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The influence of social networks and psychological mechanisms on consumer behaviour in the era of digitalisation

Abstract. Social media platforms in the digital era have become the main tool for influencing consumer behaviour, integrating informational, emotional and social influences that transform the decision-making process through psychological mechanisms. The relevance of analysing these processes is growing in the context of a hyper-competitive environment and accelerated digitalisation. The aim of this study was to identify systemic patterns of interaction between social networks and psychological triggers that determine the dynamics of consumer choice, as well as to identify strategic marketing opportunities and potential risks arising from the fundamental digital transformation of business ecosystems. The work used an interdisciplinary methodological approach that synergistically combined content analysis of scientific sources, statistical data from leading international marketing agencies, methods of comparative analysis, systematisation and theoretical generalisation, which allowed for a comprehensive examination of the phenomenon of the influence of social networks on consumer behaviour. The results of the study showed that

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modern user behaviour is largely shaped by algorithmic content personalisation (increasing relevance by up to 70%) and cognitive biases (90% of consumer decisions are made under the influence of sensory and cognitive triggers). Over 70% of users have a positive perception of brands on social media. User content influences 80% of consumer decisions and increases conversion by 29%, while influencers strengthen trust in brands among 69% of consumers. However, a closed information environment reduces critical perception. Contradictory consequences have also been identified: an increase in impulsive purchases alongside an increase in reputational risks. Social networks function as a multifunctional ecosystem space where marketing practices, communication strategies and psychological influence at the subconscious level are synergistically combined. For business structures, this opens up strategic prospects for the implementation of personalised marketing strategies, but requires systematic risk management and a balanced approach between algorithmic efficiency and transparency in interactions with consumers. It has been proven that competitive advantages will be gained by brands that strategically integrate technological innovations with authenticity and social responsibility. The practical significance of the article lies in the possibility of using the research results to develop scientifically sound marketing strategies that take into account the psychological mechanisms of social media influence and predict behavioural trends in the digital consumer space

Keywords: digital marketing; neuromarketing; personalisation; cognitive biases; gamification; influencers

INTRODUCTION

The information and digital revolution has radically transformed the behaviour of modern consumers, with social platforms becoming the dominant factor influencing consumer preferences. Technological progress and changes in communication paradigms have contributed to the emergence of social networks as the main channel for influencing consumers, which companies actively use to implement product promotion strategies in the market in order to optimise economic results. In contemporary conditions, consumers make purchasing decisions not through the prism of their own practical experience or traditional advertising, but are guided by the collective opinion of other users, rating systems, reviews and viral content, which fundamentally transforms the architecture of market relations. Social networks act as generators of current consumer trends and determine behavioural patterns, forcing business structures to adapt to evolving market dynamics. The study of cognitive distortions and personalisation through algorithms, together with emotional and psychological factors, is becoming methodologically important for understanding the evolution of consumer practices in the era of digitalisation of the economy and for creating valid predictive models.

The growing importance of digital technologies and social networks in the daily lives of consumers has stimulated scientific research in this critically important area by leading experts. A. Asanova *et al.* (2022), having studied the modification of mechanisms influencing consumer behaviour and the development of new marketing strategies in the digital space, formulated a well-founded conclusion that modern business models based on digital technologies not only revolutionise methods of communication with customers, but also determine the prospects for the formation of long-term competitive positions of companies in the global economy. Among the key strategic advantages of social media marketing, researchers Y. Dwivedi *et al.* (2021) pointed to such critically important elements as: content personalisation; expansion of analytical tools and interactive functions; targeted and remarketing technologies. The study by S. Shantatula *et al.* (2024) proves the significant impact of UGC (user-generated content) and strategic partnerships with influencers on the effectiveness of marketing communications. These tools enable businesses to optimise the effectiveness of communication processes and improve marketing approaches in a comprehensive manner. In addition to the

above, the potential for instant interaction, viral characteristics of content, the creation of online communities, and accurate metric assessment of the effectiveness of digital marketing initiatives should be taken into account, which opens up new horizons for economic development.

As for neuromarketing studies, the research by I. Ponomarenko *et al.* (2021) empirically verified the fundamental proposition that the dominant share of consumer choices is made at the subconscious level under the influence of sensory and cognitive stimuli, which is of fundamental importance for understanding market behaviour patterns. For example, research by P.D. Balki *et al.* (2025) proved that colour choices, the temporality of information presentation, and the sound design of advertising materials directly influence the emotional perception of a brand before a rational assessment of product attributes takes place, which correlates with the principles of behavioural economic theory. K. Cherry (2023) emphasised that the analysis of cognitive distortions, in particular the anchoring effect – a phenomenon where a person relies too much on initial information (anchor) when making decisions, regardless of its relevance or randomness, which directly correlates with market pricing mechanisms. R. Fernandes (2023) emphasised in his works the significant economic impact of confirmation bias on consumers – the tendency to prefer information that confirms existing beliefs, while systematically ignoring or rejecting conflicting facts, which generates information asymmetries in the market environment. Research by L. McLaughlin (2024) demonstrated the growing relevance of the social proof effect – a phenomenon where individuals interpret the behaviour or decisions of those around them as socially correct and use them as a guide for their own actions, which provokes cascading effects in consumer practices.

Contemporary researchers are particularly interested in analysing the phenomenon of FoMO (fear of missing out) – the psychological “fear of missing out on an opportunity”. A study by T.C.T. Dinh & Y. Lee (2025) proved that FoMO intensifies the influence of social platforms on user behaviour patterns and stimulates spontaneous purchases. A significant number of scientific works also emphasise the economic

value of influencers and user-generated content (UGC), which, as shown by L. Romero-Rodriguez & B. Castillo-Abdul (2023), enjoys greater consumer trust than traditional advertising and contributes to increased conversion while reducing transaction costs. In this context, FoMO acts as a factor that encourages consumers to actively engage with UGC, creating a self-reinforcing engagement effect.

