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Title: Fostering brand engagement and value-laden trusted B2B relationships through digital content marketing : The role of brand's helpfulness

Year: 2019

Version: Accepted version (Final draft)

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Please cite the original version:

Taiminen, K., & Ranaweera, C. (2019). Fostering brand engagement and value-laden trusted B2B relationships through digital content marketing : The role of brand's helpfulness. European Journal of Marketing, 53(9), 1759-1781. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-10-2017-0794

Fostering Brand Engagement and Value-laden Trusted B2B Relationships through Digital Content Marketing: The Role of Brand's Helpfulness

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This is a preformatted version of the article:
Taiminen, Kimmo and Ranaweera, Chatura (forthcoming), Fostering Brand Engagement and Value-laden Trusted B2B Relationships through Digital Content Marketing: The Role of Brand's Helpfulness, *European Journal of Marketing*, DOI: 10.1108/EJM-10-2017-0794

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT:

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to explore how digital content marketing (DCM) users can be engaged with B2B brands and determine how such engagement leads to value-laden trusted brand relationships.

Methodology: Through an online survey**,** data were collected from the email marketing list of a large B2B brand, and the hypothesised research model was analysed using covariance based structural equation modelling.

Findings: This research identifies a bundle of helpful brand actions – providing relevant topics and ideas; approaching content with a problem solving orientation; as well as investing in efforts to interpret, analyse and explain topics through DCM – to foster relationship value perceptions and brand trust. Critically however, cognitive-emotional brand engagement is shown to be a necessary requirement for converting these actions into relationship value perceptions.

Theoretical implications: This paper furthers the understanding of the dual role of helpful brand actions in functionally-oriented DCM. Additionally, this paper offers evidence of the central role of cognitive-emotional brand engagement in influencing value-laden customer–brand relationships.

Practical implications: This paper introduces a bundle of helpful brand actions that forms the basis for the dual roles of a brand in enhancing customer value and in fostering brand engagement and building relationships. This approach helps practitioners to steer brand-related perceptions arising from DCM interactions towards building trusted brand relationships.

Originality/value: This paper contributes to the marketing literature by revealing a potential approach to DCM in managing customer relationships. Instead of focusing solely on the content benefit-usage link to support engagement, this paper reveals the potential of helpfulness as a brand-initiated DCM engagement trigger in engaging customers with the brand, vis-à-vis the content.

Key words: Content marketing, customer engagement, relationship marketing, relationship value, brand trust, business-to-business

Paper type: Research paper

1 INTRODUCTION

Digital content marketing (DCM) has become an important part of digital marketing, as firms adjust their marketing communications to reach customers and prospects with content that they are willing to engage with. Digital trends survey by Econsultancy and Adobe (2018) indicates that compelling content that fosters customers' digital experience will be among the top digital marketing priorities in 2019. Additionally, nearly nine out of ten B2B marketers in North America agree that content marketing is an important marketing tactic for their firms (Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs, 2017).

Academic interest in DCM is also increasing rapidly. The focus of DCM has evolved from addressing relevant characteristics (Koiso-Kanttila, 2004) and value of digital (information) products (Rowley, 2008) to exploring DCM's potential in marketing communication (Malthouse *et al.*, 2013). This has led to conceptualizing DCM as "creating, distributing and sharing relevant, compelling and timely content to engage customers at the appropriate point in their buying consideration processes, such that it encourages them to convert to a business building outcome" (Holliman and Rowley, 2014). DCM has also often been linked to the concept of customer engagement. This discussion has centred around few main themes: Generating quality leads for sales (Järvinen and Taiminen, 2016; Wang et al, 2017); leveraging brand's social media influence through brand-focused messages (Ashley and Tuten, 2015), brand's thought leadership (Barry and Gironda, 2017), inspirational behaviours (Barry and Gironda, 2018), as well as brand content diffusion among C2C interactions (Kilgour *et al.*, 2015). Discussion has also focused on exploring positive brand attitude formation among prospective customers (Taiminen and Karjaluoto, 2017), and most recently, the role of DCM in trusted brand relationships (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018).

Most of the recent marketing research on DCM has been done in a B2B context (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Järvinen and Taiminen, 2016; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Barry and Gironda, 2017,

2018). B2B transactions are often substantial, complex in nature (Webster and Wind, 1972) and made by a small number of buyer firms (Webster and Keller, 2004). Due to this, B2B suppliers often aim to establish long-term relationships with buyers (Ganesan, 1994). Here, much emphasis is on increasing buyers' trust and confidence to the supplier before (Bengtsson and Servais, 2005) and also after the purchase (Leek and Christodoulides, 2012). While the role of DCM in B2B relationships is noted (e.g. Holliman and Rowley, 2014), few studies empirically investigate the role of DCM from a relationship marketing perspective – in fostering value-laden trusting B2B brand relationships.

To address this gap, this paper considers DCM as a relationship marketing activity relating to "the creation and dissemination of relevant, valuable brand-related content to current or prospective customers on digital platforms to develop their favourable brand engagement, trust, and relationships" (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018, p. 9). In this study the term *brand* relates to the corporate brand, which is often the primary brand in B2B. We study *DCM content users*, specifically consisting of e-mail newsletter subscribers—both customers and non-customers—of the B2B brand, hereinafter referred to as content *consumers.* Generally, DCM content can be distributed through various online platforms including the brand website, blogs and other social media. Email is however an established B2B channel (Järvinen *et al.*, 2012) and it offers a "convenient, acceptable, and appropriate" platform for B2B consumer engagement (Danaher and Rossiter, 2011, p.18).

B2B consumer engagement with digital content often builds on information related to industry issues, phenomena and trends (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Järvinen and Taiminen, 2016). For example, pharmaceutical company Cardinal Health provides insights into the changing healthcare industry landscape on their website and through email newsletters. Enterprise software solutions corporation SAP has established a separate website dealing with several themes under an umbrella of digital business transformation. This content is also distributed to

subscribers via email. This content, while non-brand centred, is a source of customer value (Pulizzi, 2012; Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Taiminen and Karjaluoto, 2017).

However, from a relationship marketing perspective, a pertinent question is how this consumer engagement with the content (as opposed to with the brand) evolves into brand engagement, and how this brand engagement can be properly fostered through the same DCM interactions. Without engagement with the brand (i.e., with sole engagement with the content), these interactions are less likely to influence consumer-brand relationships (Wirtz *et al.*, 2013; Finne and Grönroos, 2009). Research indicates that a wider thematic focus on the brands' digital content and their frequent consumption can influence positive brand attitude (Gao and Feng, 2016; Taiminen and Karjaluoto, 2017). However, brand attitude itself cannot fully explain consumers' relational orientation towards the brand, as the concept lacks interactional focus (Schmitt, 2012). Therefore, more attention is needed on the way in which DCM content could influence consumer engagement with the brand, and eventually value-laden, trusted brand relationships.

