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TITLE: A PROCESS MODEL OF CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT ON CORPORATE BLOGGING: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY ON TECHNOLOGY BLOGS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore and contribute to the understanding of customer engagement in corporate blogging. It particularly explores the customer engagement process of different technology blogs operated by Hitech companies. Based on both previous literature available and different techniques used by companies' blogs to engage their users, this study intends to step even further and develop a customer engagement process model. This customer engagement model will elaborate and explore in detail how companies are engaging customers through corporate blogging.

The process model includes 5 stages; content, interaction, immersion, evaluation, and satisfaction which will explore if how successful companies engage their users. The main idea behind this model is to explore and identify that how a random user or visitor of the blog gets engaged at first stage i.e. content and goes all the way to the last stage where a random user becomes a long term satisfied customer. However, it is not that each company goes through all these stages to engage customers. Therefore, this study by using an internet-based qualitative approach aims to explore famously and most visited corporate technology blogs and with the help of the proposed engagement model, identifying how successful companies can engage.

The study chose 4 different famous technology blogs i.e. Google blog, Cisco blog, Engadget Blog, and CNet Blog. These blogs are famous for writing reviews and offering services about either their technological products or other companies' products which are trending in the global market. The findings indicate that not every company has to struggle for attracting and engaging incoming traffic on their blog websites. For example, a technological company like Google is considered a

technology giant all over the world. Therefore, even if such companies do not put much effort into the contents or activities of their blog on the blogs to involve customers, they will still get more than a satisfactory number of users who end up as their customers. One of the important findings of this study is that although there have been many studies conducted on corporate blog marketing, however, there has been a lack of studies on technology blogs offering services of technological products.

Thus this study attempts to explore further how previously companies were involved in customer engagement on their online forums to what extent they were successful. Furthermore, how different their strategies are from each other and what advantages big companies have due to their reputation in comparison with average rated companies. Lastly, the study will propose a process model for customer engagement which will include all major stages and components which can be helpful for customer engagement.

After the implementation of all identified dimensions of customer engagement, the study found out that the content of a blog with technology products plays an important role in drawing the attention of the visitors and engaging them to achieve customer satisfaction and purchasing decision. Therefore, the study proposes a preliminary content model for customer satisfaction for future research.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In the current competitive and quick-paced developing world; online and social media marketing is considered as an efficient tool of publishing everyone's point of views and platform of sharing thoughts with the world. At the same time, the need for value delivery and offering better services has pushed the companies to strive for more measurements for customer engagement than before (Potdar, et al, 2018). Many companies consider customer engagement as one of the very significant techniques for improved customer relationship management.

Customer engagement has gained a lot of attention in the last two decades as a topic and concept of great interest among multinational companies and professionals of diverse industries (Wikipedia, 2011). There are several points of view available on customer engagement in the existing literature. For example, Chuah, et al, (2020) cited Dolan, et al, (2019) who state that researchers review customer engagement as a 'unidimensional behavior' which leads to purchasing, involvement, and participation. Customer engagement has also emerged as a very recognized concept in the literature of marketing.

Many engagement models have been developed and proposed by researchers comprising several dimensions of customer engagement. This increase in interest in customer engagement in marketing literature and researchers triggered a continuous evolution on the internet and as a result, digital technological innovations and tools emerged which we call Web 2.0 (Sashi, 2002).

This research is focusing on one of the most efficient tools of Web 2.0 for customer engagement i.e. blogs.

With the continuous evolution and growing popularity, the concept of blogging has transformed from personal use to an effective tool of communication on organizational levels. Blogs are now being used not only by bloggers but by organizations and governments for different purposes of interaction and engagement (Philip, 2017). Furthermore, blogging is strongly connected with customer engagement when it comes to organizational perspectives. According to Verma, (2014) blogs and other social media networking platforms play a significant role in giving a trigger to active customer engagement with online communities and marketers.

Furthermore, online communication tools such as blogs, networking sites, online discussion platforms, etc. are very convenient for virtual interaction and engagement among them as well as with the companies. Verma, (2014) concluded that blogs are used effectively for customer engagement by the corporation's blogs such as Amazon web services blog, the Facebook blog, Marriot on the move, and many other small and large firms. Although researchers have emphasized the significance of customer engagement in an online social media platform context, most of the researchers are descriptive and there is a lack of theoretical framework and in the measurement of this significant concept. Furthermore, this research has found out that there is a research gap in the customer engagement process on blogs with specific features.

Therefore, this research aims to explore technology blogs as the tool to engage customers with the help of prior literature and different dimensions of customer engagement in it.

1.2 Research objective and research question

In accordance with the aim of this study, which is exploring technology blogs of companies and their techniques to engage customers, the main questions of this research are:

- What are the different dimensions of the customer engagement process which can be implemented in technology blogs to engage customers?
- How different activities and events on technology blogs of companies are successfully achieving customer engagement.

Keeping the research questions in view, the research objective is to develop and propose a customer engagement model for technology blogs which will help answer the research questions.

1.3 Significance of the study

There is a lot of literature available on social media, corporate blogging, and customer engagement on social media platforms. This literature includes social media marketing sources such as blog marketing and customer engagement on social networking sites. However, not many many studies have focused on developing and proposing any model for specific blog types and exploring customer engagement through these models. This research attempts to develop and suggest a model that can be used for future research on customer engagement.

Furthermore, all previous researches have been focusing on developing the hypothesis that what are dimensions which can affect the process of the engaging customer on social media. Therefore, this study aims to develop a model specifically for blogs providing technological products services, and operated by companies to find out how they are engaging the customer.

Many technology companies are operating blogs for the marketing purpose of their products and services. Due to a very highly competitive market, not all these companies successfully engage the customers. The more companies are available, the more options the customers will have; therefore, there is no chance for companies to make any mistake. The moment a company will make a wrong decision, it may lose the customer in no time and some other company will grab the opportunity.

Moreover, when it comes to attracting more customers, every single moment Hitech companies are involved in inventing new ideas to do so. To deliver the information of these ideas, companies use blogs as a platform to engage visitors. Blogs are considered as the most reliable, quicker, lost cost, and easy access platform for individuals to stay updated with technological innovations. Despite such importance, not many researchers have put their focus on developing a model that can be helpful to find out how customers can be engaged.

1.4 Structure of the research

This study is divided into five chapters.

- The first chapter introduction comprises the background of the study, research the main questions and objectives and significance of the study.
- The second chapter is the review of relevant literature and the concept of corporate blogs, types of corporate blogs, introducing technology blogs, customer engagement, and different dimensions of customer engagement proposed by previous research.

- The third chapter is research methods which outline a brief introduction of the overall research method of this study, then explain research design, research approach, data collection, validity and reliability of the research, and data analysis.

- The fourth chapter is the basic pillar of the research and it includes the findings explored with the help of the proposed model.

- The last chapter is the discussion and conclusion on the findings of the overall research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature which is relevant to the research objective of this study. The literature review in this chapter explores the concept of customer engagement and corporate blogs. The main research objective focuses on the link between customer engagement and technology blogs; therefore, this chapter aims to explore the previous studies and literature relevant to these concepts. Additionally, the following main concepts will be reviewed which will help create a connection between customer engagement and blogging:

- Social Media Marketing.

- Concept and characteristics of blogs.

- Blog marketing, corporate blogs, and different types of corporate blogs.

- Benefits and challenges of corporate blogging.

- Concept of customer engagement.

- Dimensions/actors in the customer engagement process on social media platforms.

The main crux of the chapter is to highlight that researchers have explored earlier on the concepts and topics involved in this study and how they are connected. Furthermore, based on the literature available, this chapter shows the transitions and variations that happened in the concepts of blogging and customer engagement in the last decade.

2.1 Social media marketing

According to Shen and De la Garza, (2019) consumers accept the fact that most often they make the final decision before any purchase with the help of social media. They collect the information

through marketing, reading products users blogs, and communicating with other consumers and expressing personal experiences. Felix, et al (2017) concluded from several kinds of literature and explained that the objectives of social media marketing include; increase in sales and brand awareness, improvement of brand image, plummeting marketing costs and most importantly, attracting traffic to online platforms and creation of user communication on these platforms and inspiring them to share or post online content.

Social media marketing is described as a tool that allows marketers to involve, collaborate, and communicate for marketing purposes (Tsitsi, et al, 2013). In simple, it is a platform that provides various opportunities for marketers to get involved in marketing activities where they can collaborate and communicate to sell their products. These tools were classified as micro-blogs, blogs, media sharing contents, social networks, and different voting sites and social bookmarking (Boyd and Ellison, 2007; Singh, et al, 2008).

However, Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010) argued that despite the classification of social media tools; practitioners and marketers faced skepticism on potential opportunities and challenges caused by the new media. Besides, Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010) presented the role of social media, that it helps in building brand awareness, reputation, information sharing, customer retention, new product promotion and development, and customer relationship marketing.

Social media has started playing a very important role in people's daily life these days. It changes the form we "interact, play, shop, read, write, work, listen, create, communicate, collaborate, produce, co-produce, search, and browse" (Shen, & De le Garza, 2019, p. 1). Furthermore, Arrigo, (2018) defines social media as a concept of Web 2.0 where the collection of open sources,

interactive and user-controlled online applications is involved. These applications provide users a platform where they can share their thoughts and experiences they had as a part of businesses or social processes.

According to Sashi, (2012) social media help firm to improve customer engagement than its competitors in a way by providing greater value to its customers to develop trust and commitment in long term relationship. Furthermore, Gummerus, et al, (2012) advocate Sashi, (2012) by adding that with the help of social media firms can engage customers by active interaction and collaboration with them in the co-creation process of new products. Clemons, (2009) argued that companies should attempt to engage with their customers by developing social media strategies instead of monetizing social media networks.

2.2   Blogs

The term weblog was first introduced by Jorn Barger in 1997 that combined two words web and log (Kaiser, et al., 2007). There are several definitions of weblogs or blogs within academic literature: Colton and Poploski, (2019) define blogs are used for the facilitation of conversation between the readers and the authors and act as a marketing channel and two-way communications. Ing and Ming, (2018, p. 294) cited Hsu, Lin, and Chiang, (2013) and described blogs as famous social media platforms used for "recording and discussing personal feelings, ideas, and opinions related to particular events in one's daily life".

Among previous definitions, Schmidt, (2007) defined a blog as a website that is updated frequently and contents are displayed in communicating format with entries in reverse chronological order by date, and the writer/editor could be an organization or an individual.

Similarly, Herring, et al, (2004) described blogs as web pages that are modified frequently, moreover, in these web pages, dated entries are listed in reverse chronological order. Baxter, et al, (2010) added that entries that are interleaved by blog users are not only in the form of text but also in videos, sounds, and graphics.

2.2.1 Characteristics of Blogs

Blogs consist of various characteristics which differentiate them from other computer-mediated communication. According to Herring, et al., (2004) and Huffaker and Calvert, (2005) following are the characteristics of blogs.

- Easy-to-access content management system,

- Archive oriented structure,

- Latest information appears first in order (chronological),

- Blogs can be linked to other blogs and,

- Easy to respond to previous posts of the blog.

The fact of blogs that they are generally used for publishing content means that blogs are more often associated with the ideology of discussion, expressing emotions and information and experience sharing (Baxter, et al, 2010). Therefore, we can assume that the main purpose of introducing blogs/weblogs was to provide a platform that allows sharing ideas and experiences.

According to Lee, et al, (2008) blogs have the conversational nature which attracts the individuals towards them to exchange opinions about issues and topics of mutual or shared interest. Another significant characteristic of blogs is the encouragement and promotion of "thinking by writing"

(Nardi, et al, 2004, p.44) which allows bloggers to publish blog posts to reflect their personal experiences and actions by sharing unspoken knowledge to readers. Addtionally, Ras, et al, (2005) state that blogs can also be called as "content management system" because information stored in a blog is often categorized in themes in chronological order by date. Thus, Baxter, et al, (2010) concluded that blogs can be either public or private, they play a significant role in promoting the concept of community; as the specific purpose of creating blogs can be sharing knowledge and information in either different communal activities or projects.

2.2.2 Defining Blog marketing

Blog marketing can be defined as the promotion of products or services, company, brand, or events taking place soon, through weblogs (Kirby and Marsden, 2006). Similarly, Divecha, (2007) explains the concept of blog marketing that it is a process of publicizing or advertising the business brands or services or business websites through weblogs. Furthermore, blog marketing, involves advertisements, reviews, and recommendations posted by the companies or bloggers to promote products and services. Colton and Poploski, (2019, p. 610) cited (Papasolomou & Meanthiou, 2012) and concluded that "The inclusion of blogs in integrated marketing communications strategies facilitates informal and more personal interaction between the company and its audiences".

2.3 Corporate blog

The two-way feature of the blog allows the corporations to engage in communication and dialogues with their current and potential customers as well as potential stakeholders. These communication and dialogues can become helpful in enabling the brand building, collecting

feedback, sales support, strengthening customer relationships, and knowledge sharing (Colton & Poploski, 2019). A corporate blog can be described as a blog that is created by the company for business or professional purposes Sinha, et al, (2011). Furthermore, (Keonig, et al, 2014) explained the characteristics of corporate blogs which distinguish them from private blogging;

- that the inclusion of the organization's communication strategy, which is designed for the selection of blog authors,
- choosing the topics and content according to the organization's communication model and,
- more importantly, corporate blogs focus on commercial interests, not the author's personal opinions or choices.

According to Evans, et al, (2008) despite all the above-mentioned characteristics, corporate blogs, and their contents are criticized very often due to low credibility among internet users. However, Yang and Lim, (2009) added that the more corporate blogs are personal and credible, the more successful they will be. Corporate blogs are more often used in different areas of organizational communication including relationships with investors, customer relations, and media relations. This results in the need to comprehend the different effects of characteristics of the corporate blogs on the perceptions and attitudes of target groups (Brecht, et al., 2010).

2.3.1 Types of corporate blogs

It is clear from the above research views that companies are using blogs for different purposes such as product promotions and customer services. These corporate blogs are operated and monitored by authors (employees) of different levels of company i.e. front line to the top management (Lee, et al, 2006). However, it is difficult to differentiate between various blogs that

companies are implementing. Keonig, et al, (2014) explains that as the company stakeholders belong to different groups with a different area of interest, therefore corporate blogs can be distinguished in two main kinds;

1. ***External corporate blogs:*** Blogs that are accessible and readable by internet users outside the company.

The external corporate blogs are used as a platform for promotional activities of new products and services, providing feedback for consumers, and making purchase suggestions. However, internal corporate blogs are used for communication purposes within companies. The internal corporate blogs provide a platform for the company's employees to exchange information; also, it is used as a tool for knowledge management in an organization.

2. ***Internal corporate blogs:*** Blogs that are only accessible for the individuals inside the company.

2.4 Third-party external/independent blog

According to Cox, et al, (2008), external blogs can also be independent blogs, generated by outside parties. Frequent publishing and audiences with high interest make blogs strong and influential platform of word-of-mouth (DeFelice, 2006). Independent opinions play an important role in consumers purchasing and consuming decisions and they often approach experts' opinions in blogosphere Cox, et al, (2008). Furthermore, Cox, et al, (2008) explain that businesses can use independent blogs to build strong relationships by providing product information. Finally,

third parties blogs appear to be very helpful for companies to stay updated with new market trends and opinions by consumers.

2.5 Introducing technology blogs

The above literature shows that numerous researches have been conducted to define the concept of the blog and its types. As mentioned in previous studies, corporate blogs can be of different types i.e. employee blogs, promotional blogs, group blogs, etc. According to Song, et al, (2012), several blogs focus on topics, such as travel blogs, health blogs, fashion blogs, food blogs, and education blogs, etc. These blogs may be personally operated by individuals to share personal experiences and opinions (Min and Lee, 2011). Many belong to experts where they broadcast their core competencies or expertise to a large number of audiences (Wagner and Bolloju, 2005) or may belong to companies and enterprises that are operating them to interact and engage with their potential customers (Lu and Hsiao, 2007).