Thus, existing scientific research reveals the multifactorial and systemic nature of the influence of social networks and psychological mechanisms on consumer practices, which highlights the critical need for further interdisciplinary study of these processes in the modern digital context, especially given the exponential dynamics of technological development and the growing role of social platforms in everyday consumer life and the formation of market structures. The aim of the study was to determine the systemic impact of social networks and psychological mechanisms on the processes of economic choice of consumers in the context of digital transformation, as well as to outline strategic prospects and potential threats to business development in the context of fundamental changes in consumer behaviour and the formation of a new paradigm of the digital economy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological framework of the study was based on an interdisciplinary approach that synthesises the conceptual foundations of marketing, consumer psychology, neuroeconomics, and digital analytics. The main theoretical constructs are “consumer behaviour”, “social networks”, “neuromarketing”, “cognitive biases”, “FoMO” (Fear of Missing Out), and “algorithmic personalisation,” which are conceptualised as fundamental determinants of the digital transformation of the consumer market in a globalised economy.

The empirical basis of the study is built on the systematisation of open statistical data from leading international analytical and marketing agencies: Statista (n.d.), Grand View Research (n.d.), Maximize Market Research (n.d.). For the Ukrainian economic system, data from the Digital 2025: Ukraine report (Kemp, 2025) was analysed. The analysis covers actual

indicators for the period 2022-2024 and forecast indicators for the period 2025-2030, which allows to identify and extrapolate current trends in the influence of social networks on consumer patterns. In addition, a body of contemporary scientific research in the field of behavioural economics and neuromarketing for the period 2020-2025 was reviewed. The study was based on the works of foreign and Ukrainian scientists, in particular H. Pane *et al.* (2024), I. Ponomarenko *et al.* (2024), R. Gupta (2025).

An integrated methodology combining quantitative and qualitative analytical approaches was used to collect and process empirical data, in particular: content analysis of scientific and practice-oriented sources in the field of digital marketing and behavioural psychology; statistical analysis, which included a study of the dynamics of digitalisation processes and a comparative assessment of the pace of development of advertising markets in different national economies; comparative analysis of the specific characteristics of the influence of leading social platforms (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) on the formation of consumer preferences and purchasing decisions. The study also introduced the case method as a tool for qualitative analysis of business practices. The experience of leading international companies, in particular McDonald's (n.d.), Starbucks (n.d.), Netflix (n.d.), Spotify (n.d.) and Nike (n.d.), which actively implement algorithmic personalisation, FoMO strategies and gamification elements, which allowed for a deeper understanding of the specifics of the impact of digital technologies on consumer patterns. The analysis of their experience provided an opportunity to trace the relationships between theoretical models and practical results, as well as to identify the factors of success and determinants of failure in the implementation of innovative marketing tools.

The study provides a theoretical generalisation of the results of neuromarketing approaches (eye-tracking, associative tests, cognitive biases), which made it possible to interpret the mechanisms of influence of sensory and cognitive stimuli without their direct use as primary data collection tools. To improve the structure and systematisation of the results obtained, the main digital and psychological tools of influence

were summarised in tabular format, which made it possible to clearly outline their content, potential for business application and identify associated risks. The comparative advantage of the chosen methodology is the synergistic combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which provides a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the phenomena under study. Methodological limitations associated with the use of secondary data were compensated for by involving multiple independent sources and cross-validating the results to increase the reliability of the analytical conclusions. Despite the lack of opportunities to conduct own neuromarketing experiments, the applied methodological framework allows to form a systematic understanding of the transformational processes of consumer behaviour under the influence of social networks and psychological mechanisms, as well as to generate relevant conclusions for the Ukrainian business environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The modern global web marketing market shows clear signs of exponential growth, reflecting fundamental changes in consumer behaviour and the technological landscape. According to Maximize Market Research (n.d.), in 2024, the market capitalisation of this segment reached USD 462.14 billion, which is only the starting point of a rapid development trajectory. Forecast models indicate the possibility of reaching a market volume of USD 1,404.88 billion by 2032, corresponding to an average annual growth rate of 14.91% over the forecast period. This dynamic is particularly relevant in the context of the rapid digital transformation of the consumer experience and the evolution of communication technologies. It is worth noting that the most dynamic development is observed in the social media advertising segment, which is due to the convergence of several key factors: exponential growth in the number of Internet users on a global scale, revolutionary improvements in algorithmic targeting mechanisms, and a dramatic increase in the strategic importance of online interaction for brands seeking to build deeper and more personalised connections with their target audiences.

Analytical forecasts presented by the leading research organisation Statista (n.d.) indicate

that spending on social media advertising will reach USD 275.98 billion in 2025. Moreover, the average annual growth rate for the period 2025-2030 is expected to be 11.71%, allowing the global market volume to expand to USD 480.07 billion by the end of the decade. In geographical terms, the United States remains the leader, with more than USD 103 billion in advertising investment projected for 2025. This dominance reflects not only the scale of the American consumer market, but also its technological advantage in digital platforms and innovative advertising solutions. Particularly significant is the fact that 82.9% of these expenditures, according to Statista (n.d.) forecasts, will be generated through mobile devices, confirming the irreversibility of the conceptual shift towards a mobile-oriented user experience. This trend reflects a fundamental transformation in consumer behaviour, where smartphones and tablets have become the main points of contact between brands and their audiences.

Modern advertising in the digital environment is characterised by the increasingly intensive use of advanced algorithmic systems and machine learning technologies for audience targeting. This technological evolution leads to a significant increase in the effectiveness of advertising campaigns and a qualitative improvement in the level of interaction with target consumer segments. In this context, social networks function as a powerful multiplier tool for business structures of various sizes, providing the opportunity to simultaneously reach potential customers and maintain the loyalty of the existing

customer base. According to Maximize Market Research (n.d.), the average American adult spends more than two hours a day interacting with social media content, and over 70% of users report a positive experience interacting with brands in the digital space, which plays a strategic role in stimulating e-commerce and online sales.

