Cultivating the brand-customer relationship in Facebook fan pages: A study of fast- fashion industry

Structured Abstract:

Purpose
The study is to examine determinants of continuous brand-customer relationship via company-hosted SNSs (social networking sites). Factors that influence fans to continue using fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages and to maintain the brand-customer relationship are firstly discussed. Subsequently, predictors of fans' engagement and affective commitment to a fast-fashion brand are examined with aim to explore key elements which nurture brand-customer relationship via brands' SNSs.

Design/methodology/approach
Quantitative research was conducted and structural equation modeling was used, to test the hypotheses on a sample of 202 fast-fashion Facebook fan-page users in Taiwan.

Findings
Results demonstrate that engagement, affective commitment and continued intention to use are predominantly influenced by, in turn, social interaction tie, content value and affective commitment.

Research limitations/implications
The study is limited because it investigated the fast-fashion fan page users in on Asian country, so the findings cannot be generalised to other contexts.

Practical implications
Our findings suggest fan page managers' initiation and involvement in conversations, frequent responses, listening to fans' opinions, and improving fans' experiential value may facilitate them to engage in the brand's activities at a higher level.

Originality/value
Findings of this integrated model suggest managerial guidelines for brand managers in this industry regarding how to maintain the brand-customer relationship through social media strategy and they contribute to theory building in continuance intention of SNSs.

Keywords: Social interaction tie, Self-image congruence, Content value, Engagement, Affective commitment, Continued intention to use

Article Classification: Research Paper

1. Introduction

SNSs (social networking sites) have been employed by numerous brands as two-way communication platforms towards target audience to stream instant information, as well as initiate dialogues and interactions (Key Note, 2015a; Park and Cho, 2012; Kim and Ko, 2010; Nisar and Whitehead, 2016; Gonzalez-Lafaysse and Lapassouse-Madrid, 2016). Hence, consumer can keep pace with brands' movements and engage in brands' online environment, through brands' SNSs. This study specifically investigates factors influencing the continuous brand-customer relationship, via fast-fashion brands' company-hosted Facebook fan pages. The fast-fashion trends are defined by Key Note (2015a, p.11) that fashion retailers distribute catwalk-inspired items at much lower prices so consumers can affordably embrace products embedded with the latest fashion elements and fashion retailers increase the amount of sales. Those fast fashion brands track fashion trends quickly and make popular new designs at a cheaper price (Barnes and Lea-Greenwood, 2010). Successful fast-fashion retailers, such as Topshop and Zara, regularly incorporate the up-to-date fashion trend and launch new products in a weekly basis (Mollá-Descals et al., 2011).

Facebook has been the most important social media platform for fashion brands (Mintel, 2014), where the real-time engagement via Facebook indeed extend brand affinity. Fashion retailers showcase their brands via Facebook by highlighting image-heavy, appealing and sharable content to encourage customer engagement. Although the ease of joining a Facebook fan page and its simple usability have led to a rather high popularity on numerous valuable fast-fashion brands' social network platforms (demonstrated as number of "Likes"), the lack of fans' actual and long-term engagement still remains a problem that may harm the brand-customer relationship (Poyry et al., 2013). eMarketer (2015) reveals that increasing audience engagement has been considered the crucial objective in social media marketing. Thus, identifying and comprehending consumer's motivation to continue using brands' SNSs will further help understand drivers of the sustainable relationship between customers and a brand. This study predominantly focuses on fans' total experience in the context of brands' SNSs from emotional (e.g., engagement) and affective aspects (e.g., affective commitment), instead of brands'/products' functional attributions. With the aim of capturing customer loyalty through their emotional responses, engagement and affective commitment with the brand are deemed as indispensable ingredients for the lasting brand-customer relationship. These not only allow fans to genuinely and continuously participate in brands' social environment but facilitate marketers to

accomplish their goals to sustain the relationship with its customers (Luo et al., 2011; Wolny and Mueller, 2013).

Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine key factors that affect fans' continuous intention to maintain the relationship with fast-fashion brands via company-hosted Facebook fan pages, using the survey data collected in Taiwan where Facebook penetration rate is very high at 83.8% (Internet World Stats, 2016). The main objectives of this study are to (1) explore determinants of continuous brand-customer relationship personified by fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages; (2) investigate fans' motivations that influence their engagement and affective commitment with fast-fashion brands. These objectives are designed to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. Why are fans willing to continue using fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages to maintain the relationship with fast-fashion brands?

RQ2. What are antecedents of the sustainable brand-customer relationship via fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages?

The remainder of the article is organised as follows. The second section describes literature related to the influential factors of brand-customer relationship and hypotheses development. The third section presents the employed methodology. The fourth section contains hypotheses testing and results. The final section shows the conclusions and implications.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses

This section discusses the relevant variables that prior studies have shown to influence the continued intentions of using online brand communities, followed by a description of research model and hypotheses.

2.1 Continued intention to use

Fans' continuance intention of usage in the context of company-hosted Facebook fan pages may have influence on the performance of organisations, including sales, future purchase and potential value of community members who might be non-buyers at present (Poyry et al., 2013; Gonzalez-Lafaysse and Lapassouse-Madrid, 2016). Additionally, user retention is considered an essential determinant of sustaining the long-term intangible assets or profitability of B2C (business-to-consumer) organisations. Therefore, continued intention to use company-hosted SNSs becomes a fundamental metric to measure the performance of a company's social network platform (Thong et al., 2006). Meanwhile, the continuance intention may also be concerned with the long-lasting relationship between users (e.g. existing customers, potential customers) and a brand (Tzokas et al., 2001).

Numerous prior studies have examined consumers' behavioural intention through TAM (technology acceptance model) (Gupta et al., 2010; Al-Maghrabi and Dennis, 2011) and TPB (theory of planned behaviour) (Lee et al., 2005; Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002). TAM is a well-known model for explaining how consumers accept and use a technology. TPB posits that an individual's intention to do a given behaviour is useful in predicting actual behaviour. Both models have been applied to explain people's intention to adopt new technology and usage. The tenet of the models focuses on initial acceptance, pre-acceptance or pre-usage expectation, and these models are typically influenced by second-hand information such as others' opinions, WOM or information propagated via mass media (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Casalo et al., 2010). However, the success and viability of a Facebook fan page relies heavily on individuals' continuance intention of usage related to his/her own experience or even the affection toward the fan page. If a fan's desire or experience toward a fan page shrank or lessened after "Liking" (initial adoption), then the fan page may turn out to be disused subsequently (Thong et al., 2006). Therefore, this study investigates continued intention to use through two main aspects of engagement and affective commitment. These aspects emphasise individual's experiential value and attachment toward a brand.

Furthermore, most prior studies discussed the continuous participation with online brand communities or the loyalty toward the community membership (Casalo et al., 2010; Fang and Chiu, 2010). The motif of these studies is mainly derived from the group's collective goals or social identity with the network. However, this study specifically explores fans' continuance intention toward the brand-customer relationship, in which a fan's continuance intention of fan-page usage is ascribed to one's brand-focused mind, experiential value and emotional bond with the brand.

2.2 Factors influencing continuous brand-customer relationship
2.2.1 Engagement
Engagement represents the combination of behavioural responses with an emotional context (Vivek et al., 2012) and contains specifically interactive relationship between individuals and a brand (Brodie et al., 2013; Wirtz et al., 2013). Relationship marketing theory highlights the interactivity and experiential value as the notion of engagement, which goes beyond the solely usage intensity (Vivek et al., 2012; Wirtz et al., 2013; Brodie et al., 2013). Also, experiential marketing emphasises the extent that customers are emotionally involved with an object, according to their memorable experiences (Luo et al., 2011). Pleasurable experiences create hedonic values to engage customers and enhance emotional responses to brands. Thus, engagement is a direct and crucial metric of customer experience, which engages customers in a

personal way and makes them feel as if being part of the brand's network (Luo et al., 2011). Along the same line, engagement in this study is defined as an interactive, active participating and content-contributing behaviour within the online brand-related community (Poyry et al. 2013).