Technology blogs can be used as the most effective tool in online platforms to engage customers. Davidson and Vaast, (2009, p. 40) define technology blogs as "blogs that focus on information technology innovation and the high-tech industry". The concept of technology blogs is emerging as a significant factor in technological innovation discourse (Davidson and Vaast, 2009). Bloggers who operate technology blogs can be from expert technologist in high-tech corporations to independent programmers and commentators (Vrana, et al, 2014) and from market experts to individuals who create and spread information about technological innovation companies like Microsoft, Apple, and Google (Davidson and Vaast, 2009).

Unfortunately, unlike other types of blogs, there has been no extensive research conducted on technology blogs. This research attempted to define them with the help of successfully operating technology corporate blogs;

- Technology blogs are used for the latest technology reviews and news. Technology blogs provide updates and news of global media organizations, covering; gaming, multimedia, and entertainment. Technology blogs not only focus the entertainment items updates but they also include the information of all newly introduced technology products by big brands such as cars, mobile phones, electronic home appliances, laptops, and other electronics (Engadget, 2020).

- Technology blogs also provide a pre-purchase platform to users to access the information of the latest products, reviews, articles, posts, and comments from existing users and ratings. In addition, they provide a large number of topics, like new software patches, new items, and products or companies strategies (Droge, et al, 2010).

2.6 Customer Engagement

During the last two decades, the concept of customer engagement has become a topic of deep interest to entrepreneurs, professionals, and consultants in different types of industries and corporations; evidenced blogs, newsletters, e-magazines, seminars, and discussion forums. Besides, this concept has gained a lot of attention from the academic and research sectors. This concept is believed to be very complex and needs 'multidimensional conceptualization' (Itani, et al, 2020).

According to Pordar, et al, (2018) in the current competitive world, the need for value delivery and providing improved and unique services has pushed the corporations to work harder on customer engagement more than before. Companies contemplate customer engagement as a critical technique to achieve better customer relationship management. Therefore, brands use different platforms to engage with customers and in the current world, social media no doubt is considered as the most efficient platform to expand the circle of loyal customers.

Furthermore, Thackeray, et al, (2008) added that the creation of customer engagement either of consumer or business markets requires adaption of the marketing mix to generate benefits out of new technology to understand and facilitate customers in better ways. Therefore, social media gives the opportunity of connecting with the customer using a medium with greater access to the customers. Such digital media with interactive nature allows sellers to exchange information with customers and to customers to share information (Sashi, 2012). Wirtz, et al, 2010, explains the fact that an increase in interest in customer engagement has triggered continuous advancement in both the internet and the development of digital technologies which has been named as Web 2.0, particularly blogs, micro-blogging, YouTube and social networking like MySpace, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

According to Prahalad and Ramaswamy, (2004) in market transactions, customer engagement through the creation of close bonds for long-term exchange relations among customers and sellers; enable the customers to keep relying on buying instead of making the transaction as well as co-creation of value. The role of customers and sellers meets with their collaboration in value creation. Harrison and Barthel, (2009) added that tools and technologies of Web 2.0 appear to

elevate the level of co-creation of value by customers and sellers. As mentioned above that customer engagement is considered as a critical technique to achieve customer relationship management (Pordar, et al, 2018). Similarly, Singh, et al, (2010) added that since 2004 customer engagement, has received significant attention in customer relationship management and marketing. He further added that unfortunately this concept has not been highlighted a lot in reference and textbooks for research and academics.

On the other hand, Sashi, et al, (2012) argued that marketing literature identifies customer engagement as a relevant field of study and many researchers have agreed to that (Brodie et al., 2011; Gambetti and Graffigna, 2010; Sawhney, et al., 2005; Van Doorn, et al., 2010; Vivek, et al., 2012). Several models have been proposed for customer engagement comprising different dimensions of it (Bowden, 2009; Court, et al., 2009; Van Doorn, et al., 2010). Some of the suggested dimensions are satisfaction, acquisition, awareness, communication, bonding, interaction, retention, recommendation, conversion, etc. Such models and their dimensions aim in the transformation of customers into brand ambassador or representative, i.e. after using the products and services they recommend them to others. However, Pordar, et al (2018) explains that it is not certain that customers will experience all these above-suggested dimensions while they are interacting with the brands on the social media platform.

2.6.1 Defining customer engagement

The concept of customer engagement is considered a highlighted topic in marketing literature and it is still expanding with time (Cheung, et al, 2011). Brands (Sprott, et al, 2009), brand communities (Algesheimer, et al, 2005), and products and organizations (Patterson, et al, 2006)

have been cited very often as key engagement objects in the research literature. Though many definitions and marketing studies are available on engagement and its combination with customer psychology, however, some of them are either unclear or inconsistent (Cheung, et al, 2011). Based on the literature reviewed following definitions which this study has found clear and possibly relevant to the aim and research model.

- Lemon and Verhoef, (2016) describe that the study of customer engagement focuses on distinguishing between consumer behaviors and attitudes that go beyond buying.

- Cheung, et al, (2011) cited Van Doorn, et al, (2010, p. 254) who defined customer engagement as *"the behavioral manifestation from a customer toward a brand or a firm which goes beyond purchase behavior"*.

- According to Bowden, (2009) customer engagement is a psychological process the starts from customer need but it leads to the development of interest of loyalty in the customer.

- Patterson, et al, (2006) describe customer engagement as a psychological state which can be categorized by vigor, absorption, dedication, and interaction.

Customers can be engaged either non-digitally or digitally. Digital (online) customer engagement is possible with the help of Web 2.0 (Singh, et al, 2010). O'Reilly (2013) gives an aerial view of Web 2.0 that it is a second-generation web that plays a very important role; in fact, it makes online collaboration, sharing information, and synchronous communication between users. The components of Web 2.0 are streaming media, social networking, blogs, news feeds, and instant messages. Furthermore, Singh, et al, (2010) postulates that customers can be engaged for several purposes: research and development, production, promotion and quality management, communication, marketing, and sales and distribution through online or offline engagement.

Online customer engagement can be referred to as a social phenomenon due to its interactive nature.

Additionally, Swami, (2008) suggested two forms of engagement within online customer engagement: behavioral engagement and emotional engagement. Behavioral engagement comprises all encounters or interactions which a customer has with the brand, apart from purchasing the products or services. Behavioral engagement activities include downloading and web browsing. While emotional engagement refers to continuous tracking by a customer of a brand, sharing its experience and recommendations after developing the attachment with the brand or the company.

2.6.2 Actors of customer engagement on social media platforms

Cheung, et al (2011) cited Kahn, (1990, p. 700) who described personal engagement as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's preferred-self in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, the full role of performance". There is two characteristics of Kahn, (1990) description of engagement.

- The engagement has a psychological relationship with task performance instead of attitude towards the task.

- Engagement is linked to self-investment of dimensions of personal resources in a task, such as cognitive, emotional, and physical (Christian, et al, 2011).

According to Cheung, et al, (2011) customer engagement on an online platform can be defined as the level on which a customer is physically, cognitively, and emotionally connected with a

specific online social platform. Researchers have agreed that there are many dimensions involved in the construct of customer engagement on the online platform. This research will highlight important dimensions involved in engaging customers on online social media platforms, additionally, a process model will be developed to propose different dimensions that can be helpful on technology blogs to engage customers. Therefore, this section particularly focuses on summarizing previous researches conducted on the dimensions of customer engagement. Table 2.1 below summarizes different studies on proposed dimensions that have been used for conceptualizing customer engagement.

Table 2.1 Customer engagement from literature

Author	Proposed dimensions of Customer Engagement
Itani, et al, (2020)	Customer referrals, customer social influence, and customer knowledge sharing.
Potdar, et al, (2018)	Communication, interaction, experience, satisfaction, continued involvement, bonding, and recommendation.
Malciute and Chrysochou (2013)	Behavioral, emotional, cognitive components
Vivek et al. (2012)	Customer involvement and participation: Value, trust, affective commitment, word of mouth, loyalty, and brand community involvement
Sashi (2012)	Connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, commitment, advocacy, engagement
Zailskaite-Jakste & Kuvykaite, (2012)	Watching, sharing, commenting, producing, and curating

Hollebeek, (2011)	Immersion (cognitive), passion (emotional), and activation (behavioral)
Brodie, et al. (2011)	Involvement, satisfaction, commitment, trust
Van Doorn, et al. (2010)	Customer resources, outcomes, impact, purpose, situation
Bowden, (2009)	Satisfaction, calculative commitment, affective commitment, involvement, and trust
Court, et al, (2009)	The initial consideration, active evaluation, purchase, ongoing exposure, and loyalty
Haven, et al, (2007)	4Is of involvement, interaction, intimacy, and influence
Patterson, et al. (2006)	Vigor, dedication, absorption, and interaction

Following different theories of engagement Itani, et al, (2020) concluded three different categories of non-transactional engagement:

- *Customer referrals: occur when customers recommend and promote the offers of the firm while guaranteeing the value of the firm's products and services.*

- *Customer social influence: Described as when current customers generate content, blogs, online dating, community/discussion forum, reviews, and comments. These factors are directly or indirectly involved in engaging other users or potential customers.*

- *Customer knowledge sharing: In this category customers who are already engaged through giving feedback, sharing knowledge or experience after using the product or services are considered as the assets of the firms.*

Potdar, et al, (2018) proposed a model developed based on previous studies, communication, interaction, satisfaction, continued involvement, bonding, and recommendation. Additionally, they included "experience" a new dimension in their model and argued that experience has been always in the discussions but never added as a dimension in any of previous customer engagement models. Experience has also been cited 59 times but never included as an independent dimension to evaluate or measure customer engagement on online platforms. Therefore, they proposed experience as the third dimension in their model after communication and interaction in the process of online customer engagement.

Communication: Communication is one of the efficient ways to connect the brand with its consumers by making them aware and through increased visibility of the brand. Potdar, et al, (2018) cited Sashi, (2012) whose research explains that communication is a way of the first encounter between the company and the customers on the company's online social media platform.

Interaction: Potdar, et al, (2018) included interaction as the second dimension of customer engagement in their model. Interaction is defined as a process of correspondence and action between the customers and the company.

Experience: Experience the stage of engagement where customers create perception within their minds after interacting with the brand. "Positive experiences through social media can be achieved through the post, events, polls, and innovation. Customer's evaluation of experiences will activate the affective component, resulting in positive influence, referrals customer intimacy, and customer loyalty" (Potdar, et al, 2018, p. 602).

Satisfaction: Customer satisfaction is facilitated by social media platforms through positive experiences through personalized messages, comments, and well-timed replies. It will start the affective component, assist customers in the evaluation of their experiences, and it leads to customer loyalty, intimacy, acquisition, repurchasing, and continuous involvement with the company (Potdar, et al, 2018).

Continued Involvement: Customers can be involved continuously on social media through different activities such as quizzes, surveys, suggestions, or recommendations on brands, and events. This creates emotional attachment and bonding with the company which results in repurchase, commitment, loyalty, and retention. Continued involvement of customers creates more chances of influencing others and referral of companies offers (Potdar, et al, 2018).

Bonding: Bonding is the process of establishing relationships through continuous and frequent association. Social media helps in achieving effective bonding through personalized comments and messages. This bonding will help the company to be in touch with its customer, and which results in improved trust, intimacy, commitment, satisfaction, and more referrals (Potdar, et al, 2018).

Recommendation: The last stage of Potdar, et al, (2018) model is the recommendation which can be defined as the act which is involved in a suggestion or advising something suitable for a specific purpose. "Recommendation with the help of social media can be achieved through comments, shares and likes that may result in activating the behavioral component wherein the customer, after evaluation of experiences, becomes an advocate of the company and refers others to use the company offerings" (Potdar, et al, 2018, p. 603).

Macuite and Chrysochou, (2013) designed a customer brand engagement model by combining engagement parameters proposed by Cheung, et al, (2011) i.e. emotional, behavioral, and cognitive and dimensions suggested by Brodie, et al, (2011). The finding of the customer brand engagement model showed that emotional, cognitive, and behavioral engagement leads towards spreading word-of-mouth and creation brand loyalty.

Similarly, Vivek, et al, (2012) proposed a model of customer engagement in which they added involvement and participation as the antecedents of customer engagement. According to their research, these two antecedents result in trust, value, commitment, loyalty, word of mouth, and involvement of the brand community.

In addition to the previous researches on customer engagement, Sashi, (2012) suggested a customer engagement cycle which includes connection, interaction, satisfaction, retention, commitment, advocacy, and engagement as its key stages. Sashi, (2012) describes:

- *The connection* is the first stage, where a customer or a company is connected.

- Interaction as the second stage involves the participation of the customer in the process of value addition on different social media platforms.

- *Satisfaction* is the third and very important stage, as it is defined as a step that plays a vital role in continuous interaction with the customers, finally leading to customer's pleasure.

- *Retention* is the fourth stage in which efforts and focuses on the long-lasting relationship between the company and its customers.

- *Advocacy* involves supporting a brand which occurs when a customer shares their positive experiences on social media platforms to support their brand.

- *Engagement* is the last stage that happens as a result of customer's pleasure, trust, loyalty, commitment, and bonding with the brand.

Furthermore, Zailskaite-Jakste and Kuvykaite, (2012) relate the stages of customer engagement with brand equity components and different platforms of social media. These stages are named as watching, sharing, discussion/commenting, producing, and curating (selecting and organizing and looking after). According to their research, these stages are explained as.

- *Watching*: brand awareness occurs in the result of this stage.

- *Sharing*: on this stage, customers exchange or share relevant views or information.

- *Discussing/Commenting:* at this stage, customers express their opinions, evaluate the brands and services.

- *Producing:* at this stage, companies attempt to provide discussion platforms to the customer to engage them.

- *Curating:* in this stage customers, themselves attempt to create or organize the content in their communities by using customer engagement parameters.

According to Hollebeek, (2011, p. 790) customer engagement is.

"The level of an individual customer's motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity in direct brand interactions".

Brodie, et al, (2011) suggested the measurement of customer and brand relationships using the involvement, commitment, satisfaction, and trust of the customer as the dimensions. According to them, involvement can be considered as a very significant customer engagement predecessor. However, on the other side, commitment, satisfaction, and trust were recommended as attitudinal predecessors. Additionally, the research also explained the dimensions of customer engagement on social media platforms i.e. participation, involvement, easy access, and telepresence.

Moreover, Van Doom, et al, (2010) offered five dimensions of customer engagement; customer/consumer 'resource', 'outcomes' a customer gets, the 'impact' of overall experience (could be negative or positive), the customer's 'motive or purpose' behind getting engaged with the brand and the situation (varies).

However, Bowden, (2009) conducted comparative research on customer engagement and indicated its difference from the commitment and loyalty concepts. According to this study, in the case of the existing or old customers, affective commitment is reached with increasing or growing levels of involvement, while in the case of new customers with a good satisfaction level; the state of calculative commitment is reached.

Likewise, Court, et al, (2009) developed a model in which they introduced the journey of the customer's purchasing decision which highlights how customers are engaged. This model of customer purchasing journey includes activities i.e. consideration, active evaluation, purchase, ongoing exposure, and loyalty. Furthermore, Haven, et al, (2007) added that customer engagement can be conceptualized with the help of 4I's i.e. involvement, interaction, intimacy,

and influence. According to Patterson, et al, (2006) customer engagement is a concept that includes four components: vigor, absorption, dedication, and interaction.

