people, being possible to understand patterns in these multiple networks (Recuero, 2014). With this resource, small businesses, in particular, can develop marketing strategies with lower associated costs, which represents an opportunity for survival in crisis contexts, and also an increase in visibility in the context of increased Internet traffic, as recorded in 2020, with the lockdown occurred due to the pandemic of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) (Heuritech, 2020).

For the use of social media to represent proper digital marketing strategy, planning needs to be considered. Instagram, for example, has become the conducive medium for communication and interaction with users, due to the lower cost, faster and more interactive contact, with greater reach of new customers (Turban & Volonino, 2013), being considered one of the main supports with the purpose of the arrival of information to customers quickly and with quality (Kwayu, Lal & Abubakre, 2018).

Given the context, and therefore, the research aims to understand how companies, considered small businesses, use information technology through social networks, from the perspective of digital marketing of their businesses. To this end, the Instagram platform was considered as one of the possibilities of networks, being part of the universe of issues raised. Advances in research on digital marketing and use of social networks can add understanding about the wide use of the digital medium by companies and customers, considering associated behaviors, as well as referenced challenges. In the digital transformation process, companies incorporate new managerial practices, often without further substantiation for decision-making. Thus, research can favor the process by broadening reflections on current practices for a more assertive management in the context of digital marketing.

2. DIGITAL MARKETING

Derived from English, the word marketing in Portuguese means 'marketing', referring to studies and strategic decisions that aim to launch some product in the consumer market in which the guarantee of development should be the commercial success (Paim et al., 2004). Initially conceived as an exchange relationship, with the purpose of satisfying needs and desires (Las Casas, 2008; Paranhos et al., 2011), marketing provides information about objects or services that not even the consumer himself knows he wants and needs (Kotler & Keller, 2018). With this information, the search for products and services is expanded, increasing demand (Cobra, 2009).

For the American Marketing Association (AMA), marketing itself represents a union of processes that involve from creation, budgeting, communication to the delivery of value to customers. Thus, the thinking of companies over the years has shifted from product focus to main focus: the customer (Kotler & Keller, 2018).

To this end, marketing plays a relevant role for society, while regulating the economic relations of exchange, of market, in the search for balance between supply and demand (Las Casas, 2008). In addition, it contributes to behaviors and attitudes towards life models based on access to products and services that can improve quality of life (Las Casas, 2008). With this relationship with society, the

marketing models walk with contextual changes, which is observed with the digital transformation process and greater use of media to marketing (Silva, Muller, & Medeiros, 2013).

Digital marketing, in this case, represents a management process developed through virtual platforms or digital distribution channels, with access to the internet (Smith, 2012). According to Adolpho (2011), this type of marketing made a significant change in the way that the communication with the consumer, because there is no physical contact, but connection on websites, e-mail, social networks, among others. Automation, in this model, allows the realization of some marketing tasks, performed by software that allows connecting potential customers and make them loyal, using personalized content (Gabriel, 2010).

In the digital context, companies face challenges, such as difficulty in the speed with which information, questions, benefits and logistics need to be accessible to the consumer (Tsai et al., 2015). It is understood that the use of social media can minimize these challenges, for the dissemination of products and services in a fast and directed way to the target audience (Leite & Azevedo, 2017), which leads to the perception that the traditional means of marketing, in time, will be replaced by the digital (Malar, 2016). In this sense, planning for digital marketing involves analyzing and understanding how customers buy, uses and discard services, products or ideas for the satisfaction of their needs and aspirations (Solomon, 2016). With social media, digital marketing has shifted towards understanding the consumer and their preferences, considering numerous options in the market (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2019).

2.1. The Instagram Social Network

Launched, internationally, in 2010, the social network Instagram, created by programming engineers Kevin Systrom and the Brazilian Mike Krieger (Piza, 2012), started its activities only in smartphone model Iphones, reaching in two days, 40,000 users, which overloaded the application servers (McCune, 2011). In 2012, Instagram also became available for Android, expanding its reach, with one million downloads on the first day and 100 million users on the first anniversary of the Android expansion, with almost half of the user base coming from this operating system (Li, 2013).

By 2015, the network had over 400 million active users worldwide. About eighty million photos are shared daily (Kim et al., 2017); with the majority of active users in the United States (25%), Europe (16%), and the Asia-Pacific region (16%) (Lee et al., 2015). According to the Opinion Box website (<https://blog.opinionbox.com/pesquisa-instagram/>), in 2021, Instagram has more than 1 billion active users growing, being, Brazil, the second in number of users, behind the United States of America.