Thus, this paper aims to: 1) address potential ways to foster B2B brand engagement in DCM interactions and 2) identify how this brand engagement transforms DCM interactions into relationship value and increased B2B brand trust. Relationship value and B2B brand trust are justifiable as the key outcome variables based on their importance in both relationship marketing (e.g. Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Ulaga and Eggert, 2006) and DCM (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Hollebeek and Macky, 2018).

To achieve these aims, this paper follows the rationale that brand-initiated actions are important in engaging customers (e.g. Kunz *et al.*, 2017; Beckers *et al.*, 2018). Consumer engagement occurs online always through some digital content (Brodie *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, to address consumer brand engagement in DCM, we focus on helpful brand-actions as perceived by

consumers during their DCM interactions. Helpfulness is noted as an important element of DCM (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Barry and Gironda, 2017; Hollebeek and Macky, 2018), but this concept has received inadequate attention in the DCM literature. Helpfulness in this study is defined as a bundle of the brand's functionally-oriented DCM actions executed in a knowledgeable and benevolent manner.

This study contributes to existing DCM literature in two ways. First, it offers key insights on the roles of B2B DCM content and its executional elements in driving brand engagement, and in fostering the relationship marketing aims of DCM. In doing so, it directly addresses areas highlighted by Holliman and Rowley (2014) and Hollebeek and Macky (2018) as requiring further research. This research focus differs from that found in prior studies addressing DCM influence on brands purely based on DCM content benefits and usage frequency (e.g. Taiminen and Karjaluoto, 2017) by shifting the focus to brand as an engagement object. Second, this paper furthers the research on helpfulness in functionally-oriented DCM (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Barry and Gironda, 2017). In the process, this paper also heeds recent calls for further research in this area by Hollebeek and Macky (2018), through the provision of empirical evidence on how two brand-related DCM motives interact to trigger brand engagement in DCM. This paper also offers some contributions to brand engagement literature. This study continues the emerging discussion on brand-initiated consumer engagement efforts (e.g. Verhoef *et al.* 2010; Beckers *et al.*, 2018) and shows cognitive-emotional brand engagement to be a crucial mediator in transforming brand actions into relationship value perceptions in a DCM context.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. First, the theoretical background is discussed to rationalize the relevance of brand helpfulness in DCM. Second, a bundle of helpful brand actions in relationship marketing based DCM is suggested. Third, the relationships of the identified helpful brand actions to value-laden trusted brand relationships are hypothesised

and a conceptual model is developed. Next, the method and data collection are explained and the results are provided. Finally, the paper concludes with theoretical and managerial implications, study limitations and suggestions for future research.

2 THEORY

2.1 Theoretical background

2.1.1 Helpfulness as the foundation for DCM engagement

Perceived thematic relevance of the content and the benefits arising from content consumption are often discussed as the primary reasons consumers voluntarily engage with digital content marketing (DCM) (e.g. Holliman and Rowley, 2014). To be suitable as a relationship marketing tactic, DCM must also contribute to "establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges" (Morgan and Hunt 1994, p. 22). To do so, these communicative episodes must also be treated as an interaction with the brand (Finne and Grönroos, 2009; 2017; Vivek *et al.*, 2012; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016). The central attention of this paper is therefore on consumers' brand engagement induced by DCM interactions.

Brand engagement plays an important role in customer–brand relationships (e.g. Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Vivek *et al.*, 2012; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014). This is because it builds on self-relevant psychological connections with the object, such as a brand (Vivek *et al.*, 2012; Sprott *et al.*, 2009; Mollen and Wilson, 2010; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014), which occurs as an interaction-oriented motivational state triggered by the object of engagement (e.g. Algesheimer *et al.*, 2005; Demangeot and Broderick, 2016; Patterson *et al.*, 2006; Solem and Pedersen, 2016; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016). Brand engagement is characterised by the various brand-related cognitive, emotional and behavioural responses induced by the specific brand interactions (e.g. Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014). The engagement concept is also often addressed as engagement behaviours (e.g. van Doorn *et al.*, 2010; Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014), such

as content consumption or online content creation by a customer (Maslowska *et al.*, 2016). However, the engagement concept tells little about the specific antecedents that can trigger consumer brand engagement during DCM interactions. Therefore, a better understanding of potential antecedents of this DCM induced brand engagement is needed.

To address this issue, this study highlights the relevance of the brand-initiated engagement triggers in engaging customers to brands (e.g. Beckers *et al.*, 2018; Vivek *et al.*, 2012). The specific focus is on brand actions that are observable to consumers during their DCM interactions. We further note that while brand communication may include invisible communicative elements (Finne and Strandvik, 2012), observable actions by the brand enables customers to directly assess the meaning of those actions (Semmer *et al.*, 2008) and make sense of the role of the communicator in relation to these actions (Finne and Grönroos, 2009). In this study, these observable actions are looked at as manifestations of the brand's engagement triggers, contrary to much of the prior literature which has mostly focused on manifestations of customer's own engagement behaviours (e.g. van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010; Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). Therefore, differing from the original perspective (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010), we see brand-initiated engagement actions in DCM as the brand's engagement triggers that have a DCM consumer focus.

The particular focus in this study is on brand's helpfulness manifestations, which are acknowledged to be the fundamental aim of DCM (Holliman and Rowley, 2014). Helpfulness in general relates to a social behaviour of providing assistance to the other actor(s). In DCM, helpfulness however has a dual role: DCM is aimed at providing relevant, consumer benefitting content on one hand (e.g. Holliman and Rowley, 2014), and fostering brand engagement, relational value and trust on the other (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018). This dual role of brand's helpfulness is consistent with the dual perspective on brand-initiated engagement (Kunz et al, 2017) and makes brand helpfulness consistent with the literature on customer engagement

behaviours. In particular, while helpfulness aims to benefit the consumer beyond brand's primary role as a product/service vendor, it is not solely driven by altruistic motives (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014) – helpfulness is aimed also at fostering brand's own marketing aims (e.g. fostering brand engagement). Consequently, the dual role also encompasses brand-initiated engagement triggers in terms of fostering customer engagement to build long-term relationships (Beckers *et al.*, 2018). This dual role should therefore be the basis for addressing brand's helpfulness for engaging consumers to brand in DCM.