Leading social platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, Twitter, and other mega-platforms with billion-strong audiences, demonstrate a unique ability to instantly and scalably disseminate information among segmented target audiences. Statistics from the Maximize Market Research portal (n.d.) on the American market illustrate the depth of these platforms' penetration into marketing strategies: 99% of digital marketers actively use Facebook to promote their brands and products, 97% use Twitter, 69% integrate Pinterest into their campaigns, and 59% actively work with Instagram as their primary communication channel. The chart in Figure 1 illustrates the penetration level of leading social platforms in marketing strategies in 2025. The indicators reflect the share of each platform's use in marketing activities, allowing to assess their popularity and strategic value in the modern digital environment. The global reach of users aged 18 and older by social media advertising, according to Cropink (2025), is shown in Figure 1. The figures reflect the global significance of the leading platforms and show how brands allocate their advertising budgets according to the size of their audience. Facebook, YouTube and Instagram remain the global leaders.

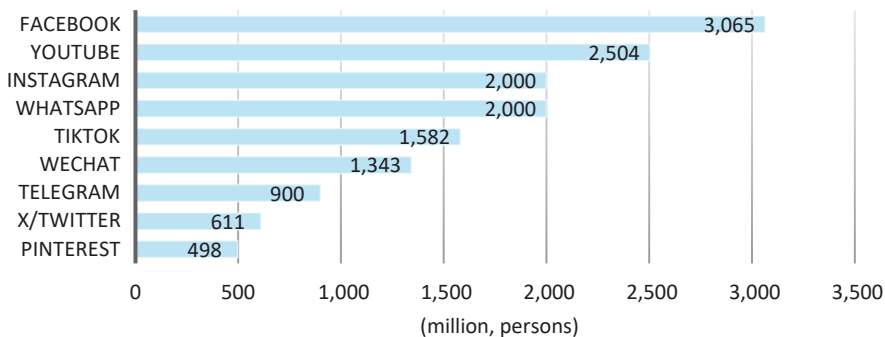


Figure 1. Number of active users reached by advertising on social media worldwide

Source: compiled by the authors based on Cropink (2025)

These indicators reflect not only the technical capabilities of platforms, but also the evolution of consumer expectations for personalised and contextually relevant content. At the same time, the total number of social media users involved in the advertising ecosystem is expected to reach 6.61 billion, representing an unprecedented scale of global digital audience (Statista, n.d.). An analysis of Ukraine's national digital space also demonstrates an extremely high level of technological and social adaptation to digital communication technologies. According to the international analytical resource DataReportal, as of early 2025, the digital space in Ukraine is characterised by almost total coverage of the population: 82.4% of the population, or approximately 31.5 million citizens, actively use Internet technologies. This indicator shows that the critical mass of digital engagement necessary for the effective functioning of a modern market economy has been achieved. The phenomenon of excessive mobile connectivity is particularly indicative: the number of active mobile connections reaches 56.4 million, which is 147% of the country's total population. This indicator reflects the widespread practice of using multiple SIM cards and devices simultaneously, which indicates a

high degree of integration of mobile technologies into the daily lives of Ukrainian consumers and the formation of a complex multi-platform ecosystem of digital interaction (Kemp, 2025).

Social networks in the Ukrainian context have evolved from a simple means of communication to a fundamental element of the social architecture of society. Statistics from the report "Digital 2025: Ukraine" (Kemp, 2025) indicate that more than half of the Ukrainian population (21.6 million active accounts) systematically use social platforms, and among Internet users, this figure reaches almost 70%, demonstrating a high conversion rate from general online access to active participation in social networks. An analysis of platform diversification reveals an interesting picture of consumer preferences: YouTube maintains its undisputed leadership with a reach of 68.5% of the adult population, sharing the top spot with TikTok at 53.6%, reflecting a shift towards visually-oriented and short-form content. Facebook maintains a stable position with 44.1%, demonstrating the resilience of traditional social platforms, while Instagram attracts 38% of users, confirming the importance of aesthetically-oriented content in the modern media landscape (Fig. 2)

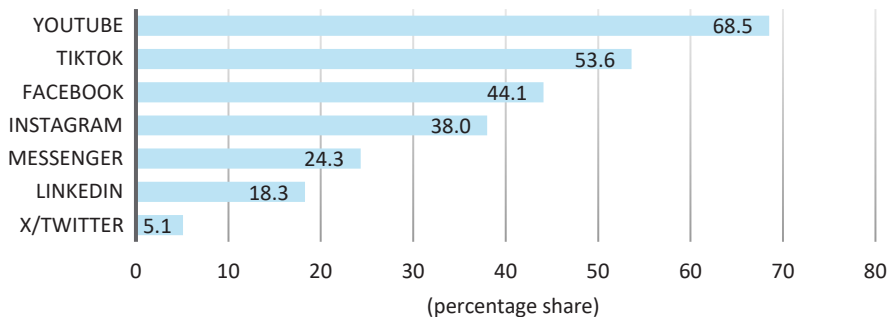


Figure 2. Share of users aged 18 and older exposed to advertising on social media in Ukraine

Source: compiled by the authors based on S. Kemp (2025)

The empirical data presented allows to ascertain the depth of penetration of digitalisation processes into the daily lives of Ukrainian consumers and to identify social networks as a key determinant of contemporary consumer behaviour. Table 1 shows the key similarities and

differences in the influence of YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram on the formation of consumer preferences and purchasing behaviour, which allows to assess their marketing potential and the specifics of their interaction with the Ukrainian audience.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the influence of YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram on consumer preferences and purchasing decisions

