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New Business Set Up for Branding Strategies on Social Media - Instagram

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Abstract

This study focuses on branding of home-based businesses that were set up on Instagram. With the advent of smartphone, Instagram as a Social Networking Site has been gaining popularity and the medium of choice for aspiring business owners. However there has been little research done regarding the businesses that were set up on Instagram especially research that focus on branding strategies. It's fascinating to note that businesses on Instagram are still pretty much under the radar even though it generates sales equivalent to a proper e-commerce business. This study sought to investigate and explore this phenomenon and understand how the business owners strategized their brand positioning. Qualitative research of in-depth interview has been undertaken with three respondents that are business owners themselves and the finding showed that Instagram is the best and current platform for aspiring business owners to start their business before deciding to venture offline. Three types of businesses were chosen with current followers of more than 10,000 and as this research was done, all three business owners had already make plan for offline expansion. This proves that as a Social Networking Site, Instagram plays an important role in shaping the way home-based business craft impactful strategies, as good branding is essential from the beginning to cut through the clutter of many businesses that are available on Instagram.

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1. Introduction

The usage of smartphone has evolved to a new level where it has led to several innovations that brings a new meaning to human's life. No longer just a device being use for keeping in touch, but a smartphone – how aptly named, is man's new best friend. Indeed, it is now the number one personal assistant as with

just one touch individuals are able to retrieve addresses, contacts, notes and so on. With the creation of apps, the smartphone can contain almost everything to one's heart desire. According to Shiraishi (2010) in a recent survey done by Impress R&D in 2010, the top three functions of a smartphone are web browsing, mail and map application with the first being the highest percentage at 83%¹. As for Voice (phone calls), it was only placed at number 10 which shows that phone is no longer being used traditionally to make calls, but used widely to communicate via text messaging such as SMS, Whatsapp, Telegram etc.

Launched in 2010 through App Store, after one week Instagram gained 100,000 followers and reached one million users exactly two months and two weeks after. Quite extraordinary as compared to other social media growth such as Twitter and Foursquare which took two years and one year consecutively to reach the same amount of users². Based on the platform of sharing, Instagram has been gaining popularity wide and far across the globe.

As for branding, more often than not, the power of branding tends to be overlooked. Geller (2012) defines brand as a promise. Think of some top brands and you immediately know what they promise: McDonald's, Coca Cola, Ford and Apple. You know what you're going to get with a well-branded product or service³.

Problem Statement - It is said that senses and sensory experience can influence purchasing decision and according to Millward Brown study in 2003 into the senses and their branding appeal, not all senses have the same significance when it comes to branding. The most important is sight, followed by smell, sound, taste and touch⁴. Obviously out of the five senses, only sight and sound can be brought to life when it comes to selling on a social media platform such as Instagram. So how does these sellers overcome this problem and turn the shortcoming to their benefit? Surely not having a physical store can become a challenge as customer cannot touch and feel according to their desire but left to imagine and theorized on their own whether the clothes will fit or the food taste good. Despite of that, we still see fascinating growth in terms of businesses being set up on Instagram.

That aside, Instagram as a social media platform has limitation on its own. Not just physical store, the lack of common e-commerce features such as viewing object from different angle, zooming and so on can cause dissatisfaction when it comes to viewing. So how does these sellers overcome this issue without the common features of online retailing?

1.2 Research Question

- RQ 1. Why do the sellers opt to choose Instagram to set up their business as opposed to other social media platform?
- RQ 2. What are the brand strategies employed by these businesses in getting strong following?
- RQ 3. What are their brand strengths in creating brand loyalty?

2. Literature Review

2.1.1 Brand positioning

Brand positioning is defined as the place in consumers' minds that you want to own, specifically the benefit that they will think off whenever they hear your brand⁵. It has to be externally driven and relevant as well as different from the competition and most importantly, valued by them. Marsden (2002) use Volvo as an example whereby it has always been associated with "safety", a *de facto* positioning in the mind of many consumers⁶. To create a brand, it starts from the DNA. The brand DNA is strongly embedded whenever the brand speaks through all its communication. The message of a brand should be concentrated, succinct and powerful as possible, so that it can survive intact as it is communicated across media types⁷. Therefore, a vague brand DNA will become unrecognizable and bland to consumers.