While Instagram focuses on images, videos and textual content that allows a connection with the followers, emotions are represented by funny images and positive messages (Lavoie, 2015), with feelings of connection and happiness (Erdogmus & Cicek, 2012), since reality personified in images satisfies and influences followers on social networks (Xun & Reynolds, 2010). Posts, containing images of celebrities associated with sports, for example, generate considerable attention from fans and associates regarding brand perception (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016).

Networking has been used by major brands such as Victoria's Secret, Adidas, and Starbucks to engage their customers (Lee et al., 2015). The process of identification with the values represented in the various content is believed to be culturally reinforcing, and regardless, of the type of culture (collectivist or individualist), people tend to use the platform and be stimulated by it (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016).

From the perspective of improving the quality of images, Instagram gained popularity not only thanks to the nostalgic and 'vintage' feeling that filters added to photo (Chandler & Livingston, 2016). Regarding the ease of sharing, integrated into a mobile device with internet access and friendly 'interface', the network makes itself present to capture and share any occasion, always at the center of the action (Verdina, 2013).

The success of the network is not only due to the number of users; the platform, also, has the most active users, with important investment of time in navigation and content posts (Iconosquare, 2020). Bossonworth (2015), for example, reports that 'Instagrammers' typically use the app for an average of 21 minutes per day, with a younger audience, with 73% between the ages of 15 and 35. Elliott (2014) adds that, 70% of its users have consulted a brand on Instagram and 37% of these use the app to

follow between 1 and 5 brands, with the fashion, beauty and decoration sectors, with 87%, 65% and 65%, being the sectors with the highest user interest, demonstrating greater engagement compared to other social networking services.

According to Instagram itself (2010), the social network offers a mix of services for its users, allowing the sharing of photos, videos, reels, application of digital filters, hashtag, gif, locations, question box, as well as Ads, for dissemination of ads, the most used strategy for digital marketing. Considering data from 2021, Opinionbox research informs that 42% of users report having activated Instagram to ask questions or complain to companies, 82% report following some brand or company and 16% use the network to promote brands, services or products.

The ease of use of Instagram, according to Aragão et al., (2016), is given by the quick possibility of creating a personal or organizational profile, with the accession of various functions that help increase the promotion of posts, such as; the location and the hashtags that, when used, extend the reach of users. With this, the network has become a strong ally for companies as a strategy (Marques, 2011), since it is an interaction channel, and can reach social and organizational activities, “creating an interactive and engaged digital relationship marketing” (Soares & Monteiro, 2015. p.10). Companies, therefore, are adhering to social networks as an ally for sales and, mainly, presence and firming the authority of their brand (Mortimer, 2012).

In this sense, Instagram represents what Las Casas (2014) understands as the web social media for sharing point of view, thoughts, experiences and conceptions through technologies and policies. Thus, considering the expansion of media use and companies' interest for virtual interactions with customers, Aragão et al., (2016) point out that the social network Instagram can be a favorable way to create bonds with customers and, subsequently, generate a lasting relationship between company and consumer.

According to Grandinetti (2012), social networks are somehow seen as a gateway for small businesses and, especially, individual small entrepreneurs, considering the low cost associated, which allows greater autonomy, favoring disclosure in periods of crisis. In this sense, social networks, especially Instagram, assume two characteristics of interest to digital marketing: visibility and relationship. These involve the ability to influence people and increase the visibility of the product or service offered (Solomon, 2016), which has spread as a new professional activity, in this case, the digital influencers, in which bloggers, share content on their own blogs or websites to maintain a more intimate contact with their followers and provide information (Iconosquare, 2020).

As a digital marketing tool, the social network Instagram can provide a greater proximity to the consumer who is interested in certain topics and brands. Therefore, this social network allows digital marketing to increase engagement, increase followers, sending personalized messages and, especially, the strengthening or changing the customer's perception of the brand and image of companies (Pereira, 2014).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research in qualitative approach, based on the search to describe and understand relationships under investigation (Oliveira, 2002), has as outline the multicase study (Yin, 2005) with four small companies, being three of women's fashion and one of makeup and accessories, located in the interior of the State of Piauí.

The description is based on primary data survey, through semi-structured interviews (Gil, 2002, 2008), with obtaining information in ‘face to face’ conversations. (Marconi & Lakatos, 2002). The script has a sequence of questions in total of 5 (five) questions, being the research context, the companies, where the interviews were conducted, with recording duration of 25 to 40 minutes, to be later transcribed in full (Table 1).

Table1. *Descriptive profile of the interviewees*

Description	Interviewee A	Interviewee B	Interviewee C	Interviewee D
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female
Age	34	35	27	30

Instagram as a Disclosure, Interaction and Advertising Tool? A Multi Country Study from the Perspective of Digital Marketing

Profession	Teacher	Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur
Education	Higher education	Higher education	High School	Higher education

Source: Prepared by the authors

The companies are called by the research by their initials, (TM, AJ, CM and SL), and the respondents are presented as A, B, C and D (Chart 1). The five (5) referenced questions about information technology, digital marketing, and Instagram related to the business are present in Table 2.

