

## **The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Brand Trust: with Special Reference to Cosmetic Industry in Sri Lanka**

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In the Sri Lankan cosmetics sector, establishing brand trust is identified as a significant challenge faced by marketers amidst the current competitive landscape. This research investigates the impact of social media marketing on brand trust within the Sri Lankan cosmetics industry, particularly in the context of the rise of digital media. Empirical studies examining the effect of social media marketing on brand trust in the cosmetics industry in Sri Lanka are limited, revealing a gap in empirical knowledge. This study aims to address this gap by evaluating the impact of social media on brand trust in the Sri Lankan context and identifying the determinants of social media's influence. To achieve this objective, data were collected from 300 consumers who use social media to engage with cosmetic brands in the Western Province, with 148 responses obtained. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The results indicate a statistically significant and strong positive relationship between entertainment, interactions, word of mouth, customization, trendiness, and brand trust. Additionally, the study identified that entertainment, interactions, word of mouth, customization, and trendiness significantly impact brand trust. The findings suggest that social media marketing enhances brand trust and provides genuine motivation for product reviews and recommendations. This gradually fosters an increase in brand evangelism among customers.

**Keywords:** *Brand Trust, Customization, Entertainment, Interactions, Social Media Marketing, Trendiness, Word of Mouth*