2.1.2 Brand name

Brand name is often the most highly visible and long lasting connecting element of a brand for the consumer. It should crystalize the experience of the brand in a single word or phrase that is transferable around the world and can be protected. Therefore, given the responsibility and value the brand name carries, it must be chosen with great care. Ellwood (2002) further outlined seven functions of a brand name and they are; 1) identifies the product as unique to customers, 2) describes the product core emotional brand benefit, 3) should be easy to pronounce and spell, 4) should be usable around the world, avoiding cultural mismatches, 5) should be protected and used to create a legal barrier to counterfeiting, 6) should be an equity that can be traded, regardless of tangible company assets and 7) must ultimately feel good in a subjective sense.

2.1.3 Brand identity and brand image

These two concepts are closely connected and rely on each other. Often than not, these two concepts are confused and used interchangeably⁸. A structure that makes brand identity consists of core identity of the brand, extended identity of the brand and brand essence. In core identity of the brand, brands are represented by 6-12 dimensions that describe their brand very well as part of the core element. At least one of the element should be a key differentiation to the brand so that it resonates with the customers. A brand is considered succesful when its core identity is clearly understood and perceived by customers. A company must have a clear brand identity with depth and texture so that those designing and implementing the communication programs do not inadvertently send conflicting or confusing messages to customers⁹. As for extended identity of the brand – a brand cannot be respresented by the core elements alone, therefore the extended brand identity will be helpful in providing perspective when formulating strategy as oppose to the core elements that may not do so well due to the nature of their brief descriptions. Examples of extended brand identity include brand personality, symbols, etc.

2.1.4 Brand community

Social media breeds brand community. Muniz and O’Guinn (2001) defined brand community as “a specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structure set of social relationships among admirers of a brand.”¹⁰ A brand community is a collective of people with shared interest in a specific brand, creating a subculture around the brand with its own values, myths, hierarchy, rituals and vocabulary¹¹. Brand communities encourage management of a product to engage their consumers whereby in such communities, people may engage in several types of behaviors, such as helping other customers or sharing experiences with them. On top of that, it is important to note that there are quite a number of passive customers as well who read up all the information shared and make their purchase decision after.

2.1.5 Branding on Social Media

Recent research shows that marketing budgets directed towards social media are constantly growing, suggesting that brands are increasingly interested in establishing their presence on social media. The shift towards social media can be explained by several factors as stated by Gilin¹²:

- 1) Declining response rates towards conventional online marketing such as banner and direct mailer via email due to disinterest and spam.
- 2) Technology developments have made way for developing IT infrastructures, new tools and increasing online population that contribute to social media attractiveness.
- 3) Demographic shifts whereby young individuals are keener to move online and the use of traditional media channels as declined.
- 4) Customer preference whereby on the internet, people trust their friends and other users of similar situation more than any company and lastly, the most crucial factor of all is low cost. A viral campaign can produce more engaged customers compared to a television campaign at a much lower cost.

2.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 Domestication theory

Domestication of technology is a concept within studies of the sociology of technology to describe and analyze the processes of technology's acceptance, rejection and use¹³. It was developed from the 'social shaping of technology' perspective, where the user is perceived as having a dominant role in defining the nature, scope and functions of the technology. Back in the olden days, domestication in the traditional sense refers to the taming of a wild animal. Using the same metaphor, the domestication of technology refers to the process where users bring an artifact from the public realm to the private and tame, gain control, shape or ascribe meaning to the artifact in users' lives¹⁴.

For instance, before the smartphone was invented, telephone is just a device we use to keep in touch and where we place it in the hallway or living room but now, it has taken over a significant spot in our lives. Telephone these days has been upgraded to become our closest companion as we carry it everywhere. It's not unusual when someone say that the first thing he looks for once he wakes up in the morning is his phone. On top of that, there's a reason why it is call a smartphone. The device has been innovated so much so that it has an integrated alarm clock, watch, and camera, address book and the list is endless. This is a perfect example of domestication that has taken place and how the foreign technology has been moulded to suit our life.