Platform	Nature of content	Features of influence on consumers	Influence on purchasing decisions	Notes
YouTube	Long-form videos, reviews, educational and entertainment content	Facilitates deep immersion in the product and the formation of well-grounded consumer preferences through detailed video content	Increases the likelihood of rational purchasing, especially after viewing reviews and comparisons	A powerful platform for video marketing and brand positioning; effective for informing and educating consumers
Facebook	Text, images, videos, links to articles	Builds stable and long-term consumer preferences through regular content and group-based communication	Encourages informed purchasing decisions and supports conversion through brand pages and advertising campaigns	A resilient traditional platform, effective for broad target audiences
TikTok	Short videos, music-based and interactive content	Shapes spontaneous and rapid consumer preferences and stimulates participation in trends	Highly effective for impulsive purchases, with the viral nature of content increasing conversion rates	A leader in reach and engagement; the FoMO effect and UGC significantly enhance purchasing activity
Instagram	Visual content, photo and video materials, Stories and Reels	Stimulates aesthetic and image-based preferences and influences brand perception through visual cues	Encourages impulsive and emotional purchases and supports the promotion of lifestyle products	Particularly effective for younger audiences and segments with high sensitivity to aesthetics

Source: compiled by the authors based on S. Kemp (2025), Cropink (2025) Maximize Market Research (n.d.)

Thus, a comparative analysis shows that Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have different effects on consumer preferences and purchasing behaviour. YouTube promotes deep immersion in the product and informed consumer decisions through detailed reviews and educational content; Facebook shapes stable and long-lasting preferences; Instagram focuses on aesthetics and impulse purchases, while TikTok stimulates quick, trendy decisions through viral content. Modern consumer behaviour theory is based on the understanding that the decision-making process is a complex interaction between rational cognitive processes and subconscious affective mechanisms. On the one hand, consumers systematically analyse the functional characteristics of a product, conduct a comparative assessment of pricing, and perform a comparative analysis of alternative options. On the other hand, there is a powerful subconscious reaction to sensory stimuli, including visual elements of presentation, the emotional tone of the communicative message, and social signals transmitted through reference groups. Revolutionary research in the field of neuromarketing, conducted by SIS Survey and

disclosed by L. Hunter (2024), shows that up to 90% of consumer decisions are made on a subconscious level. This is consistent with the results of this study, which also confirm the dominance of emotional and sensory triggers in the digital environment: the high level of interaction with visual content on social media correlates with the intensity of consumers' subconscious reactions. These signals include a wide range of stimuli: from the colour palette and rhythmic structure of information presentation to the musical accompaniment in advertising messages. This dominance of unconscious processes radically rethinks traditional approaches to understanding consumer rationality and brings to the fore the importance of neuropsychological methods of market research.

A methodological breakthrough in the field of neuromarketing has been eye-tracking technology, a high-precision tool for tracking eye activity that allows for unprecedented detail in analysing patterns of consumer visual attention. According to research by J. Novak *et al.* (2024), eye-tracking technology allows to identify the visual elements that first attract attention and stimulate quick impulsive reactions. Empirical

research on the use of eye-tracking technologies by J. Novak *et al.* (2024) has shown that warm colour schemes (red, orange, yellow shades) can induce a psychological state of urgency and stimulate impulsive purchasing decisions, while cool and neutral tones (blue, green, grey) are associated in the consumer psyche with concepts of reliability, stability and customer care. These visual and auditory elements form the initial emotional perception even before the activation of rational cognitive processes of product evaluation, thus creating a powerful multiplier effect for advertising messages and providing a psychological basis for accelerated purchasing decisions (Spytska, 2024).

The methodological arsenal of modern neuromarketing is significantly complemented by associative tests – a psychodiagnostic tool that allows to identify latent consumer attitudes and subconscious emotional reactions. This technique is based on the principle of rapid response by participants to verbal or visual stimuli associated with a specific brand or product category. The kinetic parameters of reactions (response speed) and their qualitative nature serve as indicators of hidden emotional associations and attitudes that are often not realised by respondents or articulated in direct responses to traditional surveys. The results of associative testing are used to gain an in-depth understanding of consumer attitudes towards a brand, systematically identify the strengths and weaknesses of advertising messages, and develop more precise and effective marketing communication strategies. The use of these tests makes it possible to predict the reaction of target audiences to innovative products, optimise the visual and verbal components of advertising content, and create brand images that correlate as closely as possible with the emotional expectations and subconscious needs of consumers (Gupta, 2025). An example of the use of neuromarketing, including associative tests, is McDonald's (n.d.). The company uses associative methods to identify hidden emotional attitudes in consumers and consciously uses a yellow and red colour combination in its brand design, which is subconsciously associated with energy, speed and appetite, stimulating purchasing decisions. By integrating these advanced methodological approaches,

marketers gain a unique opportunity not only to assess consumers' rational judgements, but also to systematically take into account their hidden psychological attitudes and unconscious motivational drivers, which play a decisive role in shaping final purchasing decisions.

A fundamental understanding of consumer psychology is impossible without a thorough analysis of cognitive biases – systematic deviations in decision-making that arise as a result of evolutionarily formed mental heuristics. These psychological phenomena play a role as powerful determinants of consumer behaviour, often undermining traditional economic models of rational choice. Among the most influential cognitive mechanisms, it is worth highlighting confirmation bias – the tendency to selectively search for, interpret and remember information that correlates with an individual's pre-formed beliefs. This mechanism causes consumers to actively seek data that confirms their existing preferences, while ignoring contradictory or alternative information (Fernandes, 2023). Equally significant is anchoring bias, which manifests itself in an excessive dependence on the first information received when forming a judgement. In the context of consumer behaviour, this mechanism leads to the initial price, product characteristics or recommendation creating a psychological reference point that significantly influences all subsequent evaluations of alternatives (Spytska, 2024). Another powerful determinant of consumer decisions is the phenomenon of social proof, which is the psychological tendency to imitate the behaviour of the majority in situations of uncertainty. When a product accumulates thousands of positive reviews or receives active approval from influential bloggers and opinion leaders, consumers tend to perceive it as a high-quality and socially sanctioned choice, regardless of their own previous experience with this product category (Farooq & Maqbool, 2024).