Table2. Interview script table

Topics	Related Question
Tool	Information Technology is increasingly being applied in the business environment. Do you as an entrepreneur believe that Information Technology is a tool and that through this medium you are able to achieve success in sales and attract new customers?
Disclosure	How do you advertise your products on the social network Instagram and how do your customers interact with you via this social network?
Interaction with Technology	Do you as an entrepreneur believe that Marketing together with Information Technology promotes a link between company <i>versus</i> customer? Tell us a bit about this relationship between Marketing and Information Technology for the importance in building this link between company x customer.
Advertisement	As an entrepreneur do you consider that Digital Marketing helps to lower advertising costs by advertising in real time? Does Digital Marketing also transmit information at a faster speed, and does the customer make a purchase quickly and privately?
Interaction with the public	How do you advertise your products on the social network Instagram and how do you interact with your customers through this social network? With the help of social networks, through social media, did the interaction between the company and the customer get easier?

Source: Prepared by the authors

The data analysis considers the definition of Bardin (2016) on the categorization process, considering thematic analysis, considering central ideas to the narratives, and addressing themes related to the investigated phenomenon. With the definition of themes, we proceeded, in the sequence, to the discussion of the results.

4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

a) Characterization of Small Enterprises

The company CM, of women's fashion, founded in July 2017, has an in-store attendant to serve the public. Here, the social network Instagram is widely used, considering its features, such as, for example, application of filters, boomerangs, story, and photo editing searching for professional images. The company resorts to the use of the network, especially on commemorative dates, to boost sales, such as, for example, raffles on the day of merchandise, prices with discounted offers.

The company TM, also a women's fashion company, founded in July 2015, is organized with female employees and has photographic models for publications on the social network Instagram. This is also widely used, from publications in feeds, stories, photo and video sharing. Unlike CM, TM adopts models with the approach in complete looks, considering the entrepreneur's knowledge about visual merchandising, explored in the presentation of shop windows and mannequin looks, as well as partnership formation with companies of accessories, footwear, makeup, and beauty salon. TM's emphasis is to explore the presentation of photo essays of the models for Instagram posts to ensure better customer engagement.

The company AJ, of women's fashion, founded in June 2019, is organized only with the figure of the owner, who assumes all the functions of the business. The dissemination process also considers posts corporate Instagram news feed, with less emphasis on stories. Most of AJ's sales volume is represented by viewing the pieces on the network, with description of information such as size, availability and value, and subsequent interaction by whatsapp, and it is not usual for the company to use the Instagram support, called direct to initiate a dialogue between company and consumer.

The SL company, of makeup and accessories, established in 2019, is organized with two partners,

one being responsible for logistics and finances, and the second, for marketing and projects. The company also has a female employee, who acts as an attendant in physical and online purchases. SL was also created after analysis by its founders, with the professional help of a business coach, in relation to the market niche, since they did not identify a company in the region that met the specific demand for makeup and accessories, which resulted in the decision of the associated high investment. In the four companies under study, TM, AJ, CM and SL, there is the process of entrepreneurship by necessity, when small businesses arise to meet the survival demands of the founders, which involves full dedication to business. Also, in all four, digital marketing is widely used as a strategy for interacting with customers and for prospecting, as well as being considered part of the sales process. In this social media scenario, Instagram is the main network used, which is better discussed based on the research analysis themes: tool, dissemination, interaction (with technology and with the public) and advertising.

b) Thematic Analysis of the Interviews

The analysis of the themes based on some segments of the interviews, Table 3, allows us to understand the use of social networks, specifically, Instagram, from the perspective of digital marketing.