2.2.3 Conceptual Framework - Based on the literature reviews that have been done, the researchers have come up with a conceptual framework regarding the study.

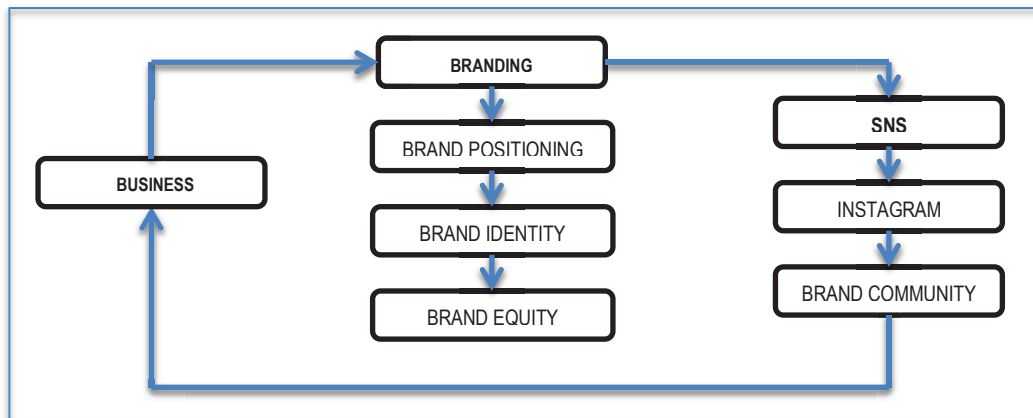


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of the study

3. Research Design

Qualitative approach with in-depth interviews were conducted with three chosen participants that fulfils the criteria of; have been selling on Instagram for at least one year and have existing followers of more than 10,000. This is to help researchers to gain more understanding and insights of the issue at hand. Interviews yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. Interviews were conducted with a panel of three participants each representing their own business setup. For good varying degrees of answers, participants from different business background were chosen.

Sampling procedure - the researcher began the search of participants by first surveying on Instagram which business has been gaining strong following and has been the "talk of the town". This is based on observation on other Social Network Sites (SNS) such as Twitter, Facebook or Whatsapp. Online word of mouth (eWOM) plays a big role as part of deciding factor. After scouting around, researchers had selected three potential respondents that could yield highly rich information to this research, and they are

Pieces by Raesa who currently have 19,000 followers, The Baking Bachelor with 16,000 followers and lastly BebeBundo with a number of 14,000 followers. These three respondents were selected as researchers feel that they represents the selected few businesses within the most popular categories on Instagram which are food, fashion and kids. Pieces by Raesa represented the fashion category as it is an Instagram shop that sells custom made batik, The Baking Bachelor specialized in desserts were chosen to represent the food category and lastly BebeBundo, an Instagram shop that are focused on creating leather moccasins for toddlers.

For this study, all participants were first contacted via email; they were properly explained on the purpose of the research before inviting them as a respondent for an in-depth interview session. Sessions then were arranged according to their time, at their chosen place with a list of questions that served as an interview guide that took time between one to one and half hours.

Validity and Reliability - in order to assess the validity of this study, the researcher had employed several ways in making sure the data collected is valid. Merriam (1992) mentioning that, human beings are the primary instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative research; whereby interpretations of reality are accessed directly through their observations and interviews¹⁵.

Therefore in this research, firstly the researcher counter checked the audio several times with the transcription to make sure everything is tally. Secondly, the transcription were then printed and showed to the respondents accordingly and had it signed to make sure that they were agreeable with everything that was on paper were exactly what had been spoken during the interview.

In assessing the reliability for this study, the researcher use inter-rater reliability Jacob Cohen's (1960) kappa as a statistical measure by using peers checker¹⁶. Two reliable individuals who are related to the research area were chosen to rate the code accordingly. Through the process, researchers had derived the Kappa value of coefficient agreement at the range of 0.87 (almost perfect), which mean a good reliability value for continuing data analysis.

