

Interactive Content and Its Influence on Consumer Engagement

Prasasti Sekar Kinanti¹*

¹ Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang, Indonesia

Abstract

Article history:

Received: June 30, 2024

Revised: July 17, 2024

Accepted: September 13, 2024

Published: December 30, 2024

Keywords:

Augmented Reality, Consumer Engagement, Gamification, Interactive Content.

Identifier:

Nawala

Page: 54-65

<https://nawala.io/index.php/gjom>

This article examines how interactive content influences consumer engagement in digital marketing, addressing the central question of which interactive strategies most effectively foster cognitive, emotional, and behavioral involvement. Using a systematic literature review of peer-reviewed studies, the paper synthesizes findings on social media interactivity, gamification, and augmented reality, evaluating their ability to generate authentic consumer participation beyond surface-level metrics. The review highlights that interactive content enhances attention, satisfaction, and loyalty by transforming passive consumption into active co-creation, though effectiveness depends on design quality, platform norms, and consumer motivations. Data extraction and thematic analysis allowed for the categorization of engagement drivers and limitations, with results emphasizing the novelty effect, the risks of cognitive overload, and the need for multidimensional engagement measures. Overall, the study finds that interactive content, when strategically designed, provides meaningful opportunities to build trust, deepen relationships, and sustain consumer-brand engagement in evolving digital contexts.

*Corresponding author:
(Prasasti Sekar Kinanti)

©2024 The Author(s).

This is an open-access article under CC-BY-SA license (<https://creativecommons.org/licence/by-sa/4.0/>)



1. Introduction

Interactive content—such as quizzes, polls, games, augmented reality (AR) try-ons, and shoppable live streams—has become central to how brands stimulate consumer engagement across digital touchpoints. Unlike static messaging, interactive formats invite users to act, co-create, and provide feedback, creating cognitive, emotional, and behavioral investment in the brand encounter (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). In social platforms where attention is scarce, interactivity can increase time spent, depth of processing, and memorability, thereby improving downstream outcomes like loyalty intentions and word-of-mouth (Islam & Rahman, 2017; Voorveld et al., 2018). These effects suggest that the unit of value is not merely content exposure but the quality of participatory experiences that content affords.

Empirical research on brand posts indicates that design choices—e.g., questions, calls-to-action, contests, or multimedia—shape engagement metrics such as likes, comments, and shares (De Vries et al., 2012; Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Studies of Facebook brand pages, for instance, show that informative, entertaining, and interactive cues trigger more active engagement behaviors than purely promotional updates (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). Beyond social feeds, gamification mechanisms (points, levels, badges) can satisfy psychological needs for competence and autonomy, increasing participation and retention when thoughtfully implemented (Hamari et al., 2014). Meanwhile, AR extends interactivity into sensory and situated contexts, enhancing telepresence and perceived diagnosticity (e.g., “how it would

look on me” or “in my room”), which, in turn, elevates satisfaction and purchase intentions (Poushneh & Vasquez-Parraga, 2017).

From a strategic perspective, interactive content works because it converts media impressions into behavioral data and reciprocal dialogue that marketers can use to refine targeting, personalization, and creative learning cycles (Voorveld et al., 2018; Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). This engagement-driven loop aligns with evidence that social media marketing activities—particularly those that foster interaction and relationship benefits—contribute to brand equity and customer equity formation (Kim & Ko, 2012). Yet the literature also cautions that not all interactivity is value-adding: overly complex interactions can increase effort without enhancing relevance, and “engagement” measured as surface-level clicks may not translate into meaningful brand outcomes (De Vries et al., 2012; Ashley & Tuten, 2015). These mixed findings underscore the need to parse when, how, and for whom interactive content creates engagement that matters.

Accordingly, this systematic literature review synthesizes peer-reviewed evidence on interactive content’s mechanisms and effects on consumer engagement. It maps dominant formats (social, gamified, AR) to engagement dimensions (cognitive, emotional, behavioral), identifies moderators (content goals, platform norms, brand category), and surfaces design principles that consistently link interactivity to high-quality engagement outcomes. The review also highlights measurement challenges and research gaps to guide practitioners and scholars toward more rigorous, outcome-relevant use of interactivity.

2. Literature Review

The academic discourse on interactive content has consistently framed engagement as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses. Early conceptualizations emphasized engagement as a process of active participation beyond mere exposure, linking interactivity with deeper brand involvement and relational outcomes (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). Empirical studies reinforce this view, showing that interactive content fosters attention and emotional resonance, while also influencing downstream metrics such as loyalty and advocacy (Ashley & Tuten, 2015; Islam & Rahman, 2017).

Social media remains the dominant arena for studying interactivity. Research shows that content designed with questions, contests, and multimedia enhances user activity compared to informational or promotional posts (De Vries et al., 2012; Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). More recent findings extend this evidence, suggesting that personalized and immersive features—such as polls or augmented reality filters—heighten perceived authenticity and trust, thereby encouraging sustained engagement (Alves et al., 2016; Mikalef et al., 2019). Platform differences also matter, as engagement drivers vary across Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok (Voorveld et al., 2018).