Table3. *Research Analysis Themes*

Topics	Narrative segments
Tool	<p>Yes, undoubtedly, social media (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) have revolutionized the way we sell and the way we relate to our customers. Certainly the visibility that digital media brings us helps us a lot to attract new customers and consequently increase sales. (E_A)</p> <p>Yes, I have no doubt that technology today is more than any other medium to achieve success in selling and attracting new customers. (E_B)</p> <p>Yes, it is an effective tool, a disclosure made on social networks it quickly reaches many customers everywhere, a wonderful ability to attract new customers. (E_C)</p> <p>Our company does have a commercial profile on Instagram, because it provides some fundamental information for those who want to see the growth of their online store, for example, the issue of impressions, where last month we had a number of 355,976, with 5,908 accounts reached, 2,032 visits to the profile, 2,493 interactions with our content, between likes, comments and shares, that even though it is an expressive amount, in this month of January there was a drop due to the holidays. (E_D)</p> <p>Through the interaction on Instagram stories, we have the possibility of using tools such as question boxes and polls, where we can find out what the customers want, if they need a certain product, and even if they are satisfied with the service. (E_D)</p>
Disclosure	<p>There are many tools for dissemination that we have through Instagram, we have examples of videos, photos with various types of effects, and we use all the possibilities with story, feed, among others. In specific cases, we boost some publications to achieve better visibility. (E_A)</p> <p>The dissemination of products is done through posts and stories on the social network Instagram where we look for real models of different shapes, styles from skinny to fat, from short to taller, so customers see the products on the models and identify themselves. This strategy generates great interaction, because they see real people. (E_B)</p> <p>Our disclosure is done in a simple way, we disclose our products, we talk about their usefulness, we disclose all our products always in a way that draws the attention of the customer, changing scenarios. The engagement is strong, because there starts our first sale, all our customers, if not all, but most of them come to the store because they saw our products advertised on social networks, so we analyze how the digital marketing does have an effect. (E_C)</p> <p>Besides the use of Instagram, other actions that we have been the dissemination with advertisements on the streets through sound cars, where we usually plan on specific and commemorative dates such as: Mother's Day, Carnival, Valentine's Day, Christmas. We also have projects and partnerships with makeup artists, to offer courses in self makeup, bringing more visibility and credibility to the store, because in the days of courses, the Instagram profile has more access, more views, and ends up generating more sales. (E_D)</p>

<p>Interaction with technology</p>	<p>Interaction with technology Digital media brings us closer to our customers and this approach gives us the freedom to be present in their daily lives (with a cell phone in hand, observes posts in the park, at home, at work etc.) opening doors so that we could be present at times that only with a physical store would be impossible. (E_A)</p> <p>Certainly yes, because before for the clients to get to know my products and work they would need to go to my physical store, but thanks to marketing and technology the clients get to know my products through the social network. Currently, there are several virtual stores without physical spaces and through social networks, these stores sell their products, today I can say that most of my sales are online. (E_B)</p> <p>It promotes a strong connection between customer and company. Marketing well done allied to technology provides comfort for the customer and the company, the customer has access there 24 hours with the company without having to leave his house, the company provides all the information to finalize a purchase without the customer needing to leave his house. (E_C)</p> <p>It is worth pointing out that for a commercial account, it is easier to follow and develop your company online, so who wants to have an online store it is important to have a commercial profile, this was the primary factor for us to create one, where we leave it open and follow the evolution through the data. (E_D)</p> <p>Instagram metrics, are basically some topics that the social network allows you to achieve through numbers, so I classify these metrics with the following degree of importance: 1- profile views; 2- engagement: Comments and likes; 3- number of followers; 4- reach of impressions; 5- clicks on the profile; 6- number of impressions. (E_D)</p>
<p>Advertisement</p>	<p>It certainly brings us more savings, but mainly efficiency and assertiveness because we can target content to specific customers, something that radio, sound cars, for example, do not do. (E_A)</p> <p>Before marketing was done via radio, billboards and pamphlets, today it is through digital media and this generates costs with models and social networks, the big difference is that digital marketing can reach a larger number of people from different parts and I say this from experience, because through social networks I have customers from other states and this is only possible through them. (E_B)</p> <p>It decreases advertising costs and has many more results; yes, digital marketing has much faster results. You are there every day, available to your customer through advertisements until the purchase is finalized. (E_C)</p> <p>The advantages are that it is an efficient platform, it gives results by promoting the products of the store, and besides being free and unlimited, there are tools on the platform that are always updated. And the disadvantages are the great reach of the platform, in which commercial accounts are usually opened, there is the ease of copying images and methods that the store develops for the dissemination of its products and services, consequently, there is a wear and tear and the need to always innovate, seek different ways for the store to stand out from others that exist in the same segment. (E_D)</p>
<p>Interaction with the public</p>	<p>Yes, with social networks we get closer and become more than customers, but friends, because of the freedom that digital media gives us (E_A)</p> <p>Yes, before, for customers to see the products they had to go to the store or make a call, already today we post the merchandise on the social network and if customers are interested in the product they give feedback to be able to know more, and also when they are looking for a specific product. (E_B)</p> <p>For sure, through the disclosures we have more clarity of what our customer needs, we follow the day to day, and we can see what they really like and need, and we are there at our customer's disposal, ready to help them. (E_C)</p> <p>Today, Instagram already provides even purchase option by the application itself and has become an essential tool for those who intend to undertake through the internet (E_D)</p> <p>In addition, we work with sending products to people, usually young people who have a cool profile and have over 2,000 followers, who can promote these products to the store, and thus, more people buy, as well as participating in events to publicize our products. This action is done monthly, and we establish a quantity of products that can be taken out per month and how many people we can send them to. (E_D)</p>

Source: *Research data*

In this sense, the tool theme emphasizes aspects of the network that facilitate customer attraction and sales, and all companies consider these aspects. Also, it is observed the use of metrics that help to

understand the impact of the disclosures made, while it is possible to identify the reach of posts and the level of interaction of people with the content presented.