Existing B2B DCM literature links DCM mainly to functional consumer-focused aims of enhancing consumer problem solving and learning (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Järvinen and Taiminen, 2016), especially through utilising brand's topical knowledge (Barry and Gironda, 2017). When a brand contributes knowledge resources to provide this kind of functional DCM content, these contributions also act as an indication of the brand's competence (Barry and Gironda, 2017) and its willingness to utilise this knowledge to help (Barry and Gironda, 2018). It may also help the brand to indicate its authentic engagement to DCM (Barry and Gironda, 2017; 2018; Taiminen, *et al.*, 2015). It is these knowledge contributions that can potentially foster brand-focused DCM aims such as brand engagement and trust. Further evidence can also be found in the relationship marketing literature. Sirdeshmukh *et al.*, (2002, p.17) acknowledge visible operational behaviors "that indicate a motivation to safeguard customer interest" to be relevant in fostering trust with the firm. These behaviours consist of dimensions that reflect "underlying motivations to place the consumer's interest ahead of self-interest" (*operational benevolence),* "competent execution" of the specific activity (*operational competence)* and behaviours that indicate "motivations to anticipate and satisfactorily resolve problems" *(problem-solving orientation)* (Sirdeshmukh *et al.*, 2002, p.17-18). These studies indicate that manifestations of brand competence and benevolence in DCM may trigger what Hollebeek and Macky (2018) refer to as consumer's functional and authenticity-based motives to engage with

brands in DCM. Consequently, we argue that a brand's helpfulness – a bundle of the brand's functionally-oriented DCM actions executed in a knowledgeable and benevolent manner – is an important element in fostering the dual role of the brand in DCM. This helpfulness is next discussed in a more concrete level related to B2B DCM.

2.1.2 Helpful brand actions in B2B DCM

In functional terms, knowledge sharing and using knowledge to solve problems constitute the basis for helpfulness. Relevant functional content seem to be the prerequisite for many helpful B2B DCM activity (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Järvinen and Taiminen, 2016). Additionally, to build an engaged consumer base, this content should consist of topics that trigger consumers' on-going information consumption. The B2B literature has revealed that consumers continuously search for information beyond products and services, for example, to keep up with industry trends and market developments, develop their task-related skills, prepare for possible problem-solving situations and gather new ideas for their businesses (Aarikka-Stenroos and Makkonen, 2014; Borghini *et al.*, 2006). From the brand's perspective, provision of relevant topics, innovative ideas and approaching content with a problem-solving orientation are noted as an indication of the B2B brand's knowledge sharing, and act as the potential facilitator in B2B customer relationships (Walter *et al.*, 2003; deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017; Leek *et al.*, 2017; Barry and Gironda, 2017). Therefore, brand's helpfulness that manifests itself through these brand actions (relevant information, ideas and problem solving) are at the core of functionally oriented DCM delivery in B2B, as shown in Figure 1.

Besides knowledge delivery, this paper proposes brand investments in interpreting, analysing and explaining content as another important part of helpfulness. We argue that in DCM this could relate to the brand's knowledge investments made to enable the processing of content. For example, B2B literature has emphasized interpretation as an action, which strengthens the

functionality of information for the information service customer (Wuyts *et al.*, 2009). Similar type of helpful actions can be found in the journalism literature. While journalism is contextually unrelated to marketing, its processes play a potential role in DCM (e.g. Pulizzi, 2012; Holliman and Rowley, 2014). Indeed, journalism appears to be built on utilising journalists' knowledge and abilities to process and present relevant and valuable information (Shapiro, 2010; Willnat *et al.*, 2013; Gil de Zúñiga and Hinsley, 2013). Here information processing relates to various efforts the journalist makes to analyse, examine and interpret the information in a way that best suits the information needs of the readers (Shapiro, 2010; Willnat *et al.*, 2013; Gil de Zúñiga and Hinsley, 2013). Similarly, the investments made to process information in terms of interpreting, analysing and examining the topics should increase the perceived helpfulness of DCM content by contributing to the functionality of the content. For example, rather than only focusing on providing a piece of information, deeper analyses of the information from the consumer's perspective may help consumers make better decisions based on the DCM content.

These types of complementary investments in acts of helpfulness may mirror the intentions of the sender in their content delivery (Sweeney *et al.*, 2012) and reflect that the consumer is respected and appreciated by the source (Semmer *et al.*, 2008). Hence, these types of investments are also likely to reflect the benevolent aspect of B2B DCM. This has also been identified by the recent DCM literature, noting the brand's "generous sharing of their knowledge" as an act reflecting their benevolence (Barry and Gironda 2017, p.18). These kinds of helpful brand actions occupy the outer layer in Figure 1.

Together the two layers illustrate the brand's helpfulness in DCM through the bundling of helpful brand actions. The inner layer in Figure 1 indicates that disseminating content relevant to the consumer is critical. Investing in activities that help the consumer interpret and analyse the content (outer layer) will be superfluous if the content is irrelevant. However, both layers

will help foster brand engagement, trust and relationship value through the brand's knowledge contributions, highlighting the dual roles of DCM. The specific dimensions of Figure 1 reveal the brand's helpful actions used in the empirical study.

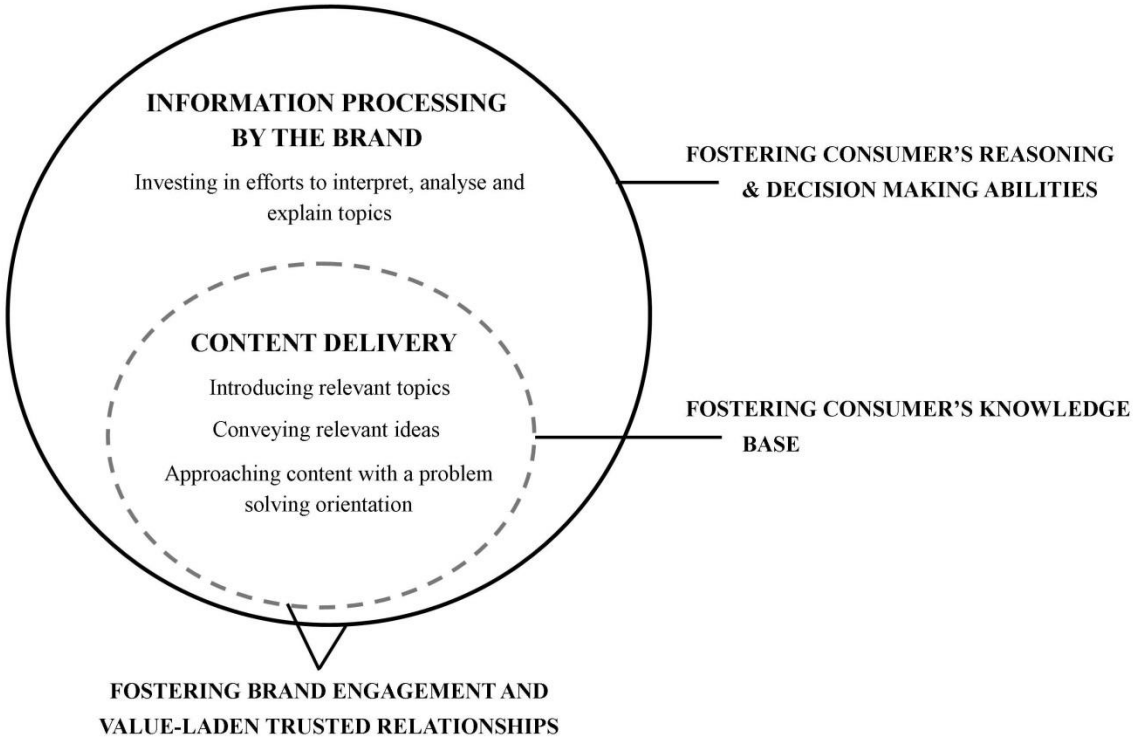

Figure 1. Dual roles of a brand in DCM helpfulness.