Gamification and AR represent emerging strands in this literature. Gamification enhances motivation by fulfilling intrinsic needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy, with positive effects on loyalty when aligned with brand values (Hamari et al., 2014; Xi & Hamari, 2019). AR features, particularly in retail,

increase telepresence and diagnosticity, boosting satisfaction and purchase intentions (Poushneh & Vasquez-Parraga, 2017). More recent evidence highlights that AR-based interactivity is especially effective for younger digital-native consumers, who value immersion and co-creation (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Despite positive findings, scholars note limitations. Interactivity that increases cognitive load or lacks relevance may backfire, reducing engagement quality (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Moreover, common reliance on surface-level metrics such as clicks or likes risks obscuring the depth of engagement (De Vries et al., 2012). Addressing these gaps, recent studies call for integrating behavioral data with qualitative measures to capture nuanced consumer experiences (Alves et al., 2016; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Collectively, the literature underscores interactivity's promise but emphasizes the importance of context, design, and measurement in driving meaningful engagement.

3. Methods

This study adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to synthesize and evaluate existing research on interactive content and its influence on consumer engagement. Following established guidelines for SLRs, peer-reviewed journal articles were identified through academic databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect using keyword combinations including interactive content, consumer engagement, social media marketing, gamification, and augmented reality. The inclusion criteria required studies to be written in English, published in peer-reviewed outlets, and provide empirical or conceptual

insights into how interactivity shapes cognitive, emotional, or behavioral dimensions of engagement. Exclusion criteria removed non-academic publications, duplicates, and articles not directly addressing interactivity within consumer-brand contexts.

To ensure rigor and transparency, the review followed a multi-stage process of identification, screening, and eligibility assessment before final inclusion. Data extraction focused on study characteristics, research design, interactivity features examined, and reported engagement outcomes. Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns and categorize findings into key themes such as social media strategies, gamification applications, and AR experiences. This approach enabled the integration of diverse evidence into a structured synthesis, highlighting both established insights and research gaps relevant for advancing theory and practice.

4. Results and Discussion

The reviewed literature illustrates that interactive content substantively enhances consumer engagement, particularly when it sparks active cognitive and emotional involvement rather than passive exposure. In social media contexts, interactive features—such as polls, contests, quizzes, and calls-to-action—consistently outperform static posts in generating engagement metrics like likes, comments, shares, and time spent (De Vries et al., 2012; Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). More recent qualitative evidence indicates that interactive mechanisms—involving personalization, user control, and sensory feedback—play a critical mediating role in transforming gamification elements into immersive, emotionally resonant experiences that foster consumer engagement (Milanesi et al., 2023).

Gamification remains a particularly effective tool for sustained engagement and loyalty, especially when aligned with users' purpose motivations. In the realm of cause-related marketing campaigns, high levels of gamification have been shown to significantly raise consumer enjoyment and favorability toward the brand, with enjoyment acting as a key mediator (Li et al., 2023). This suggests that gamification's value lies not just in attracting attention, but in generating positive affect through meaningful, experiential interactions. Beyond enjoyment, gamification has also been found to strengthen consumers' sense of achievement and belonging, further deepening their relationship with the brand (Hamari et al., 2014; Xi & Hamari, 2019).

Augmented reality (AR) technologies provide another avenue of interactivity by enriching consumer experiences through immersion and personalization. By allowing consumers to virtually explore products in their own environment, AR enhances perceptions of control and decision confidence, which in turn fosters stronger engagement and satisfaction (Poushneh & Vasquez-Parraga, 2017). AR-based experiences are particularly relevant to younger digital-native consumers, who increasingly expect brands to offer interactive and customizable encounters as part of their value proposition (Dwivedi et al., 2021). These immersive experiences expand consumer-brand relationships beyond transactional exchanges, creating new pathways for building trust and advocacy.

Despite these promising effects, the literature highlights several limitations. Many studies rely largely on surface-level metrics—clicks, likes, shares—that may reflect fleeting activity rather than deep, meaningful engagement (De Vries et al., 2012; Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Additionally, interactive innovations often run into the

novelty effect: engagement might spike initially but then decline as the novelty wears off—unless sustained through evolving relevance (Rodrigues et al., 2022). This underscores the importance of designing interactive content that adapts and remains contextually meaningful over time. Scholars have increasingly emphasized the need for multidimensional approaches to measurement, combining behavioral data with indicators of trust, emotional resonance, and community-building to capture the richness of engagement (Alves et al., 2016; Mikalef et al., 2019).