2.7 CONNECTING THE DOTS: Customer engagement and online platforms

According to Forrester, (2007), the theory of engagement includes the dimensions of Involvement, Interaction, Intimacy, and Influence. In the context of Web 2.0, customer engagement can be seen through the average number of comments on posts, publishing, feedback, subscribing, emailing, bookmarking, networking, and distribution. During the measurement of engagement, the level of customer interaction is a significant and obvious component, and the above-mentioned customer actions show the level of engagement (Ghuneim, 2008). Ahuja and Medury, (2010) added that the level of engagement can be seen simply by checking the number of users' comments, visits, and shares of blog contents or posts. The user who reads and comments on posts on a corporate blog is usually at a higher level of engagement than the user who only reads but does not comment on posts. Similarly, the user who reads comments and then shares the posts or contents on his blog or other social media platforms, is even more engaged than both mentioned above.

The level of customer involvement is expected to influence the quality and amount of the consumer's cognitive response. In terms of the amount of cognitive response "involved consumers engage in more labored information search and acquisition strategies" (Cummings, 2007, p.9). Similarly, Dwyer, (2007) added that the number of comments attracted by a blog entry and the number of users who posts those comments is the indication of participation that significantly showed the level of involvement. However, Ahuja and Medury, (2010) added that

the actions of users show the adoption level, for example, adding to a group might indicate the low level of engagement, rating, voting, commenting, and endorsing show the medium level of engagement. Furthermore, creating content activities such as blogging and participating in online communities show a high level of engagement. Likewise, Ghuneim, (2008) showed that adding people like friends or relatives, creating networks, and online fan communities are the contributing factors of the highest level of engagement.

Moreover, Minazzi, (2015) highlighted corporate communities that can be categorized into online, offline, or hybrid (between offline and online) forms. Many of the online communities are the result of previous corporate offline communities. Moreover, online corporate communities can have specific offline activities. For instance, users can connect on online games blogs in activities like playing together in a virtual world, sharing content, and point of view about the game. Additionally, at the same time, they can also organize offline events to try new products or participate in fairs or meetings, etc. According to Wirtz, et al, (2013) with concern towards funding and governance, corporate communities can be formed and then taken care of by the company or community especially keen towards the company brand or topic.

Furthermore, (Fournier and Lee 2009; Hatch and Schultz 2010), suggest that the hybrid method of governance which is based on a shared-managed approach that contributes to developing high customer engagement environments based on co-creation. This is due to the affect governance has on credibility; when a company has complete control and can manage the community, the online content may be considered as less credible. In addition, two-sided information reflects the

approach which is more authentic and results in high credibility and opportunity of engagement (Minazzi, 2015).

Finally, Wirtz, et al, (2013), highlighted the connection between the online community engagement and the motivation of consumers to engage depends on some factors which can alter the process of engagement;

- *Product complexity and involvement:* This affects consumer participation in the community.

- *Size of the online community:* Size of the online community is also a significant intermediary. Usually, small size communities encourage their members to create a close and tight connection with others and then develop a high degree of engagement with product, brand, or company.

- *Consumer:* Consumer-related mediators show concern with experience and long-term relationships with community members. However, consumers having expertise do not depend a lot on other community members' opinions while making decisions.

Various researches have been conducted on corporate blog marketing and customer engagement strategies and dimensions. However, Cheung, et al, (2011), argued that the concept of customer engagement has been understood in a very unsystematic and unclear way. Previous researches have been conducted based on a very little and narrow theory to understand the concept of customer engagement and its dimensions, specifically in the context of online platforms of social media. Furthermore, the dimensions of customer engagement in mentioned previous sections may be experienced according to the online platform characteristics. Thus,

these dimensions may vary from platform to platform in the process of customer engagement. Recently, Potdar, et al, (2018) also stated this is not always possible that customers will experience all dimensions of customer engagement in an online social media platform suggested in previous research.

Similarly, there is a lack of research that how technology blogs are engaging customers. Therefore, as a step to reduce this gap and to bridge the connection between customer engagement processes in an online platform, particularly on technology blogs, this study has explored the literature on corporate blogs, customer engagement, and its dimensions. A process model has been developed and proposed that how technology blogs can efficiently engage the customer. Additionally, this process model will also help to explore different factors companies are already using to engage customers. Finally, analysis and suggestions on findings will also be developed. The section below explains the proposed model of customer engagement for technology blogs.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

It is important to explain the concept of research methods at this juncture, as the whole research and its outcome revolves around the research methods. In simple words, the research method can be described as all those techniques and methods which are used for conducting the research. According to Kothari, (2004, p. 7) "research methods and techniques refer to the methods the researcher use in performing research operations or in other words, all those methods which are used by the researcher during studying his research problem are termed as research methods". Likewise, this chapter will also explain the method which has been used by the author in the research to achieve the research objective i.e. how technology blog can be used by the companies as a tool of customer engagement. The chapter will also highlight the technique used by the researcher as part of the research method in the congregation of the findings.

The main aim of this research is to develop an extensive understanding of how customers can be successfully engaged by using technology blogs. These blogs can either be operated by the company or they can be external corporate blogs operated by outside parties working for the company. There is a lot of empirical and scientific evidence available on customer engagement and corporate blogging. However, this study has found no evidence of customer engagement in technology blogs. The qualitative approach helps in exploring the concept in detail and understanding the idea in the natural setting (Golafshani, 2003). Therefore, having the explorative nature of this research, the Internet-based qualitative approach is more suitable to understand the concept of customer engagement on technology blogs.

3.1 Research Design

The explorative design is more suitable as an overall research design to explore and gather in-depth knowledge on how technology blogs can be useful in customer engagement in technological and innovation companies. According to Neuman, (2014) the explorative research design addresses that what is the question and identifying the suitable answer. Furthermore, according to Kothari, (2004) the research design is the theoretical/conceptual structure in which research is conducted. The research design is responsible for designing the plan for data collection, measurement, and analysis. Similarly, the research design of this study attempts to conduct the research and plan the data collection from available successful technology blogs and to explore what techniques they are using in customer engagement. Therefore, this study uses the exploring approach on the concept of customer engagement on social media platforms; a process model is developed to plan the data collection; implementing this model on already operating technology blogs, collecting the data from their daily operations and developing the analysis on how they are engaging customers.

3.2 Research Approach

According to Chetty, (2016) research approach refers to the plans and procedure which consists of wide assumptions towards the detailed data collection methods, analysis, and the interpretations. Therefore, it is based on the nature of the research objective being addressed. The research approach is further categorized as an approach to data collection and the approach of data analysis. The data collection methods consist of qualitative and quantitative approaches of data collection and data analysis consists of an inductive and deductive approach.

According to Miles and Huberman, (1994) qualitative research approach is conducted according to the real-life situation; furthermore, these reflect the real-life data of individuals or groups in either society or firms. Furthermore, Collis and Hussey, (2003) added that the inductive approach deals with empirical or experimental simplifications having a relation with the qualitative method.

Concluding from the above-reviewed literature, this study has used the qualitative approach for the research. This research comprises empirical and theoretical parts and evidence found on both parts is supportive of each other to achieve the research objective and providing a sufficient explanation of how a customer can be engaged in technology blogs. The theoretical part determines the main concepts which have been used in research such as a corporate blog, types of corporate blogs, customer engagement on social media platforms, the concept of technology blogs, and connecting the dots between technology blogs and customer engagement. The research has also studied previous research available on customer engagement, its dimensions, and how these dimensions play their role in both business and customer perspectives. The empirical part of the research has focused on developing a model of the customer engagement process after collecting enough concepts and evidence presented in previous literature. Finally, this developed model is used in exploring customer engagement activities on the chosen four technology blogs. The blogs chosen for the research are ranked among the world's most visited blogs and operated by famous IT innovation companies. This empirical part of the research will give an insight view to other technology blog companies, which are new or behind in the competitive race of the global market. The research presents both the pros and cons of these

blogs which can other blogging companies while designing their activities and techniques of customer engagement.

3.3 Data Collection

Data collection is one of the most significant stages in research methods. There are a lot of different data collection techniques available, such as interviews, questionnaires, surveys, and observations. However, given the qualitative and exploratory nature of this study, the researcher has used an internet-based data collection approach. In recent years, the usage of the internet to support research activities has become very popular. Many researchers have agreed that online surveying or electronic data collection can change the shape of research in numerous disciplines due to the easy access and easier collection of data. According to Benfield and Szlemko, (2006), internet research can play the role of a vehicle of data collection as it assures a larger sample size, wider sample diversity, low cost, easy and convenient access to data sources, and time investment. Therefore, the qualitative internet-based data collection method has been used due to these key points and additionally, due to one more reason which is the lack of literature and studies on the topic of this research.

Primarily, the data collection is based on most visited and among top-ranked technology blogs offering a wide range of technological product information and services which is explored by the research to find out different techniques used to engage customers. To do so with the help of secondary data i.e. the relevant literature available on the concepts of corporate blogging and customer engagement on the social media platform, this research has developed and proposed a model. Therefore, this model is used to collect the primary data from the selected blogs for the

research purpose. It is concluded that both primary and secondary data depend and support each other to achieve the research objective; this is due to the lack of studies on a selected topic of this research.

Data of the research is analyzed by following the methods suggested by Miles, et al, (2014) which comprises four stages i.e. preparation, exploration, reduction, and memoing. In the data preparation stage, a different type of blogs, their nature of the business, their operators, and relevant key concepts and topics were enlisted. In data exploration, the listed blogs and a wide range of literature available on customer engagement and blogging were explored. The data reduction is the third stage where data is reduced and only required authentic data remains. In this research, at this stage, the collected data i.e. visited blogs and reviewed literature was reduced to sufficient and required data. Among all visited blogs only four most visited and popular blogs of famous technology with technological products and services were selected. Furthermore, literature relevant to corporate blogging and customer engagement on social media platforms was used as secondary data. The last stage is data memoing, where summarized data is synthesized into analytical meaning along with research opinions. In this study, the collected data with the help of the proposed model are summarized, compared, and discussed by the researcher to develop a concrete conclusion.

3.4 Reliability and Validity

According to Patton, (2001) validity and reliability are two important factors that are measured by every researcher while designing the research, during data analysis, and checking the quality of the research. According to Robson, (2002) reliability refers to the consistency of the research

and validity shows that how much data collected is valid. In a quantitative study, the term reliability refers to trustworthiness, however, if reliability is used in qualitative it shows the consistency of the research. Hence reliability can be defined as the extent of consistency which an instrument uses to measure the attribute it has been designed for measuring (Long & Johnson, 2000). In this research, the technique used for data collection i.e. internet-based data collection can be considered as reliable as the data collected from the blogs are real and collected from the technology blogs providing services on daily basis.

According to Neuman, (2014) the validity refers to the authenticity of the research and whether the study is measuring what it has claimed to measure and represent. To achieve authenticity, the research has implemented the developed model on selected blogs for research with the amalgamation of available literature on key concepts of the research. To get a valid outcome every stage of the model has been fitted in the blog activities as an attempt to identify the degree of authenticity. The research claims to be valid as the model developed has the most important stages which can be useful in customer engagement and any type of blog can implement this model to engage customers more efficiently and successfully.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter shows the relevant data which is required for achieving the research main objective. As mentioned in previous chapters, the study focuses on researching how customer engagement can be done through technology blogs. To do so, a model of customer engagement has been developed to evaluate the performance technology blogs. The main data of the research has been gathered from popular IT companies' blogs or most visited third parties technology blogs. Furthermore, the data has also been gathered from relevant literature and studies conducted on corporate blogs and the dimensions of customer engagement. In the chapter literature review, it is mentioned that the blogs can be either corporate or hosted by third/outside parties working for the companies to engage customers for them. Therefore, keeping the research objective in front, two IT companies and two third parties operated technology blogs have been chosen to get a better insight view of how they are engaging customers and to evaluate them with the help of the proposed model.

4.1 Proposed model of customer engagement for technology blogs

To understand how technology blogs can engage customers this study has;

- Conducted an extensive review of previous literature available on the concepts of corporate blogging and customer engagement on online platforms.

- Explored the popular and most visited technology blogs hosted by either companies or outside parties.

After the review of the literature and technology blogs, the research designed 5 stages which can be the main actors/dimensions to engage the customer. The research has put those stages in order and developed a model following customers' perspectives, especially when they visit the blogs. This model will evaluate the activities on selected technology blogs for the research and the conclusion will be developed to show how technology blogs can engage customers. Furthermore, as discussed in prior sections that enough studies are available on customer engagement on social media or online platforms. However, not many researches have been conducted on specific blog types to engage customers. Therefore, the proposed model can be used for future research on different types of blogs like food, fashion, traveling, etc. to explore the customer engagement process.

Figure 4.1: Customer engagement model for technology blogs
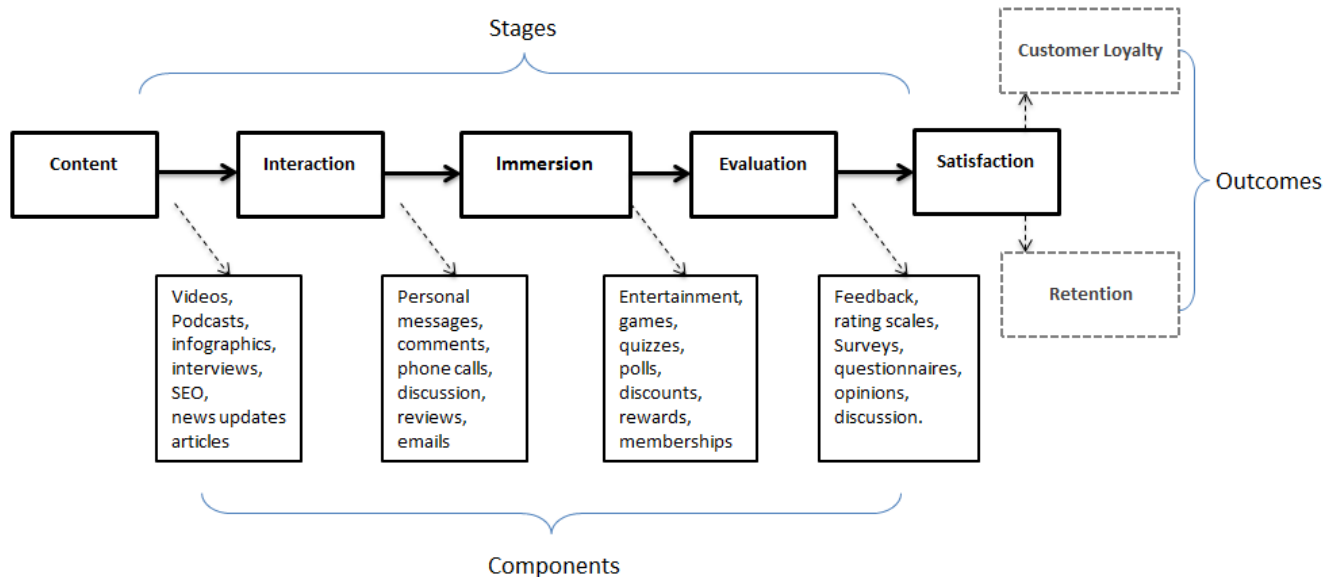
The model comprises of 5 stages: content, interaction, immersion, evaluation, and satisfaction. Each stage has several components that are used as tools of engaging visitors in that particular stage. The last phase after the engagement process ends, are the outcomes of successful

engagement. This research has aimed to contribute to the exploration of the customer engagement process on blogs therefore, only the process of customer engagement is studied based on literature and data collected. Several technological blogs have been reviewed to explore how companies are using blogs either by internal employees or third parties to engage customers. Below are the stages of the proposed model and explained what components are involved in each stage to attract and engage customers.