2.2 Hypotheses development and conceptual model

2.2.1 Influence of helpful B2B brand actions on trust and relationship value

Given that a main aim of this research is to investigate how B2B brand's helpful actions (specified in Figure 1) can enhance value-laden trusted brand relationships, we treat relationship value perceptions (RV) and brand trust (BT) as the main dependent variables. Brand trust is a key aim of DCM (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Hollebeek and Macky, 2018).

In this paper, it is defined as the confidence the customer has in the brand's beneficial relationship attributes in terms of its competence, benevolence and integrity (in line with McKnight *et al.*, 2002; Walter *et al.*, 2003). The positive influence of brands' knowledge-based communication (Zhang, Wu and Henke, 2015; Sindeshmukh et al, 2002; Walter *et al.*, 2003) as well as resource investments (Ganesan, 1994; Palmatier *et al.*, 2006) on brand trust are well established in the relationship marketing literature. For example, Walter *et al.* (2003) argued that the use of a B2B firm's knowledge capabilities in communicating with consumers increases the consumers' trust in the firm. Ganesan (1994) on the other hand revealed a strong relationship between firm's specific investments into customer relationship and firm trust. Conceptually, B2B brand's helpful actions also count as such investments. They reveal the brand's investments in helping consumers beyond the primary business function between the seller and the buyer (c.f. deLeon and Chatterjee, 2017; Ritter and Walter, 2012; Sindeshmukh *et al.*, 2002). Hence:

H1: Perceived helpful brand actions will have a positive relationship with brand trust.

The value of the relationship is addressed in different ways in the literature. Often, it is related to what is received and given (Zeithaml, 1988), as a ratio of relationship benefits and sacrifices (Ravald and Grönroos, 1996) or as a value received from one vendor compared to its competitors (Ulaga and Eggert, 2006). In this paper, relationship value perceptions are viewed as a customer's subjective perceptions of the overall value of the brand relationship (c.f. Vivek *et al.* 2014), either for themselves or to their firm. In B2B, use of a firm's knowledge in communicating with consumers is linked to increased relationship value potential for the customer. Specifically, Ritter and Walter (2012) found that firms generating ideas and sharing information about the market leads to increased relationship value. Conversely, Wuyts *et al.* (2009) argued that interpretation as part of information provision adds to the value potential of the relationship. A similar effect may also occur through brand's helpful action in DCM, as it

can contribute to the functionality of the DCM content, thus enhancing the perceived value of the consumers' brand relationship. Therefore:

H2: Perceived helpful brand actions will have a positive relationship with relationship value perceptions.

2.2.2 Role of brand engagement

Following earlier literature (e.g. Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2014), brand engagement is seen to include cognitive, affective and behavioural factors. In this study, cognitive and emotional engagement reflect Hollebeek *et al.*'s (2014) cognitive (brand-related thought processing and elaboration) and emotional elements (positive brand-related affect) (p. 154). Behavioural engagement in DCM is argued to arise from cognitive and/or emotional engagement, the latter stimulating behavioral engagement's subsequent development (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018). Consistent with this conceptualization, this research considers behavioural brand engagement as conative (Demangeot and Broderick, 2016; Solem and Pedersen, 2016), reflecting customer's intrinsic brand-related motivation to frequently interact (c.f. Algesheimer *et al.*, 2005). Interactional focus is also confirmed to be an important part of engagement by prior research (e.g. So *et al.*, 2014; Patterson *et al.*, 2006). The frequency element on the other hand is highlighted due to the relevance of frequent (behavioural) engagement of consumers with DCM (e.g. Holliman and Rowley, 2014; Taiminen and Karjaluoto, 2017).

When consumers perceive that the brand is investing in helping them, they may perceive this specific interaction as more engaging (e.g. Zainol *et al.*, 2016). Similarly, when brands make voluntary resource investments for the sake of DCM consumers, brand engagement is likely to enhance (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, if consumers identify B2B brand's helpfulness behaviour valuable, this may act as a direct trigger to

frequently consume DCM content, similar to the content benefits–usage link often described in the marketing literature (e.g. Taiminen and Karjaluoto, 2017; Jahn and Kunz, 2012; Gummerus *et al.*, 2012; Calder *et al.*, 2016). Therefore:

H3a: Perceived helpful brand actions will have a positive relationship with cognitive-emotional brand engagement.

H3b: Perceived helpful brand actions will have a positive relationship with behavioural brand engagement.

It is also likely that cognitively and emotionally engaging brand interactions through DCM (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018) will be a strong motivational trigger for frequent behavioural brand engagement. This relationship is also consistent with the well-established principle that cognitions and emotions are the direct antecedent of behaviours. Consequently, it is expected that behavioural brand engagement will be significantly affected by the cognitive-emotional form of brand engagement. Thus:

H4: Cognitive-emotional brand engagement will have a positive relationship with behavioural brand engagement.

Customer-perceived value has often been argued to be a consequence of engagement (e.g. Vivek *et al.*, 2012, 2014; Brodie *et al.*, 2011; van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010; Hollebeek, 2013; Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). Moreover, Hollebeek (2018) recently identified the functional relationship outcomes important in B2B engagement. However, empirical, quantitative studies addressing the relationship between brand engagement and relationship-oriented value remain scarce. Some evidence for this relationship is offered by Vivek *et al.* (2014), who revealed a high correlation between customer's value perceptions and their brand-related engagement dimensions (i.e. conscious attention, enthusiastic participation, social connection). In the same

vein, Zhang *et al.* (2017) found that customer engagement with enterprise microblogs strongly influenced consumers' specific enterprise-related value perceptions in terms of functional, hedonic and social value. Gummerus *et al.* (2012) showed that frequent behavioural engagement with the brand community influenced consumers' perceived relationship benefits in terms of social, entertainment and economic benefits. Supporting the relational orientation of the engagement concept (e.g. Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Vivek *et al.*, 2012; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016), this study expects brand engagement to act as antecedents to relationship value perceptions. Hence:

H5a: Cognitive-emotional brand engagement will have a positive relationship with relationship value perceptions.

H5b: Behavioural brand engagement will have a positive relationship with relationship value perceptions.