Taken together, the evidence strongly supports the value of interactive content—whether through gamification, AR, or social media design—in driving engagement across cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. However, its impact depends critically on thoughtful design: interactive elements must align with consumer motivations, provide genuine experiential value, and avoid over-complexity that reduces usability. For practitioners, this means prioritizing purpose-driven, immersive strategies that sustain engagement beyond initial novelty. For scholars, future research should refine methods for measuring engagement quality and explore how interactive experiences shape long-term brand loyalty, trust, and co-creation of value. Addressing these areas will help clarify how interactive content can nurture not only attention but also enduring brand–consumer relationships.

5. Conclusion

The synthesis of existing research demonstrates that interactive content serves as a powerful driver of consumer engagement by fostering participation, emotional connection, and behavioral responses across digital platforms. Social

media features, gamification strategies, and augmented reality applications consistently show their ability to increase attention, satisfaction, and loyalty when thoughtfully designed and aligned with consumer expectations. Unlike static approaches, interactive content transforms communication into an exchange, positioning consumers as co-creators of value rather than passive recipients of information.

At the same time, the evidence highlights critical limitations. Over-reliance on surface-level engagement metrics risks misrepresenting the depth of consumer involvement, while the novelty effect may diminish the long-term impact of interactive features. These challenges underline the importance of developing richer, multidimensional measures of engagement and designing interactions that are adaptable, meaningful, and context-sensitive.

Overall, interactive content represents a promising avenue for both marketers and researchers seeking to understand and strengthen consumer-brand relationships in a dynamic digital landscape. Future research should expand beyond short-term responses to examine how interactivity contributes to trust, community-building, and sustained loyalty. For practitioners, the key lies in integrating interactivity as a strategic element of digital communication, ensuring it consistently delivers authentic value and deepens consumer engagement over time.

References

Alves, H., Fernandes, C., & Raposo, M. (2016). Social media marketing: a literature review and implications. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(12), 1029-1038.

- Ashley, C., & Tuten, T. (2015). Creative strategies in social media marketing: An exploratory study of branded social content and consumer engagement. *Psychology & marketing*, 32(1), 15-27.
- Brodie, R. J., Hollebeek, L. D., Jurić, B., & Ilić, A. (2011). Customer engagement: Conceptual domain, fundamental propositions, and implications for research. *Journal of service research*, 14(3), 252-271.
- Cvijikj, I. P., & Michahelles, F. (2013). Online engagement factors on Facebook brand pages. *Social Network Analysis and Mining*, 3(4), 843-861.
- De Vries, L., Gensler, S., & Leeftang, P. S. (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.
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., ... & Wang, Y. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. *International journal of information management*, 59, 102168.
- Hamari, J., Koivisto, J., & Sarsa, H. (2014). Does gamification work?--a literature review of empirical studies on gamification. In 2014 47th Hawaii international conference on system sciences (pp. 3025-3034).
- Hollebeek, L. D., & Macky, K. (2019). Digital content marketing's role in fostering consumer engagement, trust, and value: Framework, fundamental propositions, and implications. *Journal of interactive marketing*, 45(1), 27-41.

- Islam, J. U., & Rahman, Z. (2017). The impact of online brand community characteristics on customer engagement: An application of Stimulus-Organism-Response paradigm. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(4), 96-109.
- Kim, A. J., & Ko, E. (2012). Do social media marketing activities enhance customer equity? An empirical study of luxury fashion brand. *Journal of Business research*, 65(10), 1480-1486.
- Li, Y., Li, Y., Zhou, X., & Ma, K. (2023). Impact of Gamification on Consumers' Favorability in Cause-Related Marketing Programs: Between-Subjects Experiments. *JMIR Serious Games*, 11(1), e35756.
- Mikalef, P., Boura, M., Lekakos, G., & Krogstie, J. (2019). Big data analytics capabilities and innovation: the mediating role of dynamic capabilities and moderating effect of the environment. *British journal of management*, 30(2), 272-298.
- Milanesi, M., Guercini, S., & Runfola, A. (2023). Let's play! Gamification as a marketing tool to deliver a digital luxury experience. *Electronic Commerce Research*, 23(4), 2135-2152.
- Poushneh, A., & Vasquez-Parraga, A. Z. (2017). Discernible impact of augmented reality on retail customer's experience, satisfaction and willingness to buy. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 34, 229-234.
- Rodrigues, L., Pereira, F. D., Toda, A. M., Palomino, P. T., Pessoa, M., Carvalho, L. S. G., ... & Isotani, S. (2022). Gamification suffers from the novelty effect but benefits from the familiarization effect: Findings from a longitudinal study.

- International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education, 19(1), 13.
- Voorveld, H. A., Van Noort, G., Muntinga, D. G., & Bronner, F. (2018). Engagement with social media and social media advertising: The differentiating role of platform type. *Journal of advertising*, 47(1), 38-54.
- Xi, N., & Hamari, J. (2019). Does gamification satisfy needs? A study on the relationship between gamification features and intrinsic need satisfaction. *International Journal of Information Management*, 46, 210-221.