4. Results

4.1 RQ 1. Why do the sellers opt to choose Instagram to set up their business as opposed to other social media platform?

Based on the analysis done on the transcription of the three respondents, the researchers had undergone through three phases of coding which are open coding, axial coding and selective coding. After the third stages, the themes have been grouped together to the closest unit and nine themes had been identified related to the first research questions. Amongst the important themes are Instagram filters, popularity, right audience and lastly word of mouth (eWOM):

4.1.1 Instagram Filters

One of the most outstanding features of an Instagram is the fact that it has filters that enables users' photos to stand out and appear as if it has been given a professional touch. The filters are so easy to operate and with just three steps, users can publish their raw photos and made it look unique and stands out according to their chosen mood.

As for these business operators, although they admittedly love using the filters but when it comes to product that needs the colour to be as close as the real one, very few times they will use a filter but rather to publish the photos just by enhancing the lighting and brightness.

4.1.2 Popularity

Popularity here is not merely referring to the popularity of Instagram, instead referring to the fact that there's a lot of Instagrammers who are very, very popular on Instagram itself, collecting up to one million followers. If popular people who write blogs are called bloggers, thus popular users on Instagram are known as "Instagrammers".

The fact that Instagram has the ability to attract a bunch of famous people to set up their own account has become an advantage to these business sellers. The sellers then will engage all these famous Instagrammers to help them to advertise their product with a minimal fee. Advertising on Instagram is a huge advantage for these sellers as there's no third party involve, no fancy media or agency budget needed, so it's just between them and the owner of the account. It also gives them direct connection as once these Instagrammers post up a post that tagged their account, it will piqued the followers' interest and invited them to click on it. Once they reached the sellers' page, there are chances that they will click on "follow" if interested and this will increase their number of followers. Therefore it is important for the sellers to do homework and research on who's who that is related to their product and target audience. This is nothing new, as outside of digital world, this concept is known as advertising, which most likely will cost them more, as they need to spend for production.

4.1.3 Right Audience

Another interesting point that was brought up, all three respondents were quick to point out that even though Instagram has wide array of users especially teenagers, they seemed to get the right audience with their product. Somehow, they only need to engage with one person and from this person, it will attract the like-minders who have the same intention to follow their Instagram. Therefore business gets easier for them as they don't have to struggle looking for followers.

Know your consumers. Get the key person that will enable you to connect more of the like-minded consumers on Instagram. Being a new brand and starting with zero followers, you cannot randomly add followers therefore, you have to start slow and build your reputation from there. It might be hard to get your first 1000 followers therefore it is imperative for the business owners to be consistent and at the same time do their homework diligently in identifying the key Instagrammer that able to make his or her business known to the public.

4.1.4 Word of Mouth

What's special about Instagram is the fact that it encourages eWOM (online word of mouth) as it exist solely on the concept of sharing. They can simply tag the username for the Instagram business to allow other potential consumers to browse through that Instagram account in just a click away. This will encourage other people to follow you and indirectly boost your business growth. On top of that, this is also where the concept of brand community comes alive where past and present customers will share their reviews and future customers will make their research based on the reviews that they read.

The strength of word-of-mouth is undeniable especially in social networking site. Admittedly, people talk and people love to hear even more. They also love to share their experience when it comes to buying, as that is a common thing to do these days. As trivial as it might sound, there are plenty of researches that stated the generation today love to elevate their status on Social Networking Sites by sharing or publishing what they just did/ate/went and so on. Therefore branding simply co-exists naturally in a Social Networking Site as without brand, the object is meaningless. And that surely doesn't connect with the concept of eWOM. Due to that, business owners need to strategize on how they can get eWOM to work for them and to boost their sales.

4.2 RQ 2 - What are the brand strategies employed by these businesses in getting strong following?

In answering this research question, no doubt that some of the themes will be overlapping with the first research question, however the researchers have managed to identify some of the different themes provided by the respondents. There are four important themes in total which are; Celebrities with strong following, Exclusivity, Packaging, and Market positioning. These themes will be elaborated below.