Furthermore, this paper expects brand engagement factors to act as a mediator between brand's helpfulness behaviour and relationship value perceptions. This is because relational influence requires interactions (Finne and Grönroos, 2009) that induce self-relevant connections with the brand (Mollen and Wilson, 2010; Vivek *et al.*, 2012) or brand-related value (Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016; Finne and Grönroos, 2017). Hence, without cognitive-emotional state of brand engagement, consumers are unable to perceive relationship value, despite their perceptions of the brand's role in DCM (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018). In other words, cognitive-emotional brand engagement is an important requirement for brand's helpfulness behaviour to be translated into relationship value. Further, frequent engagement is argued as a strong relational concept (Keller, 2009). Similar to cognitive-emotional brand engagement, behavioural brand engagement can make relationship value more salient for the consumer. Hence, although B2B brand's helpful actions may act as a trigger for the ultimate development of relationship value

(as hypothesized in H2), such effects will only take place in the presence of cognitive-emotional brand engagement and behavioural brand engagement. Therefore:

H6a: Cognitive-emotional brand engagement will mediate the relationship between perceived helpful brand actions and relationship value perceptions.

H6b: Behavioural brand engagement will mediate the relationship between perceived helpful brand actions and relationship value perceptions.

2.2.3 Relationship value perceptions and brand trust

While the relationship between trust and customer value is well established (Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000; Baumann, Le Meunier-FitzHugh, 2014), there exists some debate on the direction of the value–trust relationship. At the same time, the direction is assumed to depend on whether trust is seen to exist/occur pre- or post-consumption (Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000). Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that perceptions of relationship value leading to customer's trusting brand attributes of competence and benevolence (Gil-Saura *et al.*,2009; Sirdeshmukh *et al.*, 2002). Hence, as the brand trust in this study relates to confidence in the brand's beneficial relationship attributes, it is likely that the trust in the benefits arising from the relationship is formed based on the existing value perceptions of the relationship. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H7: Relationship value perceptions will have a positive relationship with brand trust.

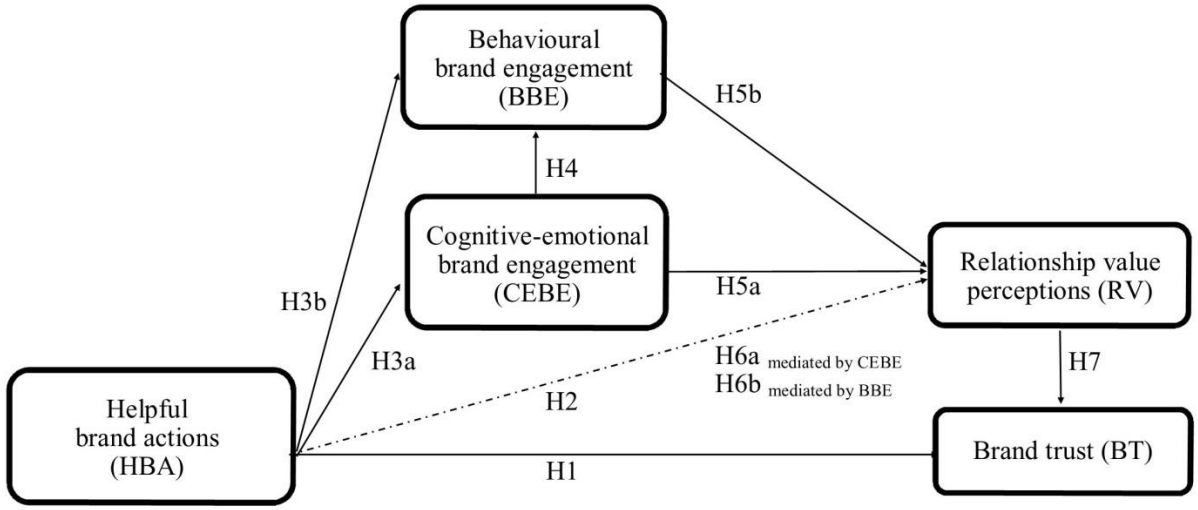

Figure 2. Hypothesised research model.

3 METHOD

3.1 Data collection and sample

To address the hypotheses and reveal the role of customer-perceived B2B brand actions in value-laden trusted brand relationships, a survey was conducted related to a thematic newsletter from a large B2B software firm offering enterprise business solutions. Unlike their other brand-centric newsletter, this periodical consists of industry-related topics and introductions to the firm's thematic blog posts, webinars, customer stories and how-to guides from the firm's website. Email newsletters are a well-accepted in B2B communication (Järvinen *et al.*, 2012; Danaher and Rossiter, 2011), and critical activity for successful B2B content marketing. Hence, the newsletter used as the focus of this survey incorporates an important B2B DCM platform.

The survey was distributed through email with a motivational letter and a request to participate in a survey related to one's brand-related perceptions and the above-mentioned newsletter. Specifically, the request was distributed to the brand's newsletter subscriber list. There were

2,000 email invitations that were confirmed as received by the recipients. Of those, the survey itself was opened by 398 respondents, and a total of 199 respondents completed the survey. Hence, of those who opened the survey, approximately 50% responded. Of the confirmed recipients of the invitation, approximately 10% submitted responses.

A total of 195 complete and valid responses were used for further analysis. The four excluded responses indicated clear signs of straight-lining, where respondents give identical or nearly identical answers to items in a battery of questions using the same response scale (in this case, extreme negative responses), which reduces data quality and validity (Kim et al 2018).

In terms of demographics (see Table 1), most of the 195 respondents were 40–59-year-old (68%), male (61%), and working in a large firm (41%). Nearly half of the respondents were also employed by a firm that purchased products or services from the newsletter provider. There was also a considerable number (53%) of individuals whose firms had not purchased or who did not know whether their firms used products or services from the newsletter provider. Additionally, forty per cent of the respondents tended to read the majority of newsletters, while a similar amount tended to read a minor portion of the newsletters. Considering the sample size, the number of readers in this study represents approximately eleven percent of the average number of monthly readers of the studied newsletter.

Table 1. Respondent profiles.

	Value	Frequency (%)
Sex	Female	77 (39.5)
	Male	118 (60.5)
Age	18-29	6 (3.1)
	30-39	29 (14.9)
	40-49	54 (27.7)
	50-59	78 (40.0)
	60 and over	28 (14.4)
Firm size (no. of employees)	Micro (below 10)	11 (5.6)
	Small (10-50)	39 (20.0)
	Medium-sized (50-250)	62 (31.8)
	Large (over 250)	79 (40.5)
	Missing	4 (2.1)
Subscriber role	Customer	92 (47.2)
	Non customer	103 (52.8)
Newsletter reading habit	Does not read	32 (16.4)
	Reads minority	85 (43.6)
	Reads majority	70 (35.9)
	Reads all	8 (4.1)
Total		195 (100)

3.2 Measures

The measures used in this study were mostly scales tested and validated in prior research. However, some adaptations were necessary to fit the context. (Please see Appendix 1 for item descriptions and measurement properties).