Content: The first stage of the model is Content. Content of the blog attempt to attract the customers and develop interest through the effective design. The content design of the blog plays a significant role in the blog's success and the efficient content design of the blog makes the reader keep coming back on the blog. According to Argenti and Barnes, (2009) the overall attractiveness of online communication is determined by the level of emotional engagement with the users, which can be achieved with the help of amusing and enjoyable blog content. Recently. Arora, et al, (2019) added that different famous brands use social media content as a tool to compete against competitors, to promote products and offers, and to maintain their reputation.

According to Koenig and Schlaegel, (2014) content characteristics can be explained as the content published on the company blog, such as the topics discussed, variety of content, and the value of actual information that is published. Content is the first impression of the blog on the reader and if they find what they are looking for easily, they spend more time on it. Most of the time, blog visitors only scans the content instead of reading word by word, therefore, user-friendly contents have short paragraphs, components list with bullets, bold text, etc. Furthermore, user-friendly blogs include videos, podcasts, infographics, interviews, surveys, guest posts, search engine

optimization (SEO), articles, news updates, and group interviews. Recently, Hanlon, (2019) concluded that content marketing plays a vital role in driving traffic to the blogs and website, brand visibility, converting customers by educating them through eye-catching content. Similary, Hall, (2019) added that popular social media helps to blog becoming a significant medium for content marketing. However, there is one issue that content marketing in blogging has a problem with overloading due to a lot of information availability.

Interaction: The second stage is Interaction. Once customers are successfully engaged through the blog content, at this stage company and customers start interacting with each other. However, the stage of interaction is different from content. The content stage involves the components which attract customers by developing a visual image of the blog. While interaction is the two ways of correspondence between companies and users. Before Web 2.0, the source of interaction between both parties was limited to the letters, telephone, and word-of-mouth. But, with the arrival of Web 2.0, companies and customers can interact frequently 24/7 with each other through instant messages, emails, and social media networking. Among these interacting tools, blogs are considered as a more faster and efficient way of interacting and they provide more platforms to communicate such as comments, posts, reviews, and personal messaging. Furthermore, blogs help companies to engage and interact with customers to understand their needs and expectations from products. Companies use this stage to influence, encourage, motivate, communicate, and acquiring customers through the stimulation of effective components (Potdar, et al, 2018).

Immersion: The third stage is the immersion. At this stage, customers can be engaged on blogs through different online and entertainment activities such as purchasing, pre-orders, games, quizzes, lucky draws for discounts, rewards, memberships to do business with companies or becoming the part of business, networking through discussion, etc. (Correa, et al, 2010) argued that entertainment is the main reason for users, and this is what they intend or expect to do them while using the internet and social media. The basic purpose of involving the customer at this stage is to get customers' interest which leads to long-term engagement and satisfaction.

This research proposes the immersion stage as the main pillar of the customer engagement process on blogs. At this stage, customers start getting emotionally attached and connected which pushes them to come back again and again on blogs. As there are many brands in the market with different attractive offers and packages for the customers, therefore, each brand has to come up with something innovative and interesting ideas to engage customers. If a brand successfully engages the customer at this stage, then it becomes easier to retain the customer for a long time which leads to repurchasing, customer satisfaction and loyalty, and recommendations to other customers. According to (Hamilton, et al, 2016; Novak, et al, 2000), immersion is a psychological state of consumers where they get fully absorbed in the environment of social media and become obsessed with brand interaction.

Evaluation: At the fourth stage of the proposed model, the customers are engaged through an evaluation of what experience they had with the brands in the immersion stage. This stage plays an important role in customer engagement on blogs as it gives the brands an idea that where they stand and what opinions their customers have about them. Potdar, et al, (2018, p. 602) state

that "a customer's evaluation of experiences will activate the affective component, resulting in positive influence, referrals, customer intimacy, and customer loyalty".

The customers are engaged in evaluation through feedback, rating of products and services, surveys, questionnaires, discussion forums, and opinions. Furthermore, companies also encourage their customers to give unbiased reviews and suggestions for more improvements openly on blogs. This leads to winning customers' trust and also gives an impression to customers of being important to the brand and their opinions and suggestions matter and they are valued by the company. As mentioned above such evaluation results in customer intimacy, loyalty, and long-term bonding with the brand.

Satisfaction: Satisfaction is the final stage of the model. This stage plays the role of the final actor in customer engagement in a way that a company creates an impression if their customers are satisfied or not. According to recent research of Potdar, et al, (2018) satisfaction can be an evaluation that is based on consumers' experiences. Furthermore, they added that satisfaction leads to long-term retention which results in repurchases and long-lasting relationships between buyers and sellers which further creates customer loyalty.

4.2 Findings and analysis

Table 4.1: technology blogs used for data collection

Blogs	Type	About	Visuals and Graphics	Connection to other social media platforms	URL
''The keyword'', Google	Company Blog	The destination for the latest news	Text, and pictures	YouTube, Twitter,	https://www.blog.google/

		updates and stories from inside Google		LinkedIn, and Facebook	
Cisco blogs	Company Blog	technology news, analysis, reviews and discussion	Text and pictures, infographics, subscription, and links	Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and RSS feeds	https://blogs.cisco.com/
CNet	External Independent	News, review, and advice	Text and pictures and podcasts.	Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter	https://www.cnet.com/
Engadget	External Independent	technology news and reviews	Text, pictures, videos, and links	YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and Tumblr.	https://www.engadget.com/uk/

The study has chosen 4 blogs which include Google and Cisco with the same nature i.e. providing services of their technological products and brands, however, CNET and Engadget are independent blogs that provide technology news and advancements information of other brands and evaluate their performances. Additionally, products can be purchased and evaluated openly by existing and potential customers.

4.1.3 First stage: CONTENT

The first stage of the model is the content of technology blogs. Content of technology blogs can play the most important role in engaging customers and making them visit the blog again and again. The content of blogs can also be the main actor in transforming readers into customers. The main characteristic of user-friendly blogs is that they have very simple and easy to access contents. The readers do not want to get lost while they are looking for something they want to.

"The Keyword", Google blog: The first company blog in the table is Google which is a very well-known IT company and famous for technological innovations in the world. The company blog of Google is named "The Keyword" and it is famous for the latest news updates and stories of Google. Google entered the blogging world in 2004 and after that Google created 19 official blogs with their specialties. However, recently Google consolidated all these blogs into one blog platform and named it "The Keyword".

Figure 4.2: The Keyword, Google blog, https://www.blog.google/
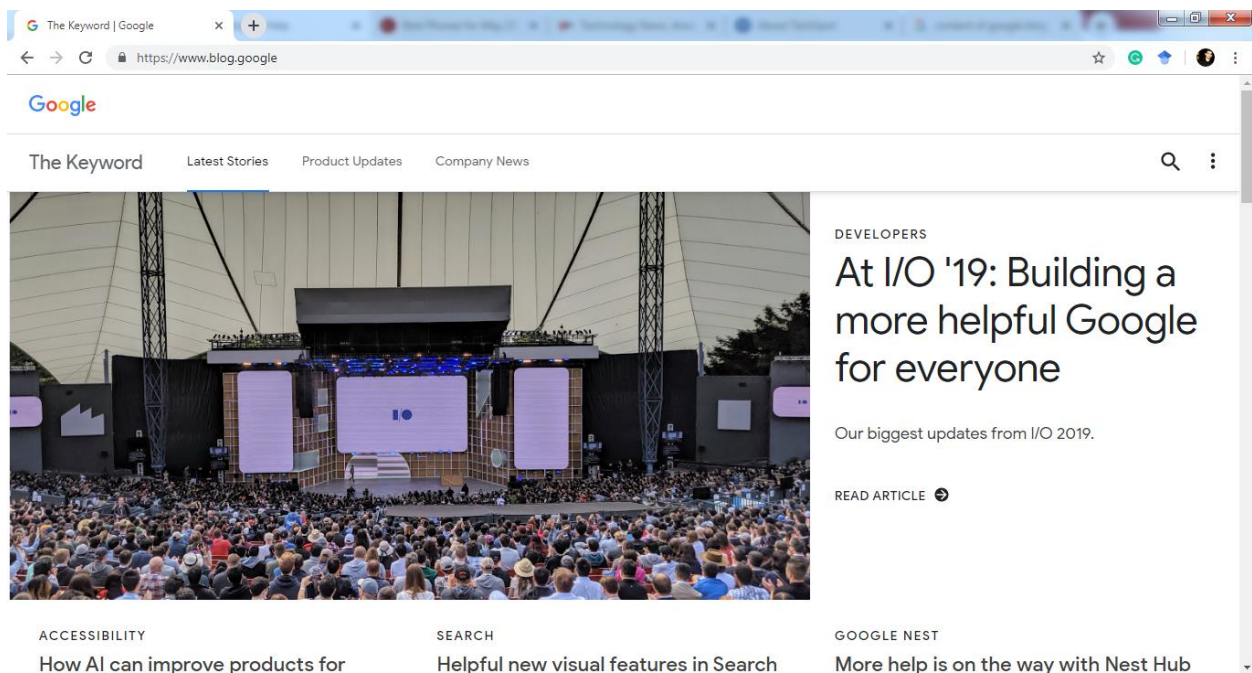
In the designing and organizing of the blog content, The Keyword has used a unique content strategy. The Keyword endorsed in creating very simple content for its reader which they find very easy to understand. The content of Google comprises of the text and pictures related to updates and news of the company and its products. The blog has very simple looking and easy to find three sections on the top of the homepage. The three main components of the blog content are; the latest stories, product updates, and company news:

- The first section is the latest stories which include all the recent stories related to innovations in technology happening in the world. It updates the reader about technological transformations happening in their surroundings.

- The second section of the contents is Product updates. It includes the most important updates of Google's latest products which readers have a concern about. This section is divided into sub-sections; in the first sub-section, the blog posts all the latest product stories and the second sub-section comprises of all the Google products and services latest information.

- Finally, the last section of the blog is company news which has the following news sections; initiatives, technology, inside Google, Around the Globe, and the perspective of Google staff members.

Concludingly, the content of google blogs includes only pictures and text to explain the updates and news of the company and its products. The visual presentation is very professional and simple. The sections are distinct and the reader can read more by clicking on them. The color chosen for the content is Google's traditional white color.

Cisco blogs: Cisco Systems, Inc. is a global company that manufactures technology and provides network and communications services. The company blog is also among the world's most visited blogs. The content of Cisco blogs comprises of a wide range of topics and updates. Since the start of Cisco blogs, it has become a huge platform where business professionals receive, share, or exchange information about technologies and innovations. Cisco blogs are famous due to the availability of professional information and a well-established reader and blogger community.

Figure 4.3: The Cisco company blog, https://blogs.cisco.com/
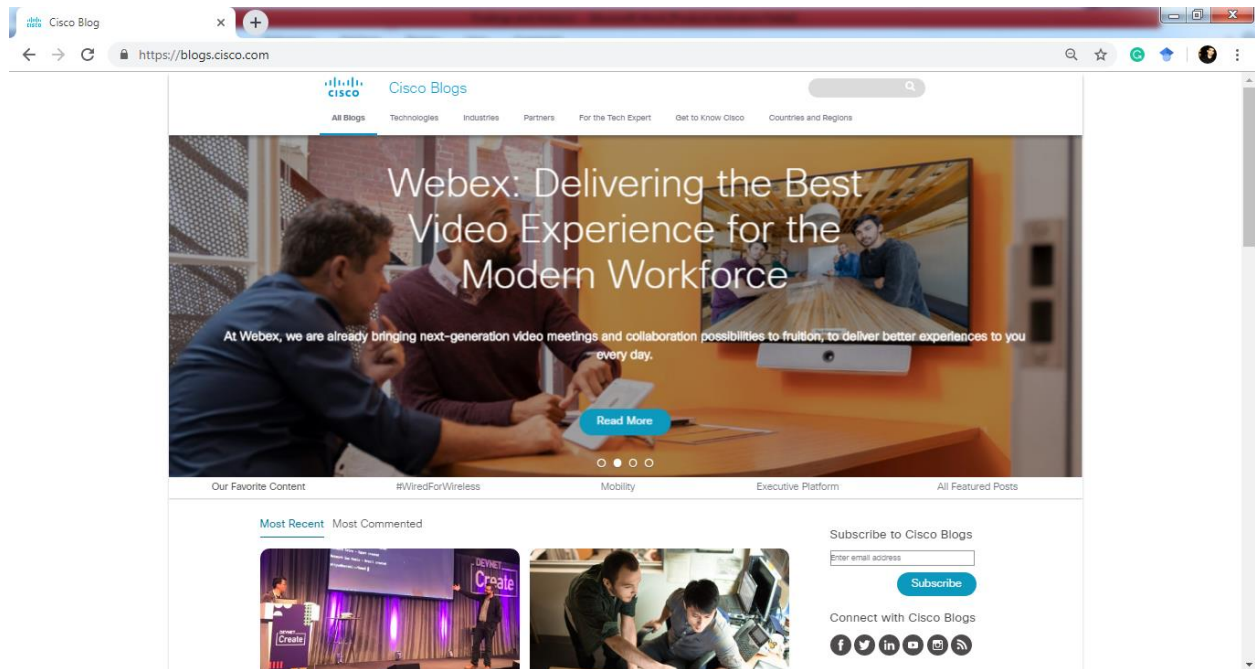
The Cisco blog has a very dynamic and simple look. The color and visual selection have contributed to the overall look of the blog. The header of the blog has a list that comprises several components and each of these components has a drop-down menu with relevant updates and stories. The header list consists of; technologies, industries, partners, technology experts, get to know Cisco. These components include

- Technological and mobile fields update,

- Topics relevant to the industry,

- Users and readers support for their issues or they can also get advice,

- The insight of the company,

- Corporate updates and news,

- Posts and articles from executives and top management of Cisco, and

- Partner companies updates

- Cisco blogs from different countries with their languages.

The graphic presentation of the blog is well organized and easy to understand. On the right top corner, SEO is located. In the middle right, email subscription for the readers and connection/following to social media platforms options are available.

CNet blog: CNet focuses on the latest technological advancements and tells its readers how they can change their life with new technology. CNet also provides significant information about popular brands and also advises its readers in choosing and buying the products and taking out maximum benefits from them.

Figure 4.4: CNet, https://www.cnet.com/
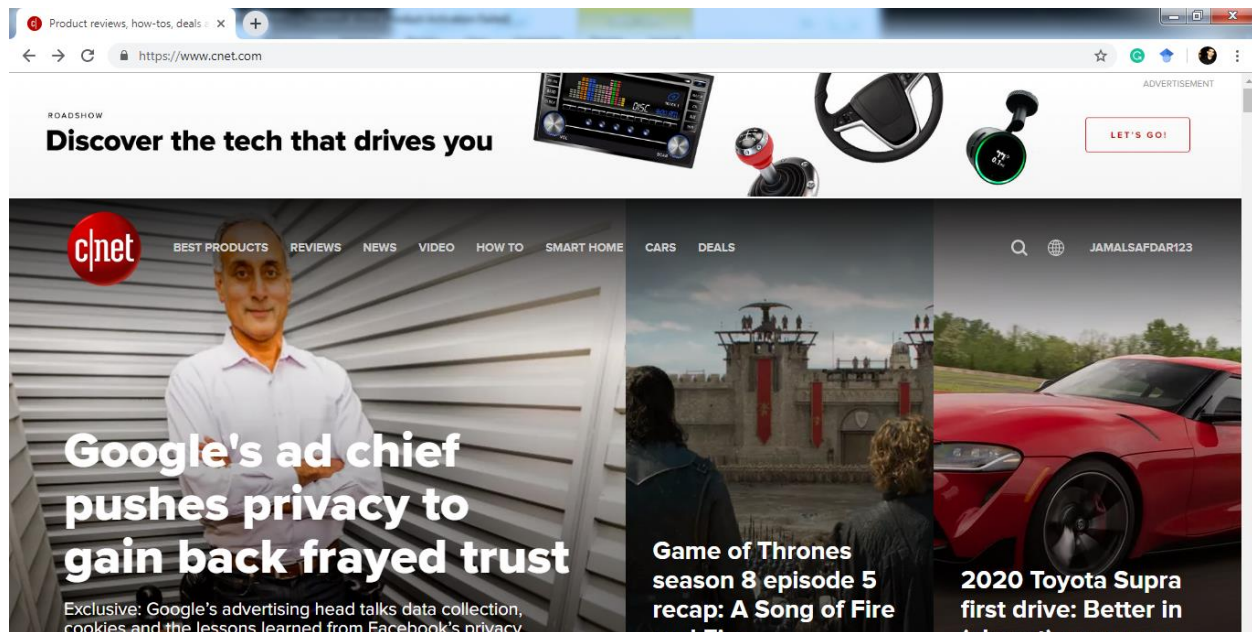
CNet blog is popular among its readers for the latest technology news and unbiased reviews on products. CNet its readers a platform to watch the latest technology videos, download games,

mobile apps, and software. Readers can also review articles on different products and buy them through CNet. Furthermore, consumers can post opinions and share their ideas about different technological brands on the CNet blog.