R. Fernandes (2023), L. Spytska (2024) and S. Farooq & A. Maqbool (2024) emphasise the significant impact of the confirmation effect and social proof on brand perception on social media. The results described above confirm this trend: about 80% of users make decisions under the influence of UGC, and high social support

for the product remains a key factor in trust. Accordingly, the conclusions of the aforementioned authors largely coincide, demonstrating the systemic effect of cognitive biases in the digital environment and reinforcing the general concept of consumer behavioural non-linearity.

Social networks function as powerful amplifiers of cognitive biases, creating an environment where countless consumer decisions are formed and implemented every day. Each platform has developed unique mechanisms of psychological influence, adapted to the specifics of user interaction and content format. Instagram stimulates impulsive purchasing decisions through highly aesthetic visual content and strategic advertising integrations with influencers, creating the illusion of authentic recommendations from trusted sources. The platform effectively uses the psychology of visual consumption, where aesthetically appealing product images are associated with a desirable lifestyle and social status. TikTok generates virality through algorithmically optimised short content, where trending products or services gain popularity through rapid dissemination in the form of short videos. The platform uses the psychological principles of micro-gratification and constant stimulation with novelty, creating a state of heightened receptivity to advertising messages. Facebook functions as a social platform for multilateral discussion and exchange of experience, where user comments and recommendations play a critical role, creating an effect of social confirmation through horizontal communication between equal community members (Eg, 2024). All of these platforms integrate complex machine learning algorithms for content personalisation, which systematically analyse user behaviour patterns and show them content with the highest probability of generating engagement and positive reactions.

The hyper-personalisation of algorithmic content generates a complex set of unpredictable socio-cognitive consequences, the most problematic of which is the phenomenon of “filter bubbles”. This effect arises because recommendation system algorithms gradually limit users’ exposure to content that confirms their previous preferences, ideological beliefs, or consumer interests. Such algorithmic curation

leads to the formation of cognitively isolated information environments where consumers are less likely to encounter alternative opinions, competing offers, or critical assessments of products. This significantly narrows the opportunities for critical analysis and comparative evaluation of market alternatives (Yang, 2023; Rodilosso, 2024). Empirical research by J. Azer & M. Alexander (2023) has shown that such recommendation systems create a psychologically comfortable information ecosystem, characterised, however, by extremely low permeability to content diversity and alternative perspectives (Bingbing *et al.*, 2023). In the long term, this phenomenon can provoke cognitive closure, reduce consumers’ ability to think critically and sceptically evaluate advertising messages, which poses a strategic challenge for marketing strategies aimed at building sustainable brand loyalty. Researchers E. Rodilosso (2024) and X. Yang *et al.* (2023) confirmed that algorithmic social media systems form “information bubbles” that limit users to content that matches their previous interests. These results confirm the findings of J. Azer & M. Alexander (2023) and T. Bingbing *et al.* (2023), further demonstrating the psychological “closedness” of the information environment – a phenomenon that was also observed in the analysis of Ukrainian users’ behaviour on social networks.

One of the most effective psychological mechanisms systematically exploited on social networks is the FoMO (Fear of Missing Out) phenomenon – an anxious feeling of possibly missing out on important social events, information or lucrative opportunities. In the context of digital marketing, this phenomenon manifests itself as a user’s permanent anxiety that other participants in the social network may receive exclusive experiences, privileged information or commercial advantages to which they do not have access (Morsi *et al.*, 2025). FoMO functions not simply as an information channel, but as a powerful emotional catalyst that psychologically prompts immediate action by creating an artificial sense of temporal urgency and uniqueness of a commercial offer. Research by H. Pane *et al.* (2024) provides compelling empirical evidence that FoMO as a marketing tool statistically significantly increases the likelihood of impul-

sive purchasing decisions while reducing the duration of cognitive analysis and comparative evaluation of alternatives. The most effective marketing campaigns are those that strategically combine temporal constraints (e.g., messages such as “this offer is only valid for the next 2 hours”) with social proof (“more than 5,000 users have already taken advantage of this offer in the last 24 hours”). This convergence of psychological triggers creates multiplicative emotional pressure and stimulates consumers to make quick, often irrational decisions.

A striking example of the successful implementation of FoMO strategies in combination with celebrity collaboration marketing is McDonald’s “Travis Scott Meal” campaign, launched in September 2020. This limited-time commercial offer instantly went viral on Twitter, and related videos on TikTok accumulated tens of millions of views within days of launch. The phenomenal popularity of the campaign led to an unforeseen shortage of key ingredients in restaurants across the United States. The strategic combination of limited temporal availability, the high social status of the celebrity ambassador, and algorithmically stimulated virality on social media created powerful psychological pressure on consumers, generating massive impulsive purchasing decisions. This campaign was a striking example of the effectiveness of FoMO strategies in the digital marketing environment, demonstrating how cognitive biases can be systematically exploited to achieve commercial goals (Schick, 2024).

Contemporary studies by T. Kumar *et al.* (2025), I. Ponomarenko *et al.* (2024), and M. Shevchenko (2024) emphasise that personalisation algorithms have evolved into the most powerful tool for attracting users and stimulating their purchasing decisions in the digital space. These complex computing systems systematically collect and analyse multimodal user data, including behavioural patterns, content preferences, search queries, and interaction activity with advertising messages, in order to build highly accurate individual recommendation profiles. Thanks to this technological advancement, each user receives a hyper-personalised content experience that correlates as closely as possible with their unique interests

and consumer preferences. Such adaptation significantly reduces the likelihood of missing relevant products and services, while providing brands with unprecedented opportunities to effectively influence consumer decisions and significantly increase the likelihood of successful conversion.