As a tool, Instagram adds important levels of interactivity and relationship between customer and company, while the low cost associated makes its use attractive. The resources, however, seem to be explored without prior planning, considering decisions defined with the analysis of the metrics that the network offers. This aspect may be associated with the ease of access and use, which, in turn, enhances the use even without greater knowledge about marketing, which can be unfavorable to the business. Moreover, in the context of small businesses, in this case, the person who performs the digital marketing activity, in general, also has other attributions, which ultimately may compromise the quality of the content produced.

While it is essential to have access to this technology (O'Brien, 2003), companies are recognizing, increasingly, the relevance of professionalizing the use of digital marketing, to better know and take advantage of the tools of this 'new digital era'.

In relation to the theme disclosure, the interviews also consider the use of Instagram as a simple way of boosting, a recurring concept in the narratives, which reinforce the movement of the visibility of the content in disclosure, with emphasis on visual material, considered to be more attractive to the public. Compared to traditional means of disclosure, the advantage of the network involves the ability of this boosting, while this represents, for businesswomen, achievement of credibility with expansion of sales. With this, Instagram is associated with the idea of reputation, with presence and establishment of the authority of its brand (Mortimer, 2012).

The disclosure, still, is associated with the dimension of advertising, considered by the interviewees as one of the main advantages of using Instagram through digital marketing. The low cost and speed is essential to the entrepreneurs, who, when managing small businesses, assume the advertising through the networks and take this activity amid the other demands of the business. With this, we have the defense of advertising through Instagram, being digital marketing, as Albertin (2000) confers, an important path for this purpose.

In relation to interaction with technology, the interviewees reflect the perception of social advances added by the potential relationships with the use of technology, while for entrepreneurs, this achievement allows them to expand their operations, being able to be present in everyday life, with the presentation of their brand, associated with day-to-day behaviors. In this sense, the interaction company, customer and technology, for the interviewees, opens relationship possibilities that enhance the buying attitude, associated, for example, with the experience of comfort in the choice, purchase and delivery of products and services. The use of technology, also, by the narratives, adds data to management for its performance, considering the monitoring of interactions with the company's profile, which can facilitate analysis and decision-making.

In this path, one can resume authors who argue to be essentially the use of technologies in the mediation of relations with the public, since they consider favorable to digital marketing the expansion of opportunities for interaction, in the supply of products, services, with emphasis on brand adhesion that can be conveyed in association with everyday life, lifestyle, behaviors (Kotler & Keller, 2018). In this case, digital marketing confers the movement of lifestyles in society, which suggests considerations about its performance in the configuration of these styles and behaviors, associated with the dynamics of life increasingly virtualized and tied to the use of social networks.

The interaction with the public, therefore, as an important purpose of digital marketing, is a result of the greater visibility added by social networks, building a relationship with greater credibility, adherence to the brand, which results in purchase possibilities. There is recognition that this interaction surpasses the commercial dynamics, by involving emotions and affections in the established relationship, enhanced by the intensity of connection and interaction time.

With Instagram resources, for example, data can define the profile of the audience that accesses the page, directing the production of content increasingly adapted to future customers, who find on the page disclosures that represent their styles and consumption preferences. Thus, as defined by Recuero

(2014), the metrics are fundamental to understanding the business through the analysis of its audience, being, then, fundamental to entrepreneurs ability to analyze these data and develop actions adapted to what these metrics reflect.

Thus, the use of Instagram as digital marketing, from the reading of Pipkin (2012), adds value to the business through relationships enhanced by the network, with achievement of greater engagement through customization (Pereira, 2014), which requires planning so that the preparation of content, dissemination and monitoring reflect the demands of the target audience, with achievement of customer satisfaction, as pointed out by Cobra (2009) and Solomon (2016).

Only one, of the 4 female entrepreneurs, discuss challenges associated with the use of Instagram, particularly, related to the open access to content, allowing competitors access and, also, the vulnerability of the profile with the risk of the account being "hacked". With this, strategies need to be revised frequently, which is defined as the need for constant innovation.

Finally, the dynamics in the interaction with the public presents activities related to a new job profile, the influencers, characterized, by one of the interviewees, as young people who have numerous followers. This activity is associated with the search for greater visibility of the company, when these young people act in advertisements and disclosures of the company in the commercial account, and also with the profiles of young people.