4.2.1 Celebrities with strong following

Instagram is such a simple and popular platform where it has attracted celebrities who originally have a strong following in the real world to join in. So naturally when they register on Instagram, immediately they will gain fast following even up to one million. Based on the interviews, the respondents shared that in order to kick-start the momentum, they will engage with celebrities in order to spread the word about their business. According to The Baking Bachelor, he is a friend to famous Instagrammers such as Faizdickie and Hanez Suraya and what he did was he baked cakes for them to taste and voluntarily they post it on Instagram as they were on friend basis. No monetary transaction was involved and he immediately gains new followers! However there's also a drawback whereby he admits that doesn't mean your followers growing it will reflect your sales as well, as not all of them has the intention to buy from you.

As for BebeBundo, the owner admits that she needs to be fast and always alert to the current situation i.e. if there's a celebrity that just gave birth to a newborn daughter, then she will craft a pair and send it as a gift. That way, the celebrity will published it on her Instagram account as a thank you note and those interested will become BebeBundo's followers.

As a home-based business owner, you are surely starting with small capital and minimal budget (or next to none) for advertising. Therefore, it is imperative for you to identify the Instagrammers that will be able to promote your business and indirectly give you more followers. All the three respondents had been doing their homework and rightfully tapping the key person that enable their business to prosper. BebeBundo especially, had always been alert to celebrities that are having babies and toddlers so they can send these celebs a pair of baby moccas for their baby to try on. And later in exchange, these celebrities will post up a photo on their account showcasing the product and tagging the business at the same time.

4.2.2 Exclusivity

There's a lot of business sprouting up on Instagram these days and to make their product stand out, they stressed on the importance of exclusivity. All three respondents agreed that the more special their product is, the easier they gain customers and followers. Indirectly, this concept relates well on brand positioning. According to The Baking Bachelor, he maintain serving cakes and dessert as well as to stress on the exclusivity of his brand, he will put up photos of the premium ingredients that he's using. It reflects on the final price and insinuates the premium taste of his baked goods.

As for Pieces by Raesa, to maintain the exclusivity of the product, she stressed on the colours. Her product carry the signature of pastel colours and it constantly evolved according to the latest colour trend. Different with BebeBundo, although they do have healthy competition, they pride in being the first crafter for baby mocassins where all their products are lovingly handmade and custom sized to fit your baby's feet rather than the ones that are mass produced from China.

Exclusivity here can simply means unique selling proposition (USP). In business, a USP is necessary to create hype for your product and set it apart from competitors. On top of that, audience needs to know what makes your product special and intrigued them to give it a try. In branding, exclusivity is another element of brand positioning whereby your uniqueness will stand out from the rest and cut the clutter of various products on Instagram.

4.2.3 Packaging

A good product will take packaging into consideration as part of its branding strategy. Especially if you are home based because all products will be send via post where customers will be receiving it at the comfort of their chosen address. Unwrapping a parcel is also part of purchasing experience therefore how the product is being package will reflect on its branding as well as the quality and pricing. Based on the interview, all three respondents stressed on the importance of quality packaging, as it is part of the buying experience for their customers, especially if you are selling premium product. For instance, Pieces by Raesa is selling batik that cost around RM790 - RM1500 therefore to reflect the pricing, the batik is posted in custom made box complete with a thank you card.

Same goes to BebeBundo. To differentiate their baby moccs from the rest, their shoes comes with a special box and a dustbag to store the shoes when not in use. They also stressed on the unwrapping parcel as part of experience when it comes to buying. Everything must looks neat and presentable. As for The Baking Bachelor, even though he is just selling cakes, he also believes in good packaging thus looking forward to custom made his own cake box.