The color scheme of the CNet is a bit color with big pictures of products and services and text written on them. On the header, CNet always displays update of latest products every time the user refreshes the page or come back on the home page from other links. On the right end of the header, there is a 'learn more' button which gives more details about the product being displayed in the header. Underneath the header, there are several components in one line and each of these components has a drop-down menu with relevant updates and stories. These components include:

- Best products offered in the market; from small electronic products like headphones to washing machines and dishwashers,

- Reviews on all latest products introduced in the market,

- The latest news on products innovation,

- Advice and guidance,

- Car and smart home section,

- Deals for customers, and

- Different apps to download.

Under the header on the right side, the SEO is located and next to the sign-in link in which the reader can use to get all the updates directly on the email. The reader can also subscribe to the CNet magazine on his email ID and can receive it whenever the latest edition is released. CNet

magazine can also be read directly on the blog and the link is located on the bottom of the blog.

If the readers want to get connected on social media, they can connect through Twitter, Youtube,

Facebook, and LinkedIn. However, the links are hard to find due to written in very small text on

the bottom of the blog.

Engadget blog:

Figure 4.5: Engadget, https://www.engadget.com/
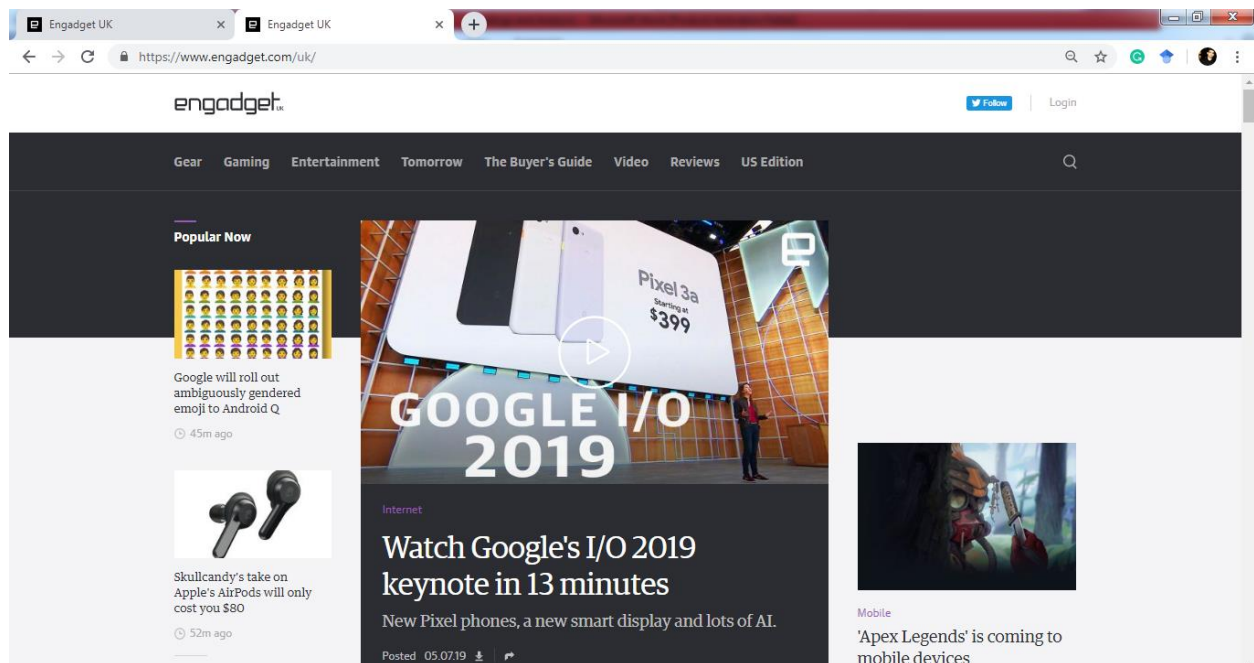
The fourth technology blog used for this research is Engadget. Engadget was found in 2004 as a

technology news and reviews provider. However, it is now a global multimedia organization that

covers the latest update on the latest release, gaming, and entertainment. Engadget publishes

articles, reviews, breaking news about professionals, products, and videos related to technology

innovations.

The color and graphics scheme of the blog is kept moderate for the pictures with bright colors to be read easily without viewer distraction. The blog has high-quality videos and pictures which makes the blog overall visually attractive. The content of the blog includes the following components list each with the drop-down menu;

- Gear: updates on the latest technological equipment and services.

- Gaming: Updates on new games or a new version of existing games, gaming companies, and gaming tools.

- Entertainment: This section includes all the updates on broadcasting, either movies, series, or sports.

- Tomorrow: This section includes articles by experts on what new can happen or expected in technology in the near future.

- The buyer's guide: If the readers are interested in buying any product, they can take the help of this section which includes articles and reviews on a huge range of products.

- Videos: Latest videos on all technological advancements and experts' interviews.

- Reviews: By experts and from current users of the different products.

On the bottom left of the page, the reader can find the link to subscribe to Engadget newsletter, ''The Morning After'' and on the right corner in the bottom links are located if the readers want to connect with Engadget on social media.

Unlike Google and Cisco blogs, the content of CNet and Engadget includes a wide range of latest videos, interviews, articles, and reviews mix on the main page of the blog.

4.1.5 Second Stage: INTERACTION

The Keyword, Google blog

Despite, the fact that Google is the world's famous and leading technology company, the company blog is more of a news and story updates platform. This is quite unfortunate that the visitors can only read the articles and news updates on the latest stories, product updates, and company news. If a reader wants to search for any specific article, he can search through SEO. The only way provided to visitors to interact with the company is social media platforms. Visitors can follow the company and interact using the traditional way such as posting a query or sending a personal email or message.

Figure 4.6: Google blog
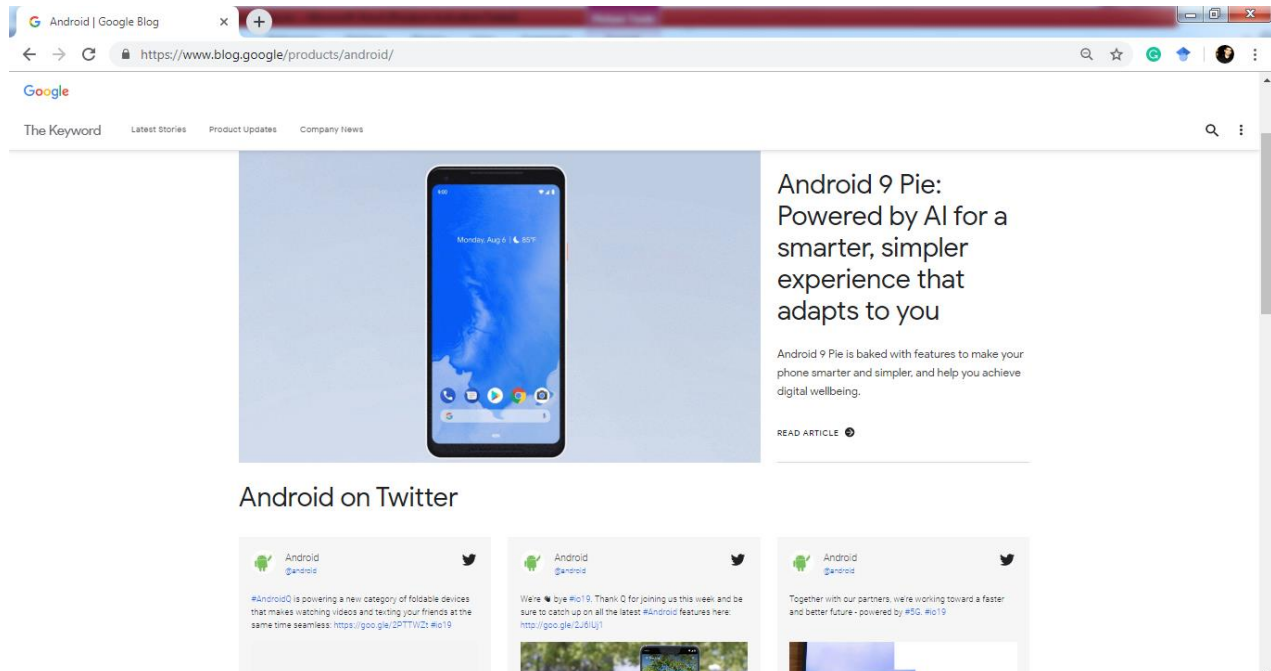
The above figure is a screenshot from Google blog in which it can be seen that if the reader has to share his opinion, post a comment, or has any query, it can be only done via social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter.

Cisco blogs

Like Google, Cisco also comes among the leading technology companies in the world. It manufactures technology and provides networks and communications services, which means it, would be a busy and interactive company. Technology manufacturers and service providers always have to stay updated and in touch with their customers to meet their expectations and listen to them. Therefore, the companies use blogs to provide such a platform to their customers where they can read and share their thoughts. Likewise, Cisco has a very interactive blog that keeps its readers engage by being responsive to them and allowing them to share their opinions.

The most interactive component found by the research is that Cisco blogs have even provided the direct phone number on the blog, in case if customers have any queries in the industries where Cisco provides services. The industries in which Cisco is providing its services are education, energy, financial services, government, healthcare, manufacturing, and retail, and hospitality. If customers need services or advice in any of these sectors, they can directly interact with the company through the number given on the website.

Figure 4.7: The contact number provided by the company
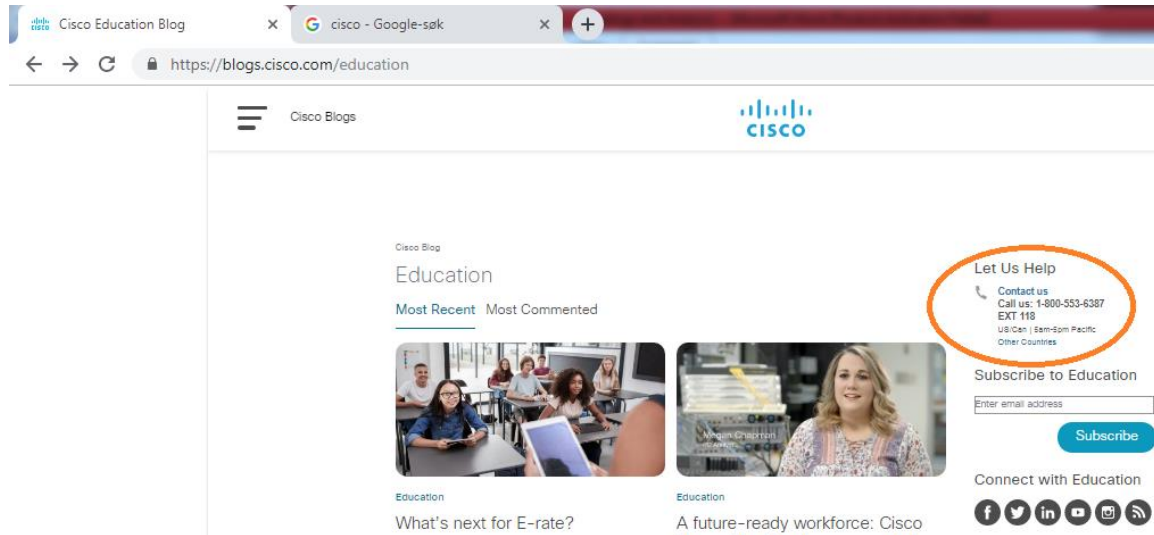
The encircled part of the above screenshot of the Cisco blog shows the number provided by the

company if the customer needs any help. They can call on any day in the given time and ask for

the advice or help needed. Furthermore, the Cisco blog provides the platform to its readers to

comment on every article or update. By clicking on the drop-menu link available on the left corner

of the header, a list of all available sections appears and the reader can choose his section of

interest and interact with other readers and experts of the company. This allows the readers to

create a community where they can discuss and share their opinions. The figure below shows the

sections available for the access of readers about which they can interact with the company.

Figure 4.8: List of sections available in drop-menu
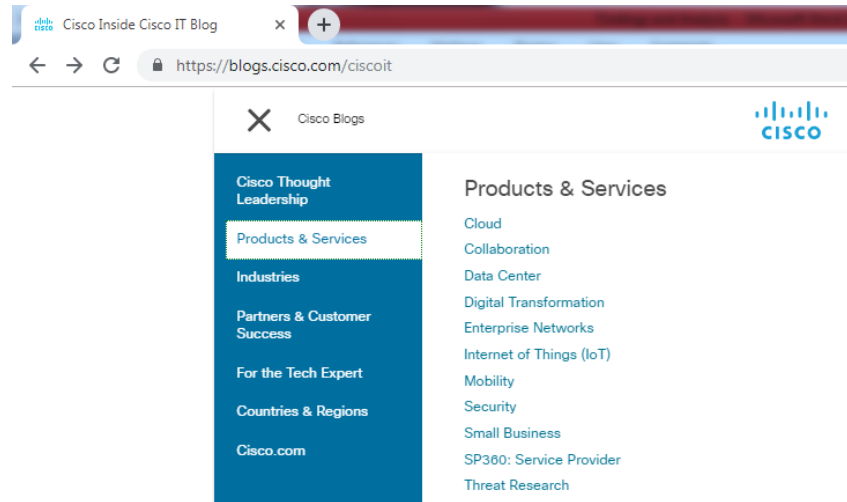
Another interesting interaction strategy of the Cisco blogs is that it is available for readers from all over the world with different languages. Cisco blogs also engage customers through Cisco gblogs, short for global blogs. Cisco's gblogs provides its technological updates in different countries. The reader can simply click on the countries and regions section and choose the country he is living in. The screenshot below shows the Cisco gblogs updates of Norway.

Figure 4.9: Cisco gblogs
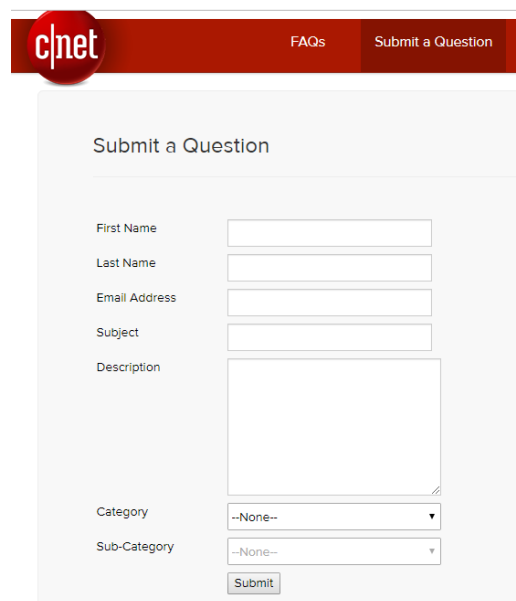
CNet Blog

CNet is among the most popular and visited blogs which provide updates of the world's most popular and in-demand brands. CNet aims to engage a huge number of visitors worldwide and the bigger targeted visitors are, the bigger interaction platform should be. CNet blog has different interaction strategies to engage its visitors. The different ways of engaging its visitors are summarized in the following points:

- CNet blog claims to provide unbiased reviews of the different products.