The brand's helpfulness behaviour was developed based on the helpful B2B brand actions identified in the theory section. Items related to functionally-oriented knowledge delivery through DCM are consistent with the measures by Dholakia *et al.* (2004) and Bruhn *et al.* (2014). The items indicating brand's investment to process content were developed for this study. These are consistent with previous research, which used similar actions to represent the content delivery construct (Sweeney *et al.* 2012), i.e., the helpful manner in which content is

delivered. The cognitive-emotional brand engagement measure was adapted from Hollebeek *et al.* (2014), but it was reframed and rephrased to support the measurement of brand-related cognitive and emotional activity during DCM interactions. The behavioural brand engagement measure was based on Algesheimer *et al.* (2005) and the competitor comparison in the item BBE2 was adapted from Hollebeek *et al.*, (2014). The items were formulated to highlight the brand-related trigger for frequent DCM consumption. In addition, the three items for measuring relationship value perceptions were formed based on Vivek *et al.* (2014). Acknowledging the various overlapping roles of respondents, the relationship value perceptions capture the overall value, benefits and positive performance contributions of the brand relationship to themselves or the firm. Finally, the items for brand trust were adapted from McKnight *et al.* (2002), Verhoef *et al.* (2002) and Abdul-Muhmin (2005). All the items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

3.3 Non-response bias

To identify the potential characteristics of non-respondents, the first 20 percent of the respondents were compared to the last 20 percent as suggested by Armstrong and Overton (1977). Chi-square tests and independent sample t-tests revealed a significant difference concerning customer/non-customer share in the groups (p=.000) and related to the item BBE2 (p=0.043). Concerning the customer share, the early respondent group included 20 percent more of customers compared to the late respondent group, which included an equal number of customers and non-customers/ individuals who did not know whether the brand was used by their firms. Hence, there was a possibility for non-customers to be representative of non-respondents. Consequently, all items were tested with a weighted early group, consisting of first 20 per cent of customers and 20 percent of non-customers. This weighted group was also compared to late respondent group. This time, no significant differences emerged. The original difference related to BBE2-responses may be explained by the non-customers as a group of

non-respondents. Based on these findings, customer/non-customer variable (CUST) is used as a control variable in the model, to account for any differences between the two groups.

3.4 Common method bias

Common method bias is a possible concern in measurement, where data is self-reported and collected within a single survey (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). To minimise the occurrence of common method bias in this study, anonymity of responses in the data collection phase was ensured and the order of the survey items were mixed in the questionnaire. Additionally, following recent research (e.g. Panagopoulos et al, 2017; Steinhoff and Palmatier, 2016), common method bias was approached statistically using the unmeasured latent method factor proposed in Podsakoff *et al.* (2003). Basically, original factor items were allowed to load into a single latent common method variance factor, in addition to their original factors. All the original factor loadings remained significant in the presence of latent common methods variance factor. Furthermore, method-based variance explained only 7.6% of the indicator variance, which is well below the 20% threshold. Therefore, common method bias is unlikely to be an issue in this study.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Measurement model

Before addressing the structural model, the validity and reliability of the measurement model was addressed with confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS 24.0. During the validity testing, cognitive-emotional brand engagement item HBA6 (*I feel good about the brand when I read this content*) showed considerable overlap with HBA4 and was therefore omitted from further analysis. The final measurement model contained five latent constructs and 24 individual items (see Appendix 1).

The composite reliabilities (CRs) presented in Table 2 ranged from 0.89 to 0.94, demonstrating excellent internal consistency. The AVE values were well above the threshold of 0.5 indicating acceptable convergent validity. In addition, the results in Table 3 reveal that all factor correlations were below the square root of the AVEs, confirming the discriminant validity of the model (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 2. Composite reliabilities (CRs), Average variance extracted (AVE), factor correlations, and square root of AVEs (on the diagonal).

	CR	**AVE**	**BBE**	**CEBE**	**HBA**	**RV**	**BT**	**CUST**
BBE	.894	.739	**.859**					
CEBE	.900	.645	.578	**.803**				
HBA	.887	.570	.517	.694	**.755**			
RV	.930	.817	.478	.619	.513	**.904**		
BT	.942	.700	.532	.633	.686	.732	**.837**	
CUST	n.a.	n.a.	.242	.207	.224	.470	.378	**n.a.**

BBE=Behavioural brand engagement; CEBE= Cognitive-emotional brand engagement; HBA= Helpful brand actions; RV= Relationship value perceptions; TB= Brand trust; CUST=Customer/noncustomer

4.2 Structural model

The indices for the structural model reveal an acceptable model fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1992). Table 3 shows that the chi-square/degrees of freedom ratio is below 2.5, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is below 0.08 and other model fit indices (NFI, IFI, TLI, CFI) were above or close to 0.9. The structural model test results for the hypothesised relationships also reveal that the constructed model has high explanatory power for the constructed model, as the model accounts for 49% of the variance in cognitive-emotional brand engagement, 38% in behavioural brand engagement, 52% in relationship value perceptions and 68% in brand trust.

The hypothesis test results show that, as expected, the helpful B2B brand actions had a strong positive impact on cognitive-emotional brand engagement (*β=0.68, p<0.001*). This supports hypothesis H3a. Helpful brand actions (*β=0.22, p<0.05*) and cognitive-emotional brand engagement *(β=0.40, p<0.001)* were also found to significantly influence behavioural brand engagement, supporting hypotheses H3b and H4. However, cognitive-emotional engagement seemed to have a considerably larger impact. Together, these results reveal the relevance of the studied helpful brand actions in engaging consumers to brands with digital content marketing.

Table 3. Structural model and hypotheses test results.

Direct effects:	**β**	**Hypothesis test results**
Helpful brand actions → Brand trust	.427***	H1: support
Helpful brand actions → Relationship value	.075	H2: no support (see mediation)
Helpful brand actions → Cognitive-emotional brand engagement	.684***	H3a: support
Helpful brand actions → Behavioural brand engagement	.221*	H3b: support
Cognitive-emotional brand engagement → Behavioural brand engagement	.402***	H4: support
Cognitive-emotional brand engagement → Relationship value	.435***	H5a: support
Behavioural brand engagement→ Relationship value	.112	H5b: no support
Relationship value → Brand trust	.492***	H7: support
Subscriber role → Helpful brand actions	.225**	
Subscriber role → Cognitive-emotional brand engagement	.053	
Subscriber role → Behavioural brand engagement	.110	
Subscriber role → Relationship value	.336**	
Subscriber role → Brand trust	.051	

	R^2	
Helpful actions	.050	
Cognitive-emotional brand engagement	.488	
Behavioural brand engagement	.378	
Relationship value perceptions	.521	
Brand trust	.676	

Model fit: $\chi^2(261)=495.12$; p=0.00; CMIN/DF=1.90; NFI=.882; IFI=.940; TLI=.931; CFI=.940; RMSEA=.068

Note: *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05.