The most striking example of successful implementation of algorithmic personalisation is Netflix’s strategy (n.d.), which uses advanced machine learning technologies to comprehensively analyse user behaviour and create individualised content recommendation systems. The platform uses a multi-level filtering system that takes into account viewing history, content viewing time, user ratings, and demographic characteristics to create a unique, personalised user experience. Spotify (n.d.) demonstrates a similar strategic practice, implementing complex algorithmic systems to create personalised music playlists. The platform conducts in-depth analysis of users’ musical preferences, temporal listening patterns, and emotional contexts of audio content consumption, creating a powerful emotional connection between the listener and the digital ecosystem (TPMUNN, 2025).

Within the contemporary digital marketing landscape, influencers play a particularly important role. These are individuals with high social capital and the ability to shape public opinion, who have the trust of their target audiences and can exert a significant influence on consumer choices. These opinion leaders strategically use complex psychological triggers, including the artificial scarcity effect (when a product is positioned as unique or time-limited) and the principle of social belonging (when a purchase is associated with a desired lifestyle or social status), to create highly effective advertising campaigns (Cuevas, 2023). Research by the American company Sociallyin (n.d.) confirms that 69% of consumers trust the recommendations of influencers rather than direct messages from brands, which contrasts sharply with the decline in the effectiveness of traditional advertising. Campaigns based on UGC (User-Generated Content) – content created directly by consumers – have become a particularly revolutionary innovation in modern digital marketing. This content includes spontaneously generated videos,

photos, text posts, and reviews that appear organically after using a product or service. The fundamental difference between UGC and traditional branded messages is its increased credibility, as it comes from authentic consumers rather than corporate marketing departments (Romero-Rodriguez & Castillo-Abdul, 2023).

According to leading international research organisation Grand View Research (n.d.), the market capitalisation of the UGC segment in 2022 was USD 4.4 billion. Forecast models indicate that the market volume will reach USD 32.6 billion by 2030, corresponding to a phenomenal compound annual growth rate of 29.4% over the forecast period 2023-2030. Geographically, North America holds a dominant position in the global user-generated content platform market, with a 34.1% share in 2022. However, analytical forecasts indicate that the Asia-Pacific region will show the highest average annual growth rate over the next decade, reflecting the rapid digitalisation and growth in purchasing power in the region. The exponential growth in the use of user-generated content for advertising and marketing purposes is driven by the convergence of several factors: the expansion of online shopping, growing consumer aversion to traditional intrusive marketing methods, and brands' search for more authentic ways to communicate with customers. User-generated content distributed through social networks has significantly greater persuasive power and influence than traditional sources because it is transmitted through trusted personal networks of consumers embedded in their social ecosystems (Grand View Research, n.d.).

Comprehensive studies conducted by leading marketing agencies CrowdRiff (2024) and Grand View Research (n.d.) provide compelling empirical evidence of the effectiveness of UGC strategies. Statistical analysis shows that approximately 80% of consumers make purchasing decisions under the direct influence of user-generated content, confirming its critical importance in the consumer choice process for goods and services. The use of UGC strategies provides a statistically significant 20% increase in audience engagement and increases online conversion rates by nearly 29%, indicating a significant positive impact on booking and direct

purchase metrics. Critically, more than half of users (55%) perceive UGC as authentic and trust it significantly more than traditional corporate advertising, while the level of trust in brands that actively use UGC strategies reaches 79%. Behavioural analysis shows that the average user spends up to four hours a day viewing user-generated content, which correlates with a 20% increase in repeat visitors. The results for video content are particularly telling: UGC videos receive almost a third more views (28%) compared to other formats, highlighting the powerful potential of this type of content in modern digital communication strategies.

Parallel to the growing role of user-generated content and interactive formats in the digital marketing landscape, there is an intensification of the gamification trend – the strategic desire of brands to transform consumer interaction into a gaming experience. This phenomenon has a complex dualistic impact on consumer behaviour, requiring careful analysis of both its positive and potentially problematic consequences. The most successful implementations of gamification include loyalty programmes that effectively motivate regular and systematic consumer interaction with the brand through point systems, achievement levels and material rewards. An example of such a strategy is the Starbucks Rewards loyalty programme, which demonstrates the exceptionally successful use of game mechanics to significantly increase customer loyalty. Under this system, customers accumulate 'stars' for every dollar spent, with the number of points earned differentiated based on the payment method, creating additional incentives to use the company's payment solutions. A critical indicator of the effectiveness of this strategy is the customer retention rate of 44%, which is statistically significantly higher than the industry average of 25% (Mohammad, 2025).

At the same time, there are documented cases of problematic use of gamification strategies, leading to unpredictable negative consequences for consumer welfare. A notable example is the Nike Run Club mobile app, which integrated leaderboards and competitive systems between users but subsequently received a wave of criticism from consumer organisations and

the academic community. The problem arose after a significant portion of users developed a pathological dependence on daily “challenges” and achievements in the app. More than 10% of active users of the app reported losing their internal motivation to exercise without constant external stimulation from the platform, which paradoxically reduced their long-term interest in a healthy lifestyle and even led to physical overload due to a compulsive desire to achieve virtual goals (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2021). This case illustrates a critically important principle: excessive or unskilled use of game mechanics can have serious unpredictable consequences, potentially transforming healthy consumer interaction with a brand into a form of behavioural addiction or compulsive behaviour.