- CNet blog also provides an opportunity for its readers to get reviews if they want on any products even if they are not available on the blog. Readers can provide information about the brand or its product and get reviews from different experts.

- CNet blog has created a "CNet everywhere" link inside about section where the visitor can get access to all social media platforms to interact with the company.

- The most effective strategy is the creation of the "Meet the Team" link in about CNet section. Here the visitor can get in touch with any team member of the CNet and simply send them a personal message by clicking the message button located next to the team member's name. Furthermore, visitor can get in touch with the team member on his twitter account which is also available on the same page

- CNet blog has a "Get in touch with us" link which gives access to interact through submitting a question on the blog or sending an email.

Figure 4.10: Query form

- CNet blog also provides phone numbers of company's offices in different cities in the world if the customers have any query and they want the solution immediately.

Engadget blog

Engadget blog is also very popular among technological innovation readers throughout the world. It is ranked among the top ten technological blogs globally. The interaction strategies opt by the Engadget blog are listed below;

- Primarily, the Engadget blog uses social media platforms to interact with its visitors and customers. On the bottom of every page, Engadget blog has provided links that connect the visitor to its different social media accounts where visitors can interact.

- Like CNet, Engadget blog has also provided the contact details of its team members and experts which are always available to help their customers.

- Engadget blog has created contact us, send us a tip and support buttons on the bottom of the page in customers or visitors want to get in touch with the blog. However, if the visitor clicks on any of these links the same contact form appears. The visitor can mention the subject of its message to the blog which differentiates the nature of the contact purpose. The same contact form which appears by clicking on these links is shown below.

**Figure 4.11: Contact form**

4.1.6 Third stage: IMMERSION

The immersion is considered as an important predecessor of customer engagement. The stage of involving customers plays a very important role in retaining customers which leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, companies use different ways to involve the customers to manipulate their thinking, so they stay with the company for the long-term. Company blogs are the most efficient ways of involving customers through various activities like quizzes, polls, surveys, and events. This study has explored the world's most-visited company blogs to find out what activities they offer to involve its visitors and transform them into customers through these activities. The findings of the research for immersion of visitors are according to the blog are explained below.

The blogger, a Google platform

As Google is a well-known technology company with a lot of products in the global market, it has secured a strong position in the market. Even if Google stops marketing its product, people will still be interested in the company updates. Google has a very simple strategy to involve its customer which is, it has created a website where everyone can create his blog. Google named this platform as "Blogger" and the only thing required to create a blog using blogger is the user must have an email account on Gmail.

Figure 4.12: The Blogger
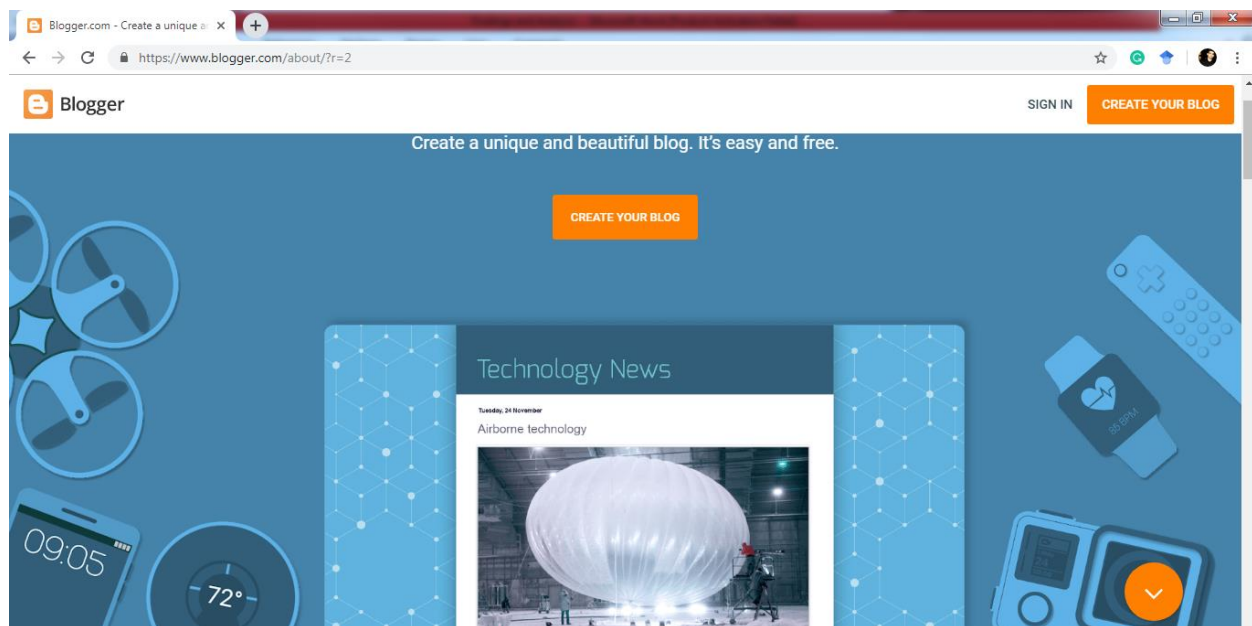
Google blog involves the user by providing a couple of benefits if they create a blog through Blogger. Figure 4.13 below shows that Blogger provides the free domain to launch the blog on Web 2.0. Furthermore, the user can earn money through Google AdSense, which is an automatic display of relevant targeted ads on users' blogs.

Figure 4.13: Benefits of using Blogger
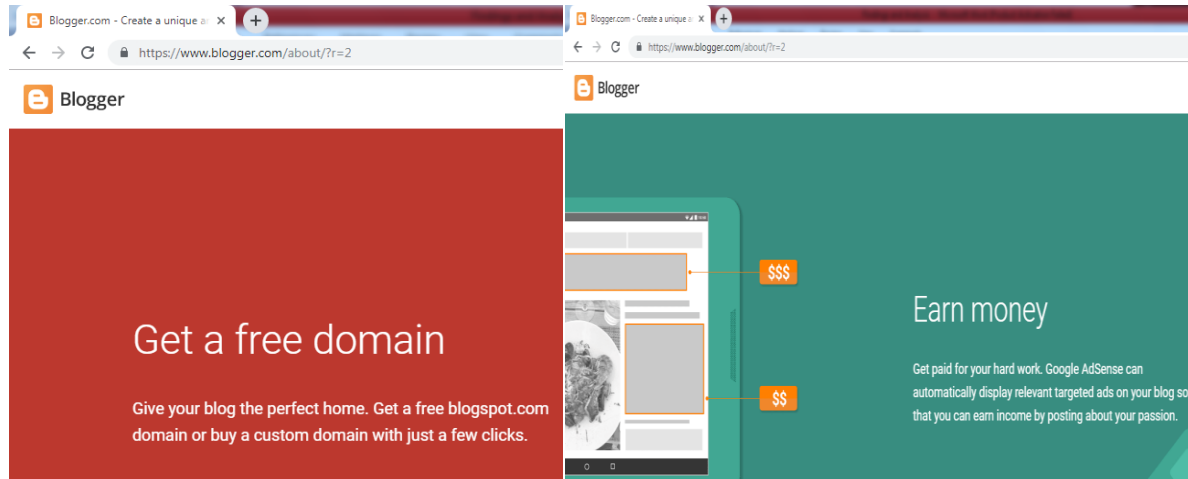
Cisco blogs

As an immersion activity, the Cisco blog has introduced a Reward system for its customers. Cisco has recently announced the rewards system on its company blogs where it encourages its customer to be a Cisco partner and earn points. Now, how they can be partners with Cisco and earn points? Cisco has both direct customers who purchase and uses the technology and the customers who are company owners. Now as an example, every time the customer A, purchase the technology from Cisco for personal use gets a code. If he recommends customer B to buy from Cisco and give him the code to use during the purchase, the customer A earns points. Similarly, in the case of customers who are company owners, purchase Cisco technology and sell it further, they earn points too. These points can be used in the next purchases for discounts or other offers.

Figure 4.14: Cisco blog rewards
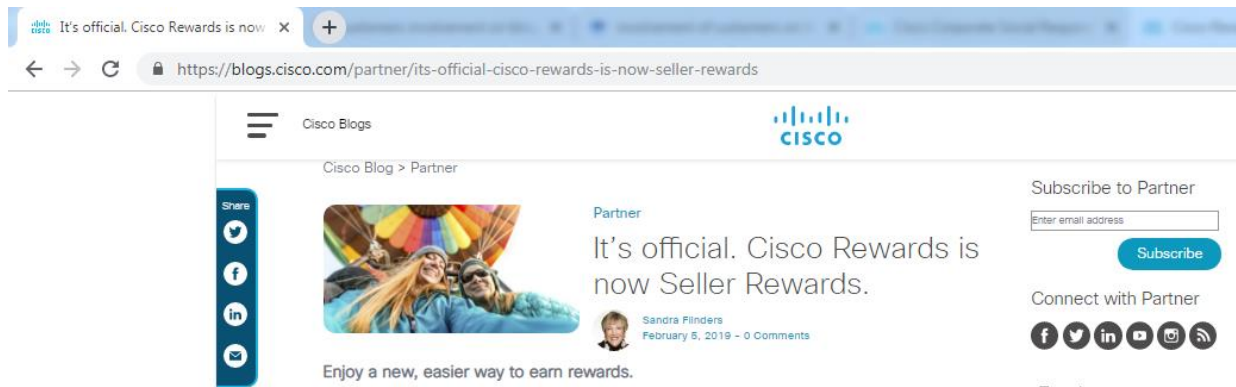
Moreover, research has as such found no other immersion strategies or activities on the CISCO blogs designed by the company to engage. However, it is assumed that the application of the previous stage of the proposed model i.e. interaction on CISCO blogs is efficient enough for the immersion of its visitors.
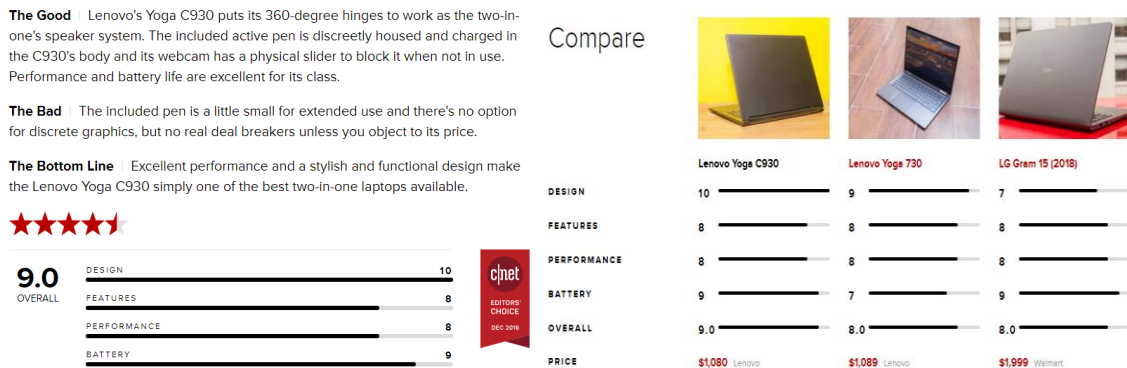
CNet blog

The research has explored the activities used by the CNET blog to involve its visitors and keep them on the blog for the long-term or make their visits frequent. The findings of research on immersion activities are discussed below:

- CNet blog provides video reviews of every product and service available on the blog. If a reader clicks on any product or service on CNet to get reviews or details, an automatic player starts with high-definition video quality and an expert's commentary.

- CNet blogs provide the full review of every single product or service available on the blog. These reviews are written as an article by the experts and editors of the company. The review involves customers in developing their interest in the product. These reviews give

scores according to the value, performance, design, features, and price. These scores are

also compared with the same product as other brands.

Figure 4.15: CNET scoring and comparison

- CNet blog visitors can create a discussion with other bloggers and users on the CNet

forum. CNet forums feature a wide range of topics, where visitors can have conversations

and get advice from a community of experts.

Figure 4.16: CNet Forum

- CNet software applications.

Figure 4.17: CNet apps

- CNet company on its blog provides a platform for business owners to do business with the company. CNet allows them to become their partners through content swaps, lead generation, video distribution, mobile content distribution, and sales packaging.

- CNet blog has created a deals section in the header of the main page where visitors can see promotions and discount deals and offers. Furthermore, visitors can subscribe to daily deals on email.

Figure 4.18: CNet deals

- CNet blog organizes yearly industry events in a very unique way. The event is called Consumer electronics show (CES) where videos, podcasts, and blogs produced live from the event.

Engadget blog

Engadget is among the world's famous technology blog with millions of visitors every month from all over the world. However, this quite strange that research has found very limited activities on the blog which are designed to involve customers. In comparison with the other blog this study has used for research, Engadget is the only blog that uses the traditional ways to involve customers. The ways Engadget uses for customer immersion are

- Offering discount deals on products with one or two years warrant, with extra cost.

- Providing a platform to advertise products on Engadget, like big brands.

- Like CNet, Engadget also has the reviewing strategy and scoring the product by experts.

Figure 4.19: Engadget review and scoring
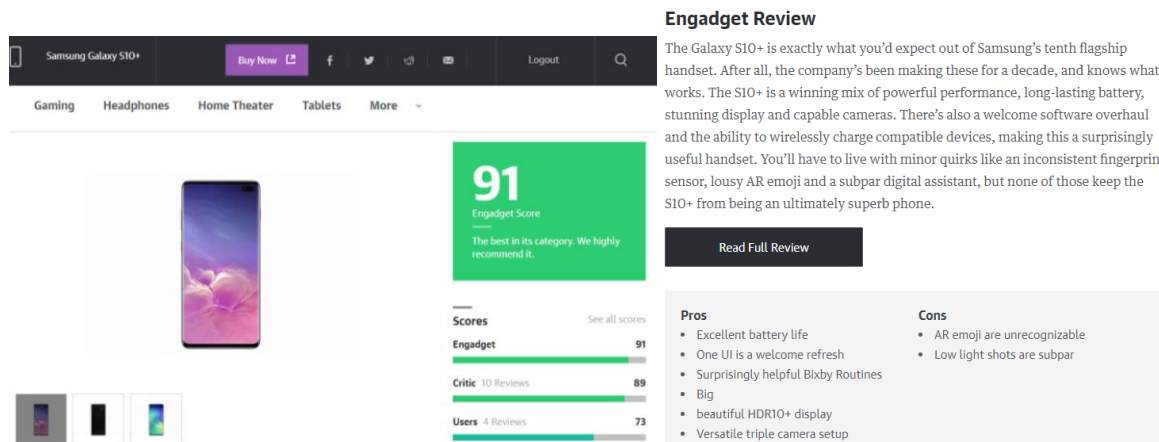
The above reviewing and scoring of the products by experts involve the visitors in checking the scores and reviews repeatedly and keep visiting the blogs until they finally make the purchasing decision. These reviews are divided into three parts; the first part is the review, pros, and cons of the product from Engadget itself, the second part is the critic reviews which

are written by other technology blogs, brands, or editors. The reviews in the third part are the reviews from the actual users of the product. Therefore, these reviews on technology blogs play an important role in the customer immersion as they show both plus and minus of the products.
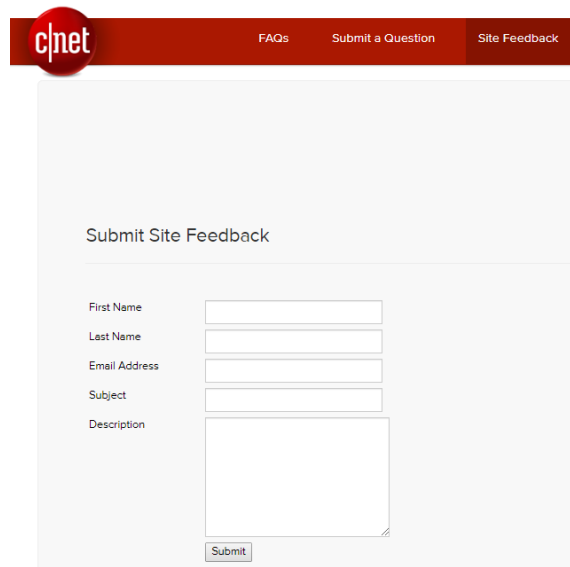
4.1.7 Fourth Stage: EVALUATION

Customer evaluation on the Google and Cisco blogs

Google and Cisco are very popular names in the world of technology and innovation and have gained a good reputation among users. However, none of the company blogs have included any customer evaluation activities on them. We can only assume that maybe they interact individually with their customers to find out how they evaluate a product that has been purchased from the companies. Though, both companies have provided their contact details on blogs, if the customers want to give any feedback or may have any issues with the products. One thing for sure about both companies is that they welcome every comment and every feedback on their blog posts.