In regards to B2B customer relationships, the direct effect results showed that relationship value perceptions were only influenced by cognitive-emotional brand engagement (*β=0.44, p<0.001*), while no influence of behavioural brand engagement was found (*β=0.11, p>0.05*). Consequently, hypothesis H5a was supported, but there was no support for H5b.

In addition, no support for H2 regarding the direct relationship between helpful B2B brand actions and relationship value perceptions (*β=0.08, p>0.05*) was found. However, based on the hypotheses H6a and H6b, the non-significant relationship is potentially caused by the mediating role of the brand engagement. To address the hypotheses relating to the mediation

effect, a bootstrapping approach was applied following Preacher and Hayes (2008). With a 5000 bootstrap samples, the results show that cognitive-emotional engagement acts as a significant mediator between perceived helpful brand actions and relationship value perceptions (β = 0.63; SE = 0.12); 95 percent confidence interval (CI= from 0.397 to 0.878). This gives support to hypothesis H6a. However, the bootstrapping did not reveal behavioural engagement to play a mediating role as the CI-values were not significantly different from zero. Specifically, the results indicated its low influence as a direct mediator between helpful brand actions and relationship value perceptions (β = 0.03; SE = 0.03; CI= from -0.012 to 0.113). Similarly, no double mediator influence was found when taking into account the mediating role of behavioural brand engagement through the cognitive-emotional brand engagement (β = 0.05; SE = 0.04; CI= from -0.018 to 0.130). Hence, these results led to the rejection of the hypothesis H6b. Furthermore, relationship value perceptions were also found to be the primary influence on brand trust (*β=0.49, p<0.001*), supporting H7. However, as hypothesised, the helpful B2B brand actions also had a considerable effect on brand trust (*β=0.43, p<0.001*), supporting H1. This suggests that brand-related perceptions arising in DCM interactions are capable of influencing consumers' confidence on brands.

4.3 Alternative model

The hypothesized research model was also compared with an alternative model. To do this, a "complete" model consisting of the hypothesised relationships presented above, as well as the direct effects of cognitive-emotional and behavioural brand engagement on brand trust was tested. Rival model fit ($\chi^2(259)=492.42$; p=0.000; NFI=0.882; IFI=0.941; TLI=0.930; CFI=0.940) showed no changes in the chi-square/degrees of freedom ratio (1.90) or in RMSEA (0.068). Similarly, non-significant paths from cognitive-emotional brand engagement (*β=0.03 p>0.05*) and behavioural brand engagement (*β=0.02, p>0.05*) to brand trust support the original hypothesised structural model.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Theoretical implications

This paper investigated the role of DCM using relationship marketing principles as a theoretical lens. Building especially on recent conceptual work addressing consumer brand engagement processes in DCM and its relational outcomes (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018), this paper addressed how brands could foster consumer engagement with the brand and build value-laden trusted brand relationships with DCM. Specifically, we focussed on helpful brand actions and demonstrated how those helpful actions play a dual role in B2B DCM. The dual role was rationalised based on the utility of helpful brand actions for both customer-focused (i.e. customer learning, reasoning and improved decision-making) and brand-focused (i.e. brand engagement, relationship value and brand trust) DCM aims. This helpfulness was empirically established to help brands to steer consumers' B2B brand engagement in DCM interactions and foster value-laden trusted brand relationships, contributing to the DCM literature.

To elaborate, the findings indicated that helpful brand action in DCM is a major driver of consumers' brand engagement. Specifically, helpful brand actions were found to act as a strong trigger for consumers' cognitive-emotional brand engagement. While helpful actions also had a limited role in triggering frequent behavioural brand engagement, this behavioural engagement was primarily caused by the consumer's cognitive-emotional brand engagement. These findings collectively demonstrate the importance of a brand's helpful actions in driving consumers' brand engagement in DCM. Additionally, these results provide evidence supporting the sequential occurrence of cognitive/emotional brand engagement and behavioral brand engagement in DCM (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018). The results offer the important insight that the focus of DCM should not only be on content benefit and usage, but also on ensuring that the content is delivered in a helpful manner which engages consumers to brands.

This paper also revealed the salience of cognitive-emotional brand engagement in transforming helpful brand actions into consumer perceived relationship value. This result gives empirical support to the central mediating role of brand engagement in customer relationships (e.g. Brodie *et al.*, 2011; Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016; Vivek *et al.*, 2012). This finding also points to the particular importance of concentrating on actions that enable the brand to convey relational meaning in DCM interactions, instead of solely focusing on providing relevant content to consumers.

Unexpectedly, this study did not find consumers' behavioural brand engagement to significantly influence their relationship value perceptions above and beyond cognitive-emotional brand engagement. Nor did this study find behavioural brand engagement to act as a significant mediator between helpfulness behaviour and relationship value perceptions. While unexpected, prior literature also indicates that these results are plausible. For instance, these findings on the direct effect of behavioural brand engagement are consistent with the acknowledged relatively weak influence of interaction frequency on relationship quality (Palmatier *et al.*, 2006). This highlights that mere B2B brand interaction does not necessarily lead to greater relationship value perceptions. The reason for the lack of a mediation effect may be that behavioural brand engagement is directed towards the DCM activity. On the other hand, cognitive-emotional engagement relates to the self-relevant connection to the brand induced by the consumers' DCM interaction. These results suggest the insufficiency of behavioural brand-related motivation such as frequent brand encounters in contributing to consumers' relationship value. Instead this value arises through cognitive/emotional brand engagement in DCM interactions, supporting the work of Hollebeek and Macky (2018).

Finally, this study confirmed helpful brand actions directly fostering B2B brand trust. Specifically, this influence was argued to occur through the ability of helpful brand actions to reveal B2B brand knowledge and signal brand's benevolence in terms of willingness to share

their knowledge for the benefit of the consumer. This result supports Hollebeek and Macky's (2018) argument that brand trust develops as a consequence of consumers' sense-making through multiple brand-related DCM interactions. This was further supported by the insignificant relationship between brand engagement factors and brand trust addressed in the rival model.

These findings contribute to DCM and customer brand engagement literature in two intertwined ways. This study is among the first to empirically approach the role of DCM in value-laden, trusted B2B brand relationships and the suitability of helpfulness as the basis of DCM activities (Holliman and Rowley, 2014; see also Barry and Gironda, 2017). With this research, we answer to the call for more research on DCM execution, and for further evidence on practises that foster consumer value, brand engagement and trusted brand relationships (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018; Holliman and Rowley, 2014). Furthermore, this study explained brand's helpfulness in reflecting both brand knowledge sharing and related benevolence by the B2B brand. Hence, this paper addressed an important DCM research area by focusing on a concept that occurs in the intersection of consumers' brand-related functional and authenticity-based motives (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018). Brand's helpfulness in DCM also continues the emerging discussion in customer engagement literature on the active role of the brand in engaging customers (Verhoef *et al.*, 2010; Vivek *et al.*, 2012; Beckers *et al.*, 2018).