Packaging is another aspect that should not be ignored as it reflects on your branding. If you are selling products that will be placed on aisle, packaging is the most important element that you need to emphasize on. Luckily home-based business is all about delivery. That however does not mean you have to neglect the packaging part. Based from the information shared by all three respondents, they unanimously stressed on the importance of packaging as part of buying experience, even more when your product is delivered via courier. So when you unwrapped the parcel, the first thing that customer will see is the package. Therefore, how you placed the product will play an important role as part of the purchasing experience. If you emphasized on the quality of your boxes, art card, stickers, ribbons and etc, this will elevate the status of your brand, especially if you are pushing for a premium product. Users will seek reason to justify for their expensive purchase.

4.2.4 Market Positioning

This theme might be slightly overlapping with the “Exclusivity” theme as it carries almost the same meaning but in different light. Questions were posed differently as exclusivity is skewed more to the product rather than market positioning is branding skewed. All three respondents seemed to know their specialty and what makes them different from the rest and the strength they could apply in order to strengthen their presence in the Instagram community.

Market positioning will create a distinct feature for your product and set it apart from the rest. This however is more centred to branding whereby how do you position your brand and make it special for the consumers. On top of that, it will also leads to your brand DNA whereby i.e. the case of Pieces by Raesa who stood out with pastel *batik*. Eventually when she ventured out to other range, she will need to maintain the pastels element in her product, as it is consistent with her brand positioning.

4.3 RQ 3. What are their brand strengths in creating brand loyalty?

Based on the interview, the researchers had managed to extract three themes from the data and they are; Fast turnaround, Handling bad reviews and Make friends with customers. These themes are considered as the brand strengths in creating brand loyalty on social network.

4.3.1 Fast Turnaround

When it comes to buying online stuff, customers will expect fast service, as they would rather not wait unless being pre-empted earlier. Amongst the three respondents, the responses for these differ from product to product. I.e. for cakes from The Baking Bachelor, he accepts one day last minute notice depending on his schedule, same goes to BebeBundo who takes around one to two days to complete a hand crafted pair of baby moccasins. On a contrary with Pieces by Raesa, she needs at least one month to custom made a fresh pair of *batik* and during festive season such as *Aidilfitri*, she will open up her order three months earlier as the demand will be really high.

One of the criteria of purchasing item online is the waiting time, as you don't get your product instantly. Waiting time differs from item to item as well as taking in other factors such as location, custom made, preorders, back orders and so on. Sometimes, a customer will be eager to get the item thus they would not want to wait. Therefore a fast turn around will be an added advantage to an Instagram's business. It is crucial for the seller to manage the customers' expectation to avoid any miscommunication or disappointment that could result in negativity.

4.3.2 Handling Bad Reviews

As with other Social Network Site that operates on the interface of allowing conversations via comments, you can't run away from negative remarks. Hence a good brand needs to know how to handle these type of reviews tactfully. The negative reviews shouldn't be confused with spam, but it is a review in bad light purposely written about the product. On top of that, Instagram is a public platform therefore how the business owner handles the reviews will be seen by the public. All three respondents were agreeable that whenever they are faced in the situation, they need to handle the matter delicately, as not to lose the customers' trust in their brands.

As Instagram allows space for users to interact with each other, reviews in negative light is unavoidable. As a brand owner, you should not let things get out of hand therefore you have to be alert in case there is bad review on your page. Handling this matter should be done delicately as it is quite transparent how the brand owners speak with the customers, as it will reflect on the brand. The professionalism and brand identity will be at stake if the issues were not handle delicately therefore it is advisable for the brand owner to be calm and diligent when handling this matter.

4.3.4 Make Friends with Customers

Slightly different, another strategy shared by The Baking Bachelor, he mentioned that he loves to make friends with his customers. He wants for his brand to be approachable and funny in a relax kind of way so that it makes his customer close to him and indirectly encourage them to stay loyal with his product. This is quite a unique approach, as the owner wants the brand to be seen as amicable, friendly and it actually communicates with the customers. Sometimes you will have individuals randomly commenting on your photos even though he or she is not your customers. But as a brand, since The Baking Bachelor has positioned himself as being approachable and friendly, he loves to casually reply and make friends with those who commented. This is another strategy in keeping the relationship close as to attract customers to become loyal to your brand.