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aims to understand how companies, considered small businesses, use information technology through social networks, from the perspective of digital marketing of their businesses. To this end, the Instagram platform was considered one of the possibilities of networks, being part of the universe of issues raised.

Through the qualitative study conducted with 4 (four) small enterprises located in the interior of the State of Piauí, the Instagram was presented as a marketing tool in stores and, representing useful and viable instrument for the dissemination and sales of products, being also a means and a tool to attract new customers, for its boosting capacity and associated credibility.

It is observed that, the Instagram tools are used, such as: story, photo post, news feed, photo and video sharing etc., timely and for the investigated small enterprises. It can also be evidenced that the interviewees identify social media, especially Instagram, as an advertising strategy, being a type of online advertising, which can reach more people, with a lower cost-benefit compared to other traditional means. Besides ensuring a better interaction between small enterprises and their consumers, with a quality service, accessible and faster.

Some aspects that escape the narratives, are made between the lines, represent final considerations of the research. On the one hand, the four companies, young, small, associate image in adherence to many benefits added to the use of the Instagram social network as a tool, dissemination, interaction (with technology and with the public) and advertising. These are companies that, due to the cost-benefit of the network, adhere to the use by the ease of access, without greater professionalization of its use. Thus, the expansion of the use of networks, such as Instagram, by small companies is represented as a successful experience, while associated challenges are not (or cannot) be explained, since the adherence to digital marketing may be the only alternative for interaction and dissemination of the companies.

On the other hand, one of the businesswomen provides an analysis of the challenges, due to the low security of the use of networks, associated with the vulnerability to competition. These aspects appear without further deepening, which demonstrate the problem of the low professionalization of the exercise of digital marketing activities. Besides the points raised, false disclosures, or fake news, deserve additional consideration, since they also represent vulnerability to the use of networks.

Considering the managerial aspect of digital marketing, the speed, associated with the ease, represents, through data analysis, an additional challenge for small businesses. Associated with other activities, the posts may follow a flow in which planning is not emphasized, with careful analysis, for example, of the target audience from data offered by the network. The data need, in this case, analysis

and reflection before the need for planning and monitoring, which may suggest skills and knowledge that the professionalization of this activity makes possible.

On the other hand, the interaction with the public needs to raise important social issues, such as, for example, generational changes implying behavioral dynamics in transformation. Associated with the conception of digital transformation, it also raises debates at the level of the relationship between companies, customers and technology, to meet emerging demands, or to satisfy ethically questionable needs. In this case, the company's social commitment may give contours to these points.

Finally, the analyzed companies bring the discussion of the influencer activity, widely recognized in the media as a new profession. This, in growing demand, finds space with the expansion of digital marketing, which requires specific investigations, from the definition of who is desirable to this activity (young people, with many followers), through labor relations involving image rights, to the weakening of the parties, when the association person-brand/company involves the private life and the business image. Besides the aspects that deserve future analysis, the research is limited to raise tentative points, considering the widely beneficial representations associated with the use of the Instagram network. Even if the advantages are clear, especially for business groups seeking survival in a market of intense competition, the research could advance in themes that deepen the challenges, to better prepare for overcoming them before the vulnerabilities of the system. Research with triangulation of data, using varied sources of evidence, may better illustrate these challenges.