5.2 Managerial implications

To succeed in relational DCM aims, marketers' attention should not be only in disseminating topical content and related benefits for consumers. Instead, DCM practitioners should also focus on generating brand-related signals through DCM. It is these brand-related signals that

trigger consumers' cognitive/affective brand engagement in DCM. This paper revealed that a specific bundle of helpful actions that manifest themselves as providing relevant information and ideas; emphasising problem solving; as well as in investing in efforts to interpret, analyse and explain topics–can drive this brand engagement. This helpfulness reveals brand's knowledge capabilities and signals brand's benevolence in terms of willingness to share this knowledge for the benefit of the consumer. These in turn act as a source of valued, trusted B2B brand relationships.

At the same time, these helpful actions are a source of functional benefit for the consumer. A brand's industry knowledge can support the consumer in terms of up-to-date information on the industry or related phenomena or support the consumer in problem solving. Similarly, using the brand's competence to explain, analyse and interpret topics may help the consumer to develop a deeper understanding of different topics and to make more reasoned decisions based on this information. Consumers presumably search for information from different sources until they are satisfied with this need (Hollebeek and Macky, 2018). Potentially, brands could also invest their time and effort to curate information on the relevant topics from outside sources and combine this information for example through interpretation and analysis. This may further reduce consumers' need to engage in information gathering and increase their motivation to engage with brand's DCM content. For a brand, helpful action is also easily executable relative to another known trust promoting DCM aim, namely thought leadership. This is because sharing brand knowledge in a functional and benevolent manner does not require thought leadership capabilities necessary when disseminating for instance, novel, industry-advancing content (c.f.: Barry and Gironda, 2017).

The concept of helpfulness applied in this research also offers a contrast to native advertising which is often considered as DCM in a paid context. There is a concern that marketing practitioners opportunistically utilise paid DCM primarily to leverage the credibility of the

medium to their brand messages, thus endangering the credibility of the medium and the brand (Taiminen *et al.*, 2015). Applying brand helpfulness as the primary approach enables a more authentic route to paid DCM. This approach corresponds to the journalistic context, where brand representatives are in fact often attending as topical experts who are used to interpret and explain the happenings.

5.3 Limitations and future research suggestions

The results of this study revealed several interesting findings, but the cross sectional nature of the study limits ability to draw causal inferences. Furthermore, the study was based in a B2B context, often characterized by a high relational orientation between the supplier and a limited number of consumers and a relatively strong emphasis on corporate branding. As such, inferences about a B2C context will have to be made with some caution. In addition, the research focused specifically on DCM activity related to B2B brand's newsletters delivered through email. Email is a more accepted marketing communication platform in B2B than in B2C (Danaher and Rossiter, 2011). The B2B suppliers also disseminate content through other activities such as webinars, white papers or social media posts. However, this study does not focus on the roles of those other activities. Furthermore, the current engagement literature (Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016; Hollebeek, 2018) and marketing communication literature (e.g. Finne and Grönroos, 2017) have emphasised the role of ecosystems and multiple actors within. This study focuses on the dyadic brand relationship perspective in DCM treating the dyad as the lower analytical level within the higher level context of ecosystems. It has also been suggested that buying centre members may engage differently with B2B brands (Hollebeek, 2018). This study does not address such role differences. These topics highlight the numerous research future opportunities in this area.

Furthermore, DCM has become crucial in digital marketing activities in both the B2B and B2C sectors. Several academic marketing papers mention DCM, but research focusing specifically on DCM remains scarce. Thus, future research should put emphasis on addressing content marketing from various perspectives in both B2C and in B2B. This study offers an interesting path for future research to continue discussing the dual role of a brand's helpfulness in DCM in both these contexts. However, as similar type of functional benefits are important for B2C consumers as well (e.g. Calder *et al.,* 2016), and as information contributions are based on journalism whose content is regularly consumed by households, we believe that a brand's helpful actions should also be applicable to the B2C context.

Finally, this paper identified a bundle of helpful B2B brand actions that serve the consumer through B2B DCM. Most recent B2B DCM research has also similarly indicated useful tips and problem solving advice as representing brand's helpfulness (see Barry and Gironda, 2017). However, several other important helpful brand actions likely exist, especially related to information processing by the brands. Future studies could focus on identifying a broader bundle of helpful brand actions and their relationship to the dual role of the brand in DCM. Future research could also consider DCM from a systems perspective. For instance, what drives consumers to search topical information from one actor over another? What are the consumers' perceived additive benefits from engaging with several topic-related information sources in parallel? In addition to ecosystem perspective to customer engagement (e.g. Hollebeek *et al.*, 2016; Maslowska *et al.*, 2016), the recently introduced customer-integrated marketing communication model (Finne and Grönroos, 2017) may offer a fruitful starting point in addressing these issues. Effort could also be directed towards identifying distinctive strategies for brands to foster consumer brand engagement in DCM interactions.

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Appendix 1. Construct items and factor loadings.

Factor	Indicator	Factor Loadings
Behavioural brand engagement (BBE)	I read this content because of the actions made by this brand (BBE1)	.855
	Compared to similar vendors, this brand has a substantial influence to why I frequently read this content (BBE2)	.951
	I read this content repeatedly because of this brand (BBE3)	.762
Cognitive-emotional brand engagement (CEBE)	Reading this content gets me to think about the brand (CEBE1)	.740
	I think about the brand a lot when I read this content (CEBE2)	.824
	Reading this content stimulates my interest related to the brand (CEBE3)	.874
	The brand makes me feel positive when I read this content (CEBE4)	.862
	The brand makes me happy when I read this content (CEBE5)	.702
Helpful brand actions (PBA)	The brand introduces relevant topics (HBA1)	.829
	The brand conveys relevant ideas related to industry or phenomenon (HBA2)	.834
	The brand approaches relevant topics with a problem-solving mentality (HBA3)	.808
	The brand invests in explaining relevant topics (HBA4)	.716
	The brand invests in analysing relevant topics (HBA5)	.608
	The brand invests in interpreting relevant industry information or phenomenon (HBA6)	.707
Relationship value (RV)	This brand positively contributes to my/my company's performance (RV1)	.888
	Altogether my relationship with this brand is valuable for me/my company (RV2)	.893
	Altogether my relationship with this brand benefits me/my company (RV3)	.930
Brand trust (BT)	This is a competent brand (BT1)	.883
	This brand is exactly the right brand to provide industry products/services (BT2)	.878
	This brand performs well (BT3)	.844
	This brand is a good partner to do business with (BT41)	.884
	This brand is a fair actor (BT5)	.734
	This is a trustworthy brand (BT6)	.890
	This is a sincere brand (BT7)	.724

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