Customer evaluation on Cisco and Engadget blogs

To find out the customer experiences, different activities of evaluation are used by CNet and Engadget blogs. One of the traditional evaluation techniques used by CNet blog is the feedback from the customers. This method of evaluation is the simplest and easiest way to find out the customer experience with the products or services.

Figure 4.20: CNet customer evaluation feedback form

Taking feedback is very important but what if the feedback is not good. Then, the evaluation process does not stop here. CNet provides an open platform to the customer to put their issue forward and report it on the blog, on the discussion forum, or in the comments under the review so the expert who has written can read it straight away. Below are the screenshots of methods used for evaluation.

Figure 4.21: CNet customer evaluation through comments
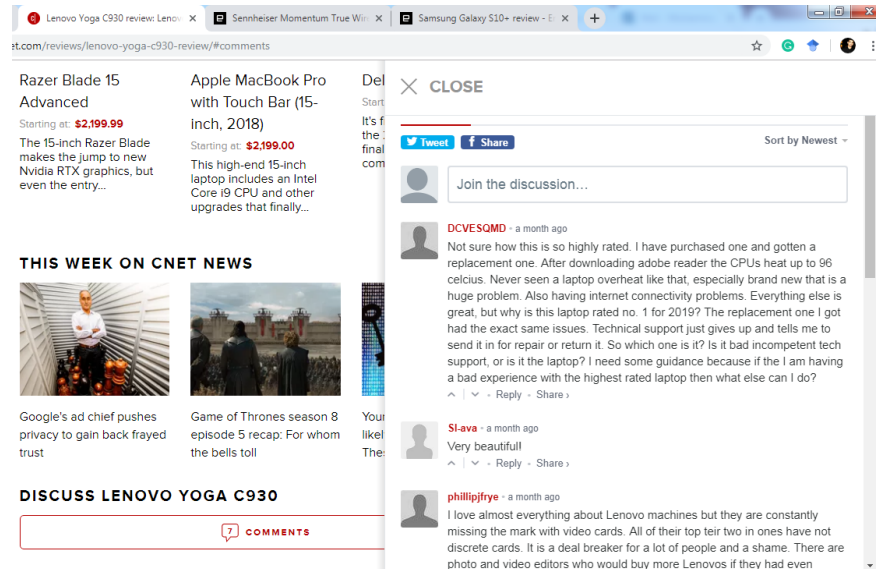
Figure 4.22: CNet customer evaluation
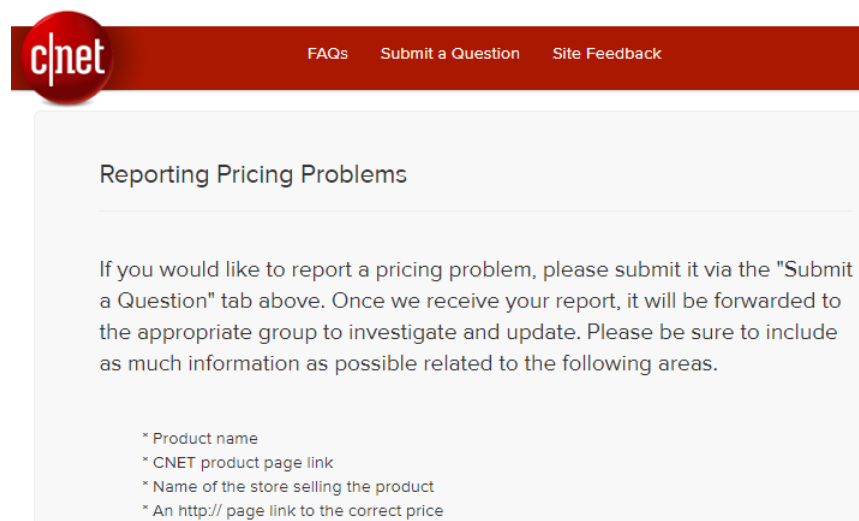
Figure 4.20 and 4.21 above show the methods being used for the evaluation of customer

experience. Figure 4.20 is a discussion platform but CNet welcomes its users if they want to show

their feelings and emotions with the brand. Furthermore, CNet also encourages its customer to

mention the name of the store selling the product. If customers see any pricing problems, for

example, a high price compared to another store, they can simply report in pricing problems form

on the blog. Apart from the above-mentioned way of customer evaluation methods, CNet also uses email evaluation, phone number of the company offices, and team member details if the customer wants to report any issue or give feedback.

For the Engadget blog, if we compare the customer evaluation with CNet, both blogs have almost the same methods of evaluation. However, Engadget gives this opportunity its visitors to write their review, score the product, and post publicly on the blog.

Figure 4.23: Engadget user review

Figure 4.22 shows the three-step of customer evaluation using the user review method on the Engadget blog. In the first step, the user rates the product's different attributes on scales from 1 to 10, in the second step user can write a detailed review on the product and express his experience with the product. Finally, in the third step user can adjust the overall average score which automatically given by the Engadget based on the scores provided by the user.

4.1.8 Fifth stage: SATISFACTION

The last stage of the proposed model is customer satisfaction. In this study, customer evaluation of experiences is considered as the predecessor of customer satisfaction. If the company successfully engages the customer in the evaluation process, it can find out the level of customer satisfaction.

As there were no findings in the evaluation stage of Google blog and Cisco blogs, therefore at this stage it is not possible to explain how these two companies identify either satisfied customers or their satisfaction level.

For CNet and Engadget blogs, the research found out several ways of customer evaluation which can help in identifying their satisfaction level. CNet uses feedback, reporting pricing methods, and customer discussion forums to find out if the customer is satisfied or not.

Figure 4.24: CNet blog; same product, two different perceptions on discussion forum
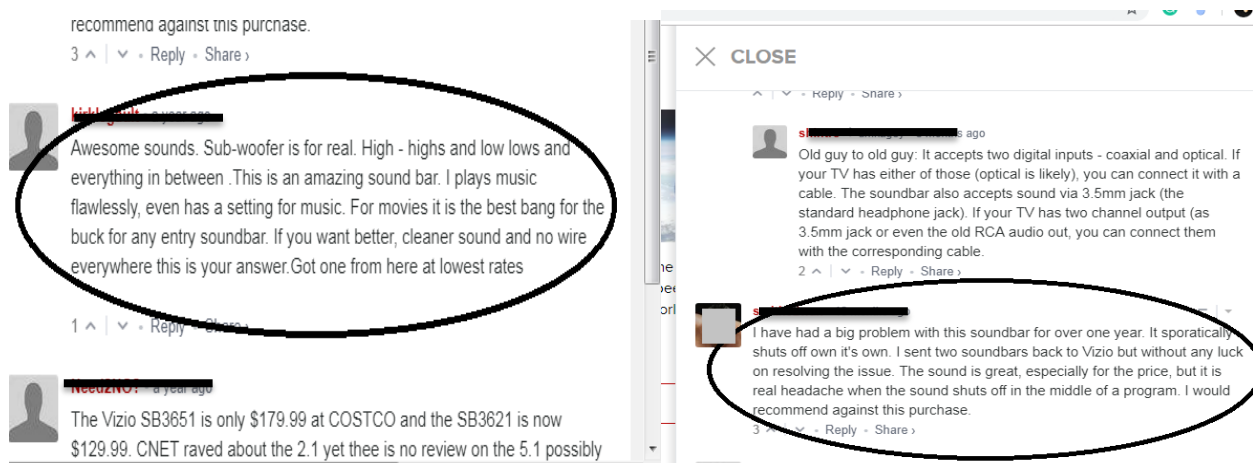
The above figure shows the opinions after customers have used the same product of the same company and evaluated according to their experiences.

In the case of the Engadget blog, the customer satisfaction level is identified through the reviews of the users and the scores they give to the product out of 100.

Figure 4.25: Measuring satisfaction through experience
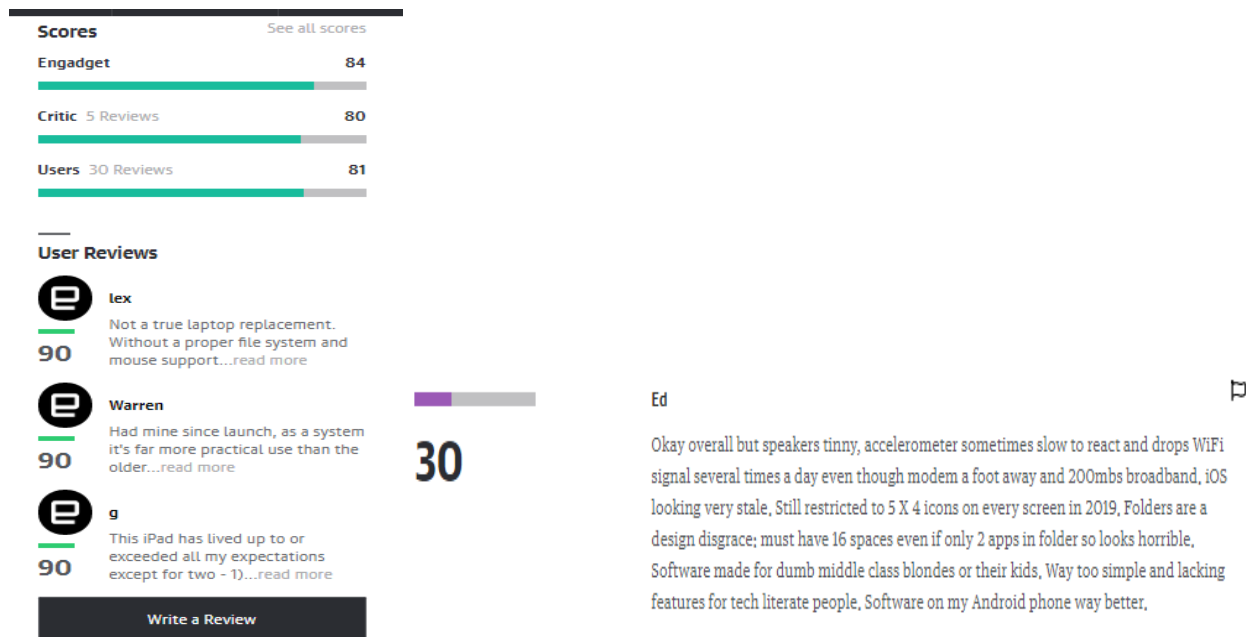
Figure, 4.24 shows the customer satisfaction level from their experience with the product. Engadget blog provides this unique platform to its readers to write their experience with the product, give them scores to different attributes of the product and publish them on the blog. The scores given by the customer are calculated and the product is given an average score by Engadget automatically, however this final score can also be adjusted by the customer. In the figure above, a product has been evaluated and customers have also shared their experiences on the blog. This freedom of rating a product and expressing satisfaction from the experience through evaluation engages the customers on the Engadget blog. Other than sharing the experience and expression satisfaction in reviews on the Engadget blog, as typical way customers

are may be contacted through emails or personal numbers by the teams to identify if the

customers are satisfied.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to explore the literature available on customer engagement to achieve its main objective. The main objective of this study is to develop a process model with the help of the previous literature and use it by implementing technology product blogs to find out how they engage customers through different online activities. The study developed two main research questions to achieve its objective. The first question focuses on exploring as much as available literature on customer engagement on online platforms, to identify the main dimensions responsible for engagement. The second research question depends on the data collected in the first research question from the previous literature. Furthermore, the chosen sample i.e. technology blogs are used for further data collection and use the developed process model of customer engagement. This process model includes the dimensions as stages identified in the first research question.

RQ1: What are the different dimensions of the customer engagement process which can be implemented in technology blogs to engage customers?

With the help of literature, this study has identified five main dimensions as stages of customer engagement on technology blogs. The proposed model of customer engagement comprises of 5 dimensions as stages: content, interaction, immersion, evaluation, and satisfaction. As mentioned in the literature that there has been a huge lack of research on customer engagement on technology blogs, therefore, the main objective set for this research was to identify these dimensions and with the help of these dimensions how a customer can be engaged in technology blogs. Four famous and most visited company technology blogs were chosen to find out what

activities are designed by these blogs to engage customers. Company blog of Google i.e. The keyword, Cisco blogs, CNet blog, and Engadget blog are the selected technology blogs used for data collection and analysis. The activities and events on these blogs are explored with the help of the dimensions of the proposed model and the findings have been gathered.

Successful customer engagement on a corporate blog is a very hard and crucial process. This is because a customer may not experience or encounter all of the suggested dimensions by scholars while interacting with the technology blog (Potdar, et al, 2018). Furthermore, we are living in a very competitive world, where every company blog comes up with something new and attractive every day. Combining both points, we can conclude that customers always keep their options open and do not bind them with one company blog when they are looking for something of their interest. They keep looking more than one blog at a time until they find what they are looking for, and if they don't experience any of the proposed components with a company, then they may switch to another one. Therefore, customer engagement is not an easy process to perform, and satisfying the customer to achieve customer loyalty and retention is crucial.

RQ2: How different activities or events on technology blogs of companies are successfully achieving customer engagement?

As mentioned there were not many studies conducted on customer engagement in connection with technology blogging, therefore, the first main research question stresses proposing 5 key dimensions of customer engagement on technology blogs followed by the second research question. The second research question focused on giving a detailed aerial view of customer engagement activities on technology blogs used as samples for data collection.

5.1 Content

As the research explored the famous and most visited technology blogs, it is concluded that blogs adopt a simple content strategy to attract and engage readers. The color scheme and the visuals chosen by famous blogs are mostly simple, clear, and eye-catching. Such selection of theme attracts more traffic towards the blog and increase the number of visitors. Pal and Kapur, (2010) explain that blogs are used as a way of additional interaction channel which can distinguish the intensive information content from the content available on the company's website. If used properly and smartly, this content brings more individuals to the company. Similarly, the four blogs used for the research purpose are very user-friendly blogs. Their contents are designed in a way that they provide companies news, product updates, and technological information in presentable ways. Brodie, et al, (2011) stated that there are two main components of customer engagement on social media and the relevant content theme is one of them.