REFERENCES

- Adolpho, C. (2011). *Os 8 Ps do marketing digital: o guia estratégico de marketing digital*. 1. ed., Alfragide: Texto Editores.
- Albertin, A. (2000). *Comércio Eletrônico: modelo, aspectos e contribuições de sua aplicação*. 2 ed. São Paulo: Atlas.
- Andrade Yejas, D. A. (2016). Estrategias de marketing digital en lapromoción de Marca Ciudad. *Revista Escuela de Administración de Negócios*, 80, 59-72, jan.
- Aragão, F. B. P., Farias, F. G., Mota, M. O., & Freitas, A. A. F. (2016). Curtiu, comentou, comprou. A mídia social digital Instagram e o consumo. *Revista Ciências Administrativas*, 22(1), 130-161.
- Bardin, L. (2016). *Análise de conteúdo: edição revista e ampliada*. São Paulo: Edições 70.
- Bhaskaran, S. (2013). Structured case studies Information communication technology adoption by small-to-medium food enterprises. *British Food Journal*, 115 (3).
- Britto, F. & Wever, L. (2003). *Empreendedores brasileiros: vivendo e aprendendo com grandes nomes*. Rio de Janeiro: Campus.
- Brown, Z. & Tiggemann, M. (2016). Attractive celebrity and peer images on Instagram: Effect on women's mood and body image. *Body Image*, 19, 37-43.
- Chandler, L., & Livingston, D. (2016). Reframing the Authentic: Photography, Mobile Technologies and the Visual Language of Digital Imperfection. In *Learning to See*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Cobra, M. (2006). *Administração de Marketing no Brasil*. 2. ed. São Paulo: Cobra.
- Cobra, M. (2009). *Marketing básico: uma perspectiva brasileira*. 4 ed. -São Paulo: Atlas.
- Elliott, N. (2014). *Instagram is the king of social engagement*. FORREST. Estados Unidos. Disponível em <http://blogs.forrester.com/nate_elliott/14-04-29-instagram_is_the_king_of_social_engagement>. Acesso em: 10 jan. 2021.
- Erdogmus, I. E. & Cicek, M. (2012). The impact of social media marketing on brand loyalty. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58, 1353-1360.
- Gabriel, M. (2010). *Marketing na era digital - Conceitos, plataformas e estratégias*. São Paulo: Novatex.
- Gil, A. C. *Como elaborar projetos de pesquisa*. 4. ed. São Paulo: Atlas, 2008.
- Gil, A. C. *Métodos e técnicas de pesquisa social*. 5. ed. São Paulo: Atlas, 1999.
- Godoy, A. S. (1995). A pesquisa qualitativa e sua utilização em administração de empresas. *Revista de Administração de Empresas*. São Paulo, 35 (4), 65-71, jul./ago.
- Grandinetti, R. (2012). Um paletó da última coleção Armani custa 5.305 reais no site oficial da grife Italiana. *Info Exame*, São Paulo: Abril, ed. 321, Outubro de 2012.

- Hawkins, D. I., & Mothersbaugh, D. L. (2019). *Comportamento do consumidor: construindo a estratégia de marketing*. 13. ed., Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier.
- Heuritech. (2020, 30 de março). *Fashion under COVID-19: The measures brands cantake*. [Artigo em blogue]. Disponível em < <https://www.heuritech.com/blog/articles/fashion-under-covid-19-the-measures-brands-can-take/>> Acesso em: 08 jan. 2021.
- Iconosquare. (2020). Noudettu osoitteesta Iconosquare: <https://pro.iconosquare.com/> Investopedia. (29. January 2019). Disponível em <<https://www.investopedia.com/investing/companies-owned-by-google/>> Acesso em: 10 jan. 2021.
- Instagram (2010). Disponível em <Instagram|Official Blog> Acesso em: 28 de jan. 2021.
- Kim, D. H., Seely, N. K. & Jung, J. H. (2017). Do you prefer, Pinterest or Instagram? The role of image-sharing SNSs and self-monitoring in enhancing ad effectiveness. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 70, 535-543.
- Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L. (2018). *Administração de “marketing”*. 12 ed. São Paulo: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Kwa Yu, S., Lal, B. & Abubakre, M. (2018). *Enhancing Organisational Competitiveness Via Social Media - a Strategy as Practice Perspective*. Nottingham: Springer US.
- Labarca, N. (2008). Evolución del pensamiento estratégico en la formación de la estrategia empresarial. *Opcion*, Maracaibo, 24 (55), 47-68, abr.
- Las Casas, A. L. (2008). *Administração de marketing: conceitos, planejamentos e aplicações à realidade brasileira*. 2 reimp – São Paulo: Atlas.
- Las Casas, A. L. (2014). *Crociação de valor: conectando a empresa com os consumidores através das redes sociais e ferramentas colaborativas*. 1. ed. São Paulo: Atlas.
- Lavoie, K A. (2015). Instagram and Branding: A Case Study of Dunkin'Donuts. *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 6 (2).
- Lee, E., Lee, J. A., Moon, J. H. & Sung, Y. (2015). Pictures speak louder than words: motivations for using Instagram. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 18(9), 552-556. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2015.0157> Acesso em: 21 jan. 2021.
- Leite, R. A., & Azevedo, A. (2017). The Role of Digital Marketing: A perspective from Porto Hotels' Managers. *International Journal of Marketing, Communication and New Media*, 2.
- Li, A. (2013) “One Year Later, Half of Instagram's 100M Users Come From Android” Mashable. 4th April. Disponível em <<http://mashable.com/2013/04/04/instagram-users-android/#vxMcNVhfqqb>> Acesso em: 15 dez. 2020.
- Malar, P. J. M. A. J. (2016). Innovative digital marketing trends. *International Conference on Electrical, Electronics, and Optimization Techniques (ICEEOT)*, 4550-4556.
- Marques, M. C. M. I. (2011). *Marketing e Comunicação: A Web como ferramenta para a promoção turística dos hotéis da Costa do Estoril*. Dissertação (Mestrado em Economia) – Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias, Lisboa-Portugal.
- Mc Cune, Z. (2011) *Consumer Production in Social Media Networks: A Case Study of the “Instagram” iPhone App*. Dissertation for M.Phil in Modern Society & Global Transformation: University of Cambridge.
- Mortimer, R. (2012). *Why Did Facebook Buy Instagram?* Marketing Week, 2012. Disponível em <<https://www.marketingweek.com/why-did-facebook-buy-instagram/>> Acesso em 12 de set. 2021.
- O'brien J. A. & Marakas G. M. (2007). *Administração de Sistemas de Informação*. 13ª ed. São Paulo: Ed Mc Graw Hill.
- Oliveira, S. L. (2002). *Tratado de Metodologia Científica*. São Paulo: Pioneira Thomson Learning.
- Paim, A. P., Camargo, A. C. & Silva, A. C. M. et al. (2004). Marketing em Odontologia. *Revista Biociência*, 10 (4), 223-9.
- Paranhos, L. R., Benedicto, E. D., Fernandes, M. M., Viotto, F.R., & Júnior, E.D. (2011). Implicações éticas e legais do marketing na Odontologia. *Revista Sul-Brasileira de Odontologia*, 8 (2), 2019-24.
- Pereira, D. B. S. (2014). *O Uso do Instagram Patrocinado de Marcas como Veículo de Publicidade*. Monografia (Graduação) - Faculdade de Tecnologia e Ciências Sociais Aplicadas FATECS, UNICEUB.
- Pikpin, A. (2012). *Marketing Estratégico: Distribuição, logística e os canais de comercialização*. São Leopoldo: Unisinos.
- Piza, M. V. (2012). *O fenômeno instagram: considerações sob perspectiva tecnológica*. Monografia (Graduação) – Departamento de Sociologia, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, Universidade de Brasília, Brasília/DF.

