**Word-of-mouth on social sites (sWOM): a trend?**

Eisingerich, Chun, Liu and Bell (2015) claim that individuals are involved in a form of self-censorship when expressing opinions about brands online (sWOM) due to social fears. Authors believe that people are involved in less positive sWOM than traditional WOM because their message may be seen not only by both one’s personal network and strangers (which is not the case when WOM is shared in the traditional one-to-one way). In this way, people are fearful of how they will be perceived once they express a brand opinion online.

This is an interesting finding because as much as social media allows for even greater freedom of expression, people still censor and edit themselves based on what others will think of them online. Individuals are becoming even more aware of privacy issues on social media and thus censor themselves (Warner & Wang, 2019); which may also affect the amount of brand opinions they share online. However, there are also people who overshare (see Appendix A). In terms of marketeer implications, it is important to know that not everyone will engage in sWOM. Thus, there are only certain types of people with varying motivations that may engage in online expressions of brand opinions. For instance, younger people express their opinions online more than other generation groups (Zhang, Omran, & Cobanoglu, 2017).

On the other hand, individuals may engage in varying degrees of sWOM depending on the social media platform. What one publishes on LinkedIn may differ on Facebook. Nowadays, many platforms such as Facebook and Instagram allow individuals to limit the number of people who see a message one publishes. Moreover, Eisingerich et al. (2015) focus on positive brand endorsement; however, people may engage in sWOM differently depending on the sentiment of their statements, the brand and their experience. Hu and Kim (2018) discovered that personality traits drive negative and positive word-of-mouth online differently. Not only is the sentiment a factor on why some people may choose not to engage in sWOM, but also their affiliation in a brand community may moderate this relationship. For instance, if one is part of an online brand community, then they have a moral responsibility, consciousness, and an emotional bond with other members (Zaglia, 2013). Thus, their motivations to express sWOM may be much higher than regular WOM.

Therefore, sharing sWOM is dependent on a multitude of factors rather than only on perceptions of social risk. While the latter is also relevant, contextual factors such as a person’s personality and age, involvement in a brand community, the social media platform, sentiment and type of message, may also play a role.

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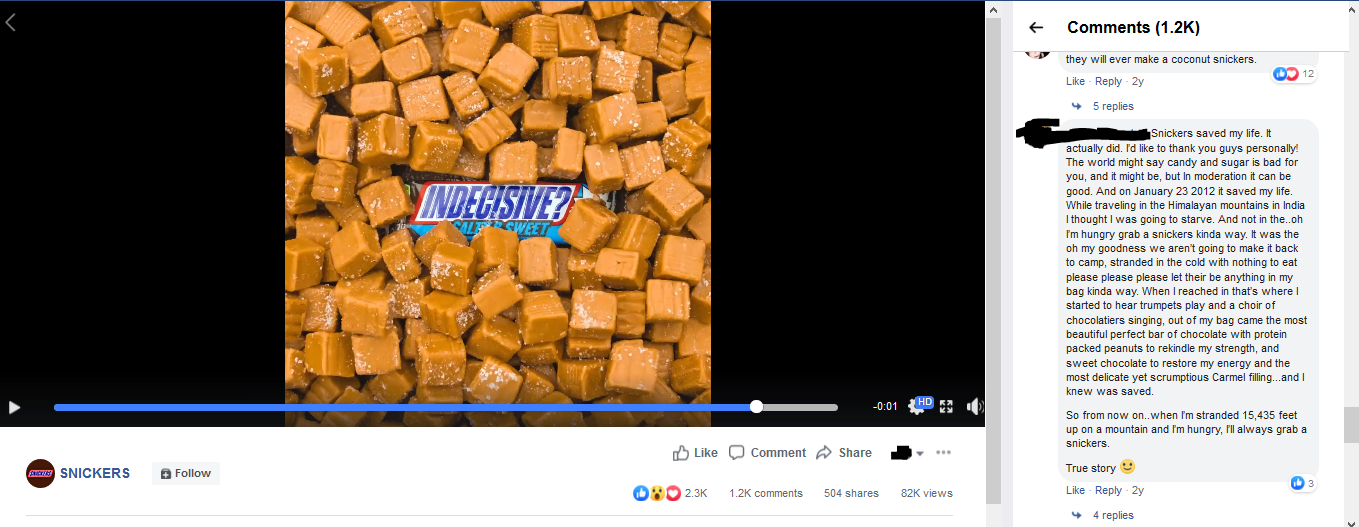
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**Appendix A: Oversharers**