Thus, the synergistic convergence of global digital marketing trends, national market specifications, revolutionary advances in

neuropsychological research, a deep understanding of cognitive biases, and innovative algorithmic personalisation technologies is shaping a fundamentally new paradigm of marketing communications. In this paradigm, digital platforms function as intelligent multi-level ecosystems that integrate big data analytics, neuropsychological targeting, algorithmic personalisation, exploitation of cognitive biases, user content and interactive communication into a single strategic architecture of post-industrial digital business. To systematise and comparatively analyse the advantages and risks of using digital marketing, Table 2 presents a structured overview of key psychological influence tools, their operational content, strategic opportunities, and potential risks for business organisations in the context of forming and implementing new-generation marketing strategies.

Table 2. Digital and psychological tools for shaping consumer behaviour

Tool of influence	Content and mechanism of action	Benefits for business	Potential risks and threats
Neuropsychological technologies of influence			
Eye-tracking analysis (Neuromarketing)	High-precision tracking of consumers' visual attention patterns to optimise advertising visuals and product design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Precise optimisation of advertising design ■ Increase in conversion rates of up to 25% ■ Reduction in spending on ineffective visual elements ■ Objective data on consumer attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High costs of technological equipment ■ Ethical issues related to privacy ■ Limited representativeness of the sample ■ Complexity of result interpretation
Associative tests (Psychodiagnostics)	Identification of consumers' subconscious emotional associations with a brand through reaction speed to stimuli	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identification of hidden consumer attitudes ■ Forecasting reactions to new products ■ Development of precise communication strategies ■ Identification of brand weaknesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Subjectivity of interpretation ■ Cultural and demographic limitations ■ Potential for manipulative use ■ Difficulty in standardising the methodology
Exploitation of cognitive biases			
Confirmation bias (Cognitive psychology)	Leveraging consumers' tendency to seek information that confirms their existing beliefs and preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased trust in the brand ■ Strengthening loyalty among existing customers ■ Effectiveness of personalised content ■ Reduced resistance to new offerings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Limited reach of new segments ■ Creation of “information bubbles” ■ Reduction of consumers' critical thinking ■ Ethical issues of manipulation
Exploitation of cognitive biases			
Social proof (Social psychology)	Leveraging people's tendency to follow the behaviour of the majority through reviews, ratings, and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rapid trust-building among new customers ■ Lower decision-making barriers ■ High effectiveness with minimal costs ■ Viral dissemination effect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability to negative reviews • Possibility of review manipulation • Dependence on external opinions • Risk of reputational crises

Table 2, Continued

Tool of influence	Content and mechanism of action	Benefits for business	Potential risks and threats
Exploitation of cognitive biases			
FoMO marketing (Behavioural economics)	Creating artificial scarcity and urgency to stimulate impulsive purchasing decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Significant increase in impulsive purchases ■ Acceleration of the decision-making cycle ■ High effectiveness in e-commerce ■ High conversion rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deterioration of long-term customer relationships ■ Increased product return rates ■ Ethical issues of manipulation ■ Possible legal restrictions
Algorithmic personalisation technologies			
Machine learning personalisation (AI technologies)	Using machine learning algorithms to generate personalised recommendations based on behavioural data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased content relevance by up to 70% ■ Automation of personalisation ■ Continuous self-improvement of the system ■ Increased time spent interacting with the platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High technological investments ■ Need for large volumes of data ■ Risks of privacy violations ■ Complexity of technical maintenance
Predictive analytics (Big Data)	Predicting consumer behaviour and needs on the basis of historical data and behavioural patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Optimisation of inventory and logistics ■ Forecasting trends and demand ■ Improved effectiveness of marketing campaigns ■ Reduced operational costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Possibility of inaccurate forecasts ■ Excessive dependence on data ■ Ethical issues related to the use of personal data ■ Difficulty in adapting to new conditions
Content and social strategies			
User-Generated Content (UGC) (Social Media)	Using content created by consumers themselves to enhance brand authenticity and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased trust of up to 79% ■ Growth in conversion rates of up to 30% ■ Reduced content creation costs ■ Authenticity and credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Loss of control over brand-related content ■ Possibility of negative user-generated content ■ Legal issues concerning content usage ■ Difficulty in controlling large volumes of information
Influencer marketing (Social marketing)	Collaborating with opinion leaders to influence target audiences through the influencer's trust and authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High audience trust levels (69%) ■ Precise interest-based targeting ■ Rapid dissemination of information ■ Increased brand awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High costs of top-tier influencers ■ Reputational risks arising from scandals ■ Difficulty in measuring ROI ■ Dependence on the influencer's personality
Gamification (Behavioural psychology)	Integrating game mechanics into marketing strategies to increase consumer engagement and loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved customer retention of up to 45% ■ Increased frequency of interactions ■ Formation of consumption habits ■ Differentiation from competitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Risk of developing consumer dependency ■ Decrease in intrinsic motivation ■ Ethical issues of behavioural manipulation ■ Rapid loss of interest if implemented incorrectly
Innovative technological solutions			
AR/VR technologies (Immersive technologies)	Using augmented and virtual reality to create immersive consumer experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Innovative product interaction experience ■ Reduced barriers to online purchasing ■ Brand differentiation ■ Increased time spent engaging with the brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High development and implementation costs ■ Limited accessibility of the technology for users ■ Technical issues and instability ■ Rapid obsolescence of technological solutions

Table 2, Continued

Tool of influence	Content and mechanism of action	Benefits for business	Potential risks and threats
Innovative technological solutions			
Chatbots and AI assistants (Artificial intelligence)	Automated communication systems for personalised customer support and product recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 24/7 service availability ■ Reduced staffing costs ■ Faster query processing ■ Collection and analysis of customer needs data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Limited capacity to resolve complex issues ■ Possible errors in query recognition ■ Loss of the human element in service delivery ■ Negative reactions to overly “robotic” communication

Source: created by the authors based on I. Ponomarenko (2021), S. Farooq & A. Maqbool (2024), T.C.T. Dinh & Y. Lee (2025), R. Gupta (2025), O. Morhulets (2025)

Thus, analysis of current trends convincingly shows that modern consumers demonstrate a marked preference for personalised and authentic content on social media, which generates a critical need for corporate brands to develop transparent, ethically sound and trust-oriented marketing strategies. This fundamental shift in consumer expectations reflects broader socio-cultural transformations, where authenticity and corporate integrity are becoming key determinants of competitiveness. At the same time, there has been an intensification of the importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) – a strategic shift in focus towards sustainable development principles and active integration with local social communities has evolved from simple PR activities to key factors that directly influence consumer decisions and determine the long-term market competitiveness of brands in the digital business environment. In this context, modern companies have to perform a complex strategic balancing act between maximising the commercial potential of social platforms to stimulate sales and actively managing potential reputational, operational and ethical risks by developing adaptive strategies to respond flexibly to rapidly changing consumer preferences and market conditions.