The Keyword, Google blog was the first one chosen for the research and the company blog is self-explanatory and no doubt among the world's top-rated blog. However, one of the contributing factors in this high ranking of the blog is the reputation of the company itself. The content of the Google blog is very basic and simple, with the latest technological stories, product updates, and company news. Although, the blog includes the basic component to present these contents, for example, clear pictures and only black colored text is used, however, many interesting content and components are missing in the Google blog. The only factor as mentioned which gives Google blog a huge number of visitors is the reputation of the company and the emotional interest and concern people have with the company.

Cisco blogs also include all basic and required content that engages the customers. In today's, knowledgeable environment, the quality and the relevance of information is considered as the key selection and consumption criteria for individual information (Eppler and Mengis, 2004). This statement goes in favor of CISCO as the company blog keeps updating the relevant content to the core area of the company. Every single bit of technology update is available to the visitors and it keeps updating every half of the day. Furthermore, Argenti and Barnes, (2009) added that if the companies want to be heard by their target customers, they must publish or produce the content which is useful, related, and credible for the customers. Similarly, CISCO blogs provide useful content that has relevance and is credible.

CNet and Engadget blogs are ranked among the world's top technology blogs with the latest updates from popular brands. Both blogs publish a huge variety of content with all updates and new products, services, offers, and stories from inside companies. According to the researchers on content, to attract and engage customers, a company blog must include relevant information to the company's core objective and area of expertise. Both CNet and Engadget blog's content includes all relevant information for engaging customers and making them visit again and again. Additionally, the offers of downloading apps, reading reviews, subscribing for deals and magazines, and getting advice from experts are some success factors of CNet and Engadget. However, none of the blogs offers any fun event on the blog such as gaming, lucky draws, or live chatting with other users or experts. Though it's not the negative point if they do not offer these but this can be a key factor to engage more customers.

5.2 Interaction

The second proposed stage of the customer engagement process is interaction. From the findings of the interaction stage is chosen technology blogs, the research has analyzed that once readers are engaged through the content of the blog, they automatically entered the transition process of becoming customers. The blogs use different strategies to interact with their customers. Therefore, it is important to develop interest among them and once they become interested in what they see in the content, they interact with the companies. Potdar, et al, (2018) explains that social media platforms help the corporation to interact with their customers to understand their expectation, needs, and problem. On social media platforms, personal messages, comments, feedback, query form, or contact forms are used as the medium of interaction.

In the case of Google blog, the research found that although Google blog is famous among users and blogging community, however, Google does not provide any interaction platform on its blog. The users can only ready technological breakthroughs and contact through the main website or email. There is no such platform available which makes the interaction possible with the company via the blog.

However, Cisco blogs which the research has explored provide more platforms to interact with customers in comparison with Google. Cisco blogs have provided global blogs/gblogs which focuses on interacting with international communities. Users from different countries with different languages can be easily engaged through this opportunity. However, the best interaction opportunity provided by Cisco is the display of the direct phone number to the

company. The findings of the research have shown that although Cisco is engaging activities are very limited but very efficient.

CNet and Engadget blogs are attracting more traffic towards their content a wide range of interaction options to their users. First, both blogs provide the details of their staff details on the blogs who are one click away from the direct messaging. Furthermore, CNet has a unique way of interacting with the customers that they can get the review from an expert on any product they want. However, the Engadget mostly depends on the query form for interaction between the company and users. This same query form can be accessed if clicking on any of the following options: sending the tip, contact, or support link. It makes it easier to find an interaction medium. With the help of one form, customers can interact on any topic with the company.

Overall, the frequent response from the CNet and Engadget creates the sense of being heard in customers which makes them interact through company blogs very often. At this point, customers do not only interact for the issues they face but to take advice before any purchase decision they make. Similarly, Chaffey, (2007) states that "Repeated interactions between a customer and brand that strengthen the emotional, psychological or physical investment a customer has in that brand".

5.3 Immersion

According to Bowden, (2009) immersion is a way of increasing loyalty towards the brand and high immersion leads to stronger brand trust and increased customer commitment. Different activities on the blog, such as quizzes, polls, and different events are used to create immersion to achieve customer commitment and brand emotions (Potdar, et al, 2018).

Similarly, Google involves customers by providing them a platform named "Blogger" where they can create their blog and use a free domain linked to Google blog. The user can earn money through AdSense which is an automatic display of Google's partner's advertisements. As mentioned in the findings, this research has found only one immersion activity on Google blog. Similarly, Cisco blogs offer one immersion activity too which is a Reward system where business owners and direct customers are involved in points earning activities to earn rewards. This finding is supported by the research of Chan, et al, (2014) "when participants perceive rewards and recognition from the online brand community they participated in, they will feel obliged to devote themselves with higher levels of engagement"

However, unlike Google and Cisco, the CNet blog offers several immersion activities to achieve customer engagement. CNet provides unique video reviews with pros and cons of products by experts. This visual presentation of products develops customer's interest as they can see the products from every angle with all attributes. Similarly, text reviews with scores of product characteristics, opening their discussion forum, downloading apps, subscribing for daily discount deals, and participating in live video innovation events are the activities and events which are used for immersion by CNet. In comparison, the Engadget blog allows its users to advertise their products on the blog, offering discount deals, and reviewing products.

5.4 Evaluation

Customers evaluate according to their experience with the brands or products. However, the study found no technique of customer evaluation on either Google or Cisco blogs. In the case of CNet and Engadget blog research found, feedback technique, using customers' comments on

product posts to understand their perceptions, allowing the customer to write their reviews publicly and also giving points to the used products according to their features. Such posts of evaluation are supported by Ba and Pavlou, (2002) who stated that evaluation activities on social media and websites are very important as they play an important role in the customer's purchase decision, especially for those who read blogs to seek guidance. Furthermore, Melián-González, et al, (2013) added that businesses should pay attention and post only positive opinions, not negative ones because the potential customers check all these evaluation posts before making a purchase decision. However, the crucial part is that CNet and Engadget are famous for posting unbiased reviews and evaluation of customers and experts who do not go in the favor of brands.

5.5 Satisfaction

It is concluded after the findings that if customers are engaged successfully in the evaluation stage, it gets easier for the company to find out the satisfaction level of the customer. Potdar, et al, (2018) supports this argument by stating that satisfaction is the result-based process of evaluation of customer experience, which they get from companies offers. Furthermore, Sashi, (2012) mentioned that interaction for evaluating the services can lead to satisfaction, and this interaction can also lead to engagement. Similarly, in the case of CNet and Engadget blogs, the research found that both blogs allow their users to interact and evaluate used products based on their experiences.

Although no customer satisfaction evidence was found on Google and Cisco blogs, however, Engadget blogs engage their customers through interaction on feedback forms, discussion

forms, reporting pricing problems, and rating the products on scales from 1 to 10 according to their features. These activities develop emotions and feelings of;

- Being an ambassador of the brand through continuous participation,

- Satisfaction when the customers feel that they are being heard and their suggestions matter to the company for improving brand image.

- Involvement and conveying their opinions to the companies and experiences to the other users.

CNet uses feedback, reporting pricing methods, and customer discussion forums to find out if the customer is satisfied or not. Though for feedback and reporting pricing methods, research has found no evidence which shows customer satisfaction on the blog. Therefore, it can be assumed that the feedback and reporting happen between customer and blog in private interaction.

In the current highly competitive environment, it is not possible to engage customers in all the proposed stages. There is always a lack at some point and it is hard to fulfill customer expectations but if the companies successfully engage the customer in the last stage, according to the model it leads to customer retention and loyalty. Potdar, et al, (2018) agreed to this and added that satisfaction leads to long-term retention which results in repurchases and long-lasting relationships between buyers and sellers which further creates customer loyalty.

However, as no concrete evidence was found on customer satisfaction for all the selected technology blogs therefore, the study will propose future research in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The study has aimed to identify the main actors playing a vital role in engaging customers on technology blogs. The technology blogs chosen for the research are famous for providing services whether news updates or innovative advancements of technological products. The study developed a process model for customer engagement and implemented on 4 blogs i.e. The Keyword Google blog, Cisco blog, Engadget, and CNET. In chosen blogs, Google and Cisco blogs are of similar nature with providing technology services of their brand while Engadget and CNET blogs are independent providing news updates and information and also selling the products of other brands.

The findings are divided into 5 parts according to the 5 dimensions of the customer engagement process i.e. content, interaction, immersion, evaluation, and satisfaction. From the above findings, it is clear that technology blogs offering information for technology products play a very important role in engaging customers. Though the explored blogs for the research have shown enough evidence to find out how they engage customers through different activities, however, the research suggests that still there is a lack of more attractive activities on companies' blogs. It is shown in the finding of Google and Cisco blogs that both companies have included only technology and company news and updates on the blog and no other engaging activities are available. Though they are still ranked among the top technology blogs in the world and this is due to the company's long history and reputation in the customers. Therefore, it can be concluded that the brand name also plays an important role in the customer engagement process. Unlike, Google and Cisco blog, CNet and Engadget blogs have more engaging techniques

available. They have given more access to their users to interact and evaluate their experiences and express their satisfaction on the blogs.

Furthermore, the findings of the research show that Google has given no access to its user to interact through the blog. In comparison, Cisco allows its user to interact through the direct phone number mentioned on the blog as shown in fig 4.8. If we put the performance of technology blogs in the proposed customer engagement model, the finding can be concluded that all stages are important in engaging customers, however, the image of the company also matters. From the stage of content to satisfaction, it is not possible to engage customers at every stage; however, the companies make effort through the blog:

- To develop an impression in the customer's mind that they are given importance and their opinions and suggestions are being heard,
- To meet their expectations and give them priorities, and
- Interact with them before and after purchase, to allow them product evaluation and share their satisfaction level.

This is a crucial stage to engage as customers also think to try another brand. Ibojo, (2015) added that not only the customer can change the brand but also, they may switch to the brands of market competitors. Therefore, companies try to reach the customer and interact, to gain their trust again and satisfy them.

6.1 Limitations

Limitations and potential threats for conducting research always occur in the way of studies. Identifying and dealing up with these limitations on time help in coming up with concrete and

authentic results. This study has also encountered some limitations during the process of data collection.

This study has focused on a topic which very trendy and in everyday updates, therefore, the reader will probably think that what is the need for a model for customer engagement for blogs with technology products especially when the world is already connected through social media. Although many studies have focused on customer engagement in several areas including social media yet the missing piece to be studied is blog marketing of technological products. Due to high competition on social media and the marketing edge of giant technology companies, it is hard for new or small blog companies to survive in this competitive environment. As mentioned in this research several times that even if big technology companies do not put much effort into their blog marketing they will still attract a lot of traffic to their websites and blogs.

6.2 Blog content on technology product blogs; future research

From previous literature and study on blogs, It is concluded that the content of the blog is the key to success to successfully achieve customer satisfaction in the process of customer engagement and lead customers to purchase decisions of technological products. Andaç, et al, (2016) explains that the value creation of the product plays a role in creating customer satisfaction and developing customer purchasing condition.

According to Meire, et al, (2019), consumers use social networking sites to engage in marketer related activities, like consuming and creation of brand about blogs. Andaç, et al, (2016) added that companies willing to meet customers' expectations and needs prefer digital content marketing strategies where the focus is on achieving objectives for the products. Furthermore, a

customer visiting content designed for products transforms the information included in content into loyalty. Similarly as mentioned above, content for blog success play an important role to draw customer's attention and convert it into loyalty. Leibtag, (2011) added that the content should be shareable, easy to understand, entice, user friendly, and absorbing.

Pulizzi and Barret, (2009) highlighted the importance of content marketing as the creation of continuous value which changes and directs customer behavior. Likewise in the research, it is explained how content draws customer attention and sustain them as a buyer. Even if blogs have any missing dimension of customer engagement, content is the only dimension that is always there as it gives the first of the attention of the company and presents the reputation of the business. Demirer, (2013) also explains that blogs are digital channels that play an important role in creating awareness in target groups and potential customers towards products and services by gaining their attention, therefore creating suitable content for an increase in demand is very important.

Andaç, et al, (2016) added that apart from the website's basic functions, it is important to use different marketing activities, which can emphasize the knowledge and satisfaction of the customer. Likewise, studied blogs have included several marketing activities to focus on customer's knowledge and satisfaction level. Lin, (2003, p. 205) highlighted a very important point that consumer gets reference from the valuable content generated for the products. In this research, the content section shows that all the selected blogs have generated several contents like videos, infographics, animated text, and pictures to give customers a reference.

Furthermore, every blog has put effort to be innovative, accurate, and targeted customers demand fulfillment. Andaç, et al, (2016) also underlined four main factors of content on blogs i.e. innovation, accuracy, confidence, and expectations fulfillment to ensure customer satisfaction. Blogs are also very useful for providing open and clear information on already sold products. Therefore, the content of a blog can help customers to interact with the products even before they but the products. This research also provides evidences that the content of technology blogs include all the information in several forms for a wide range of electronic products and services so visitors take full advantage of knowing them before making the purchase decision. Andaç, et al, (2016) support this statement by stating that customers get the opportunity to experience the products only when they buy them but blog content helps them to find out about the product even before they buy it. Furthermore, the positive feedbacks of existing customers on blogs through content is also helpful in companies' perspectives to gain more customers.

Therefore, this research recommends a study on blog content for future research on technology products as they can be key dimensions of customer engagement and achieving customer satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, and leading customers to purchasing decisions. The research recommends a survey approach for data collection and at least a sample of 30 would be suggested to get concrete findings on customer satisfaction. The sample will be random users of blogs who visit for information gathering and engage them in marketing activities happening on blog contents and to make a purchase decision if they are satisfied. The customer satisfaction scale will depend on the loyalty and commitment of customers,

- how many times they visited the blogs

- how long they will stay because of its content

- they will make purchase decisions if satisfied with the content.

Figure 6.1: Framework of blog content for future research
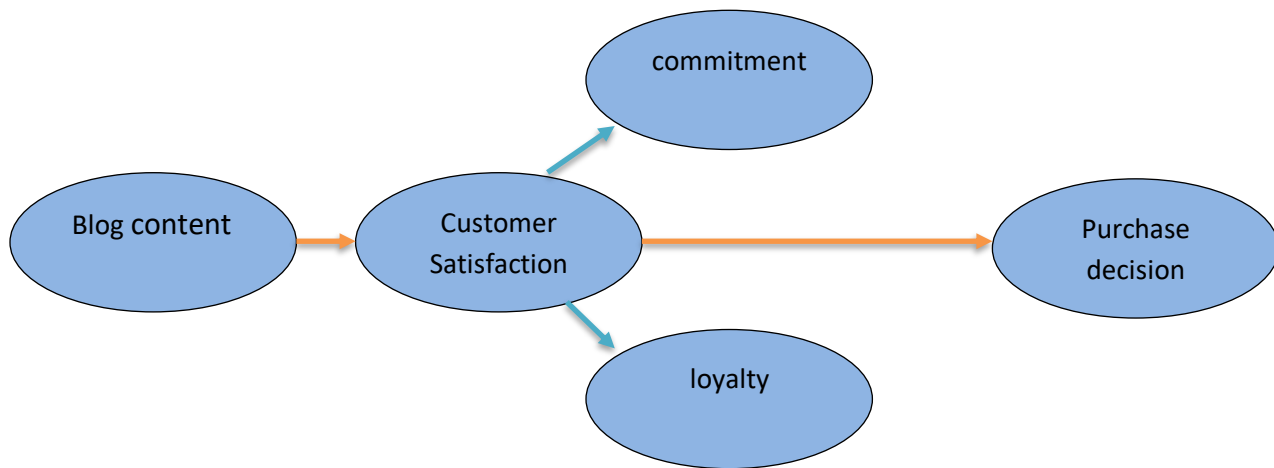
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