- Prodanov, C. C. & Freitas, E. C. de. (2013). *Metodologia do trabalho científico*. 2. ed. Novo Hamburgo: Feevale.
- Recuero, R. (2014). Contribuição da Análise de Redes Sociais para o estudo das redes sociais na Internet: o caso da hashtag #TamojuntoDilma e #CalabocaDilma. *Revista Fronteiras – Estudos midiáticos*, 16(2): 60-77 maio/agosto.
- Rezende, D. A. (2002). *Tecnologia da Informação Integrada à Inteligência Empresarial*. São Paulo: Atlas.
- Sibanda, M. & Ramrathan, D. (2017). Influence of Information Technology on Organization Strategy. *Foundations of Management*, 9.
- Silva, E. B., Muller, C. A. da S. & Medeiros, D. O. (2013). Utilização do Marketing Digital em comércio varejista de vestuário. *XI Congresso Nacional Excelência em Gestão*.
- Smith, K. T. (2012). Longitudinal study of digital marketing strategies targeting Millennials. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 29 (2), 86-92.
- Soares, F. R. & Monteiro, P. R. R. (2015). Marketing digital e marketing de relacionamento: interação e engajamento como determinantes do crescimento de páginas do Facebook. *Revista de Gestão e Tecnologia - NAVUS*, 5 (3), 42- 59.
- Solomon, M. R. (2016). *O Comportamento do consumidor: comprando, possuindo e sendo*. Bookman Editora.
- Torres, C. (2009). *A bíblia do marketing digital: tudo o que você queria saber sobre o marketing e publicidade na internet e não tinha a quem perguntar*. São Paulo: Novatec Editora.
- Tsai, T. M., Wang, W. N., Lin, Y. T., & Choub, S. C. (2015). An O2O commerce service framework and its effectiveness analysis with application to proximity commerce. *Procedia Manufacturing*, 3, 3498-3505.
- Turban, E. & Volonino, L. (2013). *Tecnologia da informação para gestão: em busca do melhor desempenho estratégico e operacional*. 8. ed. Porto Alegre: Bookman.
- Verdina, Z. (2013) *A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Storytelling with Instagram*. Master Thesis in Communicatiewetenschappen Strategische Communicatie: Universiteit Antwerpen.
- Xu, X., Zhang, W., & Li, L. (2016). The impact of technology type and life cycle on IT productivity variance: A contingency theoretical perspective. *International Journal of Information Management*, 36 (6), 1193-1204.
- Xun, J. & Reynolds, J. (2010). Applying netnography to market research: The case of the online forum. *Journal of Targeting. Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 18(1), 17-31.
- Yin, R. K. (2005). *Estudo de caso: planejamento e métodos*. 3. ed. Porto Alegre: Bookman.

Citation: Claire EilaneSilva Mendes et al. "Instagram as a Disclosure, Interaction and Advertising Tool? A Multi Country Study from the Perspective of Digital Marketing" *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, vol 9, no. 7, 2022, pp.26-37. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0907003>.

Copyright: © 2022 Authors. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.