CONCLUSIONS

A comprehensive analysis of the empirical data presented allows to conclude that social networks have radically transformed the fundamental mechanisms of consumer behaviour, turning the process of making purchasing decisions into a more emotionally charged, socially

determined and algorithmically controlled phenomenon. In particular, it has been established that user content influences an average of 80% of consumer decisions, and its use can increase conversion rates by up to 30%, while the use of neuromarketing tools, such as eye-tracking, increases the effectiveness of advertising communications by increasing conversion rates by up to 25%. These trends demonstrate that digital platforms are creating new opportunities for content personalisation and individual influence on users, while making it more difficult to predict behavioural responses.

In the contemporary digital landscape, it is critical for companies to be able to continuously analyse user behaviour dynamics, track new trends and adapt marketing strategies to changing consumer sentiment. The continued growth of algorithmic personalisation, which can be up to 70% effective in increasing content relevance, as well as the development of AR/VR technologies and intelligent predictive analytics systems, will significantly strengthen the influence of digital platforms on consumer choice. Accordingly, companies will have to go beyond traditional models of interaction and form unique emotional ecosystems capable of maintaining lasting trust and loyalty.

A favourable macroeconomic context, a high level of digital infrastructure, and the spread of digital marketing expertise are increasing the effectiveness of personalised advertising solutions and consumer engagement. At the same time, the progressive development of digital technologies and the spread of professional competencies in digital marketing significantly increase

the effectiveness of advertising campaigns. Global trends in sustainable development and corporate social responsibility are prompting organisations to adopt more ethical and socially responsible advertising practices, which correlates positively with increased consumer confidence and creates a positive resonance among conscious and socially active consumer segments. Companies that can successfully meet rapidly changing consumer expectations will not only retain existing customers, but also activate the formation of brand-loyal communities with a high level of emotional loyalty. In the era of artificial intelligence, algorithmic personalisation and information hypermobility, the ability to engage in authentic, ethically sound marketing is transforming from a temporary trend into a fundamental business norm that will

determine consumer trust and long-term loyalty. Future research should focus on a deeper study of the relationship between brand authenticity and consumer trust in the digital environment, developing quantitative tools to assess the effectiveness of personalised and ethical marketing strategies, and integrating psychological and cognitive approaches to more accurately predict user behaviour in the digital era.

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Вплив соціальних мереж та психологічних механізмів на поведінку споживачів в епоху цифровізації

Анотація. Соціальні медіаплатформи у цифрову епоху стали основним інструментом впливу на споживчу поведінку, інтегруючи інформаційні, емоційні та соціальні впливи, що трансформують процес ухвалення рішень через психологічні механізми. Актуальність аналізу цих процесів зростає в умовах гіперконкурентного середовища та прискореної цифровізації. Метою цього дослідження було виявлення системних закономірностей взаємодії між соціальними мережами та психологічними тригерами, що детермінують динаміку споживчого вибору, а також визначення стратегічних маркетингових можливостей і потенційних ризиків, які постають у результаті фундаментальної цифрової трансформації бізнес-екосистем. У роботі застосовано міждисциплінарний методологічний підхід, що синергетично поєднує контент-аналіз наукових джерел, статистичні дані провідних міжнародних маркетингових агентств, методи компаративного аналізу, систематизації й теоретичного узагальнення, що дозволило комплексно розглянути феномен впливу соціальних мереж на споживчу поведінку. Результати дослідження продемонстрували, що сучасна поведінка користувачів значною мірою формується алгоритмічною персоналізацією контенту (підвищує релевантність до 70 %) та когнітивними упередженнями (90 % споживчих рішень приймаються під впливом сенсорних і когнітивних тригерів). Понад 70 % користувачів позитивно сприймають бренди в соцмережах. Користувацький контент впливає на 80 % споживчих рішень і збільшує конверсію на 29 %, а інфлюенсери зміцнюють довіру до брендів у 69 % споживачів. Однак замкнене інформаційне середовище знижує критичність сприйняття. Також виявлено суперечливі наслідки: зростання імпульсивності покупок поряд із підвищенням репутаційних ризиків. Соціальні мережі функціонують як багатофункціональний екосистемний простір, де синергетично поєднуються маркетингові практики, комунікаційні стратегії й психологічний вплив на підсвідомому рівні. Для бізнес-структур це відкриває стратегічні перспективи імплементації персоналізованих маркетингових стратегій, проте потребує системного управління ризиками й збалансованого підходу між алгоритмічною ефективністю і прозорістю взаємодії зі споживачами. Доведено, що конкурентні переваги здобудуть бренди, які стратегічно інтегрують технологічні інновації з автентичністю та соціальною відповідальністю. Практична значущість статті полягає у можливості використання результатів дослідження для розробки науково обґрунтованих

маркетингових стратегій із урахуванням психологічних механізмів впливу соціальних мереж та прогнозування поведінкових трендів у цифровому споживчому просторі

Ключові слова: цифровий маркетинг; нейромаркетинг; персоналізація; когнітивні упередження; гейміфікація; інфлюенсери