5. Discussions and Conclusion

This study sought to answer the phenomenon of virtually set up businesses on Instagram as this activity has been growing rapidly where Instagram has become a popular medium to shop. Started as a Social Networking Site, Instagram has evolved in ways that users would have never imagined. When Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger kick started the project, they didn't imagine it to be a platform for businesses to grow especially home based business as their objective is based on photo sharing. From this study, the researcher has found several interesting insights to what had contributed to the growth of this phenomenon. Amongst it, Instagram was rated as a convenient Social Networking Site for users to adapt, trendy as it is considered "in" at the moment and it managed to attract the popularity of individuals from all levels to set up their own account. Therefore everyone has easy access to it. Not to mention the fact that Instagram was built as an application as compared to Flickr which is a web based photo album, therefore it made a huge difference as everyone own a smartphone these days. This is in line with Domestication Theory where it stated that users have a prominent role in adopting and evolving a technology especially in their social life.

The effect of Instagram in human live is undeniable especially for the gen Ys or the echo boomers. Born with variety of gadgets, it was utilized for day-to-day activities. For instance, nowadays it become such a norm for people to take photos of their foods especially when they eat in fancy place with proper plating and fancy ambience so they can upload it on Instagram. And it just doesn't stop at food, as the categories are endless. There's going for holidays, shopping or even uploading photos of what you wear. It is also a norm these days to see people posing in front of unique backdrop, even in the middle of a traffic, as the more unique their photos are, the higher rank of awesome level it will get on their Instagram account.

That aside, when it comes to branding, all three-business owners seemed to have a clear idea of where they want to take their businesses. Even though when they first started the business, Instagram was

chosen as it has very simple interface with loads of potential, they did give much thought and adapted well to the surrounding in order for their business to thrive. For example, BebeBundo, when she first started selling baby moccasins, she wasn't sure whether the style will be adapted by moms locally as leather moccasins are more popular in the United States and United Kingdom. That aside, she braved through and after seeing the responses, she decided to launch it into a full time business. Although it is only a one-man show in the beginning, all three sellers seemed very focus on establishing their brand by emphasizing on their product quality to win the heart of customers.

That being said, Instagram has obvious lacking when it comes to doing business. The most apparent ones are the fact that Instagram needs to be supplemented as it does not carry full features as compared to e-commerce website. Therefore, in order to smooth out the communication between the buyer and the seller, these business owners had to resort to another platform, in example The Baking Bachelor used Whatsapp to communicate with his customers, while Pieces by Raeesa preferred email for the first stage and moved on to Whatsapp for the second stage (once customers has confirmed to buy) and lastly for BebeBundo, tired over replying the same set of questions over Whatsapp, had chosen their own domain www.bebebundo.com to smoothen out the purchasing experience as well as to work efficiently. This goes to show that Instagram cannot be a stand-alone platform when it comes to business, as it needs to be supplemented with another platform that allows communication between buyer and the seller. Another issue is, all three-business owners do not seem to engage with a proper analytical tool in analyzing their Instagram post. Therefore their observation on the most likes, proper timing and so on are purely based on their experience and through their own observation that could be on the surface only. With a proper analytical tool, they will get to have the details down to the last number, which they might have easily missed out.

As conclusions, the researcher found that Instagram is a good platform to start a home-based business as it encourages people from all walks of life to give it a go. It's not only for the aspiring homemakers but also for students, part-timers and so on that wants to give it a try before deciding to engage in a full time business. This is due to the large crowd and very minimal capital needed for them to start their own business. Likewise from a brand perspective, we cannot deny the strength of branding and the impact it has on a business. Without a brand, a business is nothing. Even commodities are branded these days. From salt, sugar, rice, every item comes with a brand and branding is not limited to a simple packaging and a logo, but encapsulates more elements than that. Therefore, a business may be easy to set up on Instagram but the sellers have to be more proactive in building the brand. Every step from the beginning needs to be carefully mapped out, as business is not something that you embark without proper planning.

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