In a brand-customer relationship, engagement is defined as 'the level of a customer's motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind characterised by specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioural activity in brand interactions' (Brodie et al., 2013, p.106). Thus, consumers' engagement in an online brand community stands for his or her overall engagement toward the brand (Wirtz et al., 2013). One of the most ubiquitous platforms where customers engage behaviourally with brands is SNSs, which are particularly suitable for developing and consolidating brand-customer relationships through users' repeated interactions, knowledge co-creation, and event or activity participation (Huang et al., 2013). In the context of company-hosted Facebook fan pages, fans' interactive and integrative participation therefore becomes the focus of brand's social media strategy, which aims at engaging, integrating, and immersing fans in the brand's fan-page community (Jahn and Kunz, 2012). Given that engagement is a significant driver and facilitator for the brand-customer relationship, the hypothesis below was therefore proposed:

H1: Engagement has a positive effect on fans' continued intention to use fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

Engagement is the predictor of cognitive and affective commitment to an active brand-customer relationship, personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities (Wirtz et al., 2013; Huang et al., 2013). Likewise, affective commitment to a brand is significantly determined by active participation (engagement) in its online brand community (Royo-Vela and Casamassima, 2011; Casalo et al., 2010; Poyry et al., 2013; Brodie et al., 2013). Thus, this study posits that:

H2: Fans' affective commitment to fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages is positively influenced by their engagement.

2.2.2 Affective commitment

The foundation for maintaining brand-customer relationship is customers' promises keeping and their ongoing desire to sustain the relationship with a brand; thereby commitment is regarded as the highest level of relational bond (Sánchez-Garcia et al., 2007; Rufín et al., 2013). In accordance with commitment theory (Zhou, 2011; Chen et al., 2013), affective commitment serves as a psychological or emotional barrier to switch a brand, due to one's emotional attachment and desire to continue the

brand-customer relationship instead of being driven by instrumental motivations (Richard and Zhang, 2012). Sánchez-Garcia et al. (2007) show that affective commitment is a significant constituent of relationship quality, in which customers' emotional motives and feelings of belonging toward a brand play a fundamental role.

Affective commitment is defined as "the psychological attachment of an exchange partner to the other based on feelings of identification, loyalty, and affiliation" (Vivek et al., 2012, p.135), which pertains to an emotional, intrinsic, and desire-based attachment and represents the enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship (Chen et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2012; Jahn and Kunz, 2012). Organisations (brands) can acquire more follow-up benefits derived from customers' affective commitment, due to a strong emotional attachment which reflects customers' bond with a brand (Luo et al., 2011), such as loyalty (Zhou et al, 2012; Wu et al., 2012), WOM communication (Wolny and Mueller, 2013) and re-purchase (Brodie et al., 2013). Jahn and Kunz's (2012) study notes that commitment to a brand's online community functions as brand commitment, and participants of the community possess much stronger commitment toward the brand, compared with others who do not belong to the community. Thus, affective commitment in this study primarily focuses on fans' unique affection, evoked by a particular fast-fashion brand and the emotional attachment to an active brand-customer relationship (Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Huang et al., 2013). Wolny and Mueller's (2013) study reports that the emotional bond with brands is particularly crucial in the fashion domain, which heavily relies on emotional differentiation rather than functional product differentiation. If a customer has a high affective commitment to a fast-fashion brand, he/she might be motivated to continuously maintain the brand-customer relationship (Choi et al., 2010). Thus, this study examines the following hypothesis:

H3: Affective commitment has a positive effect on fans' continued intention to use fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

2.3 The formation of brand-customer relationships
2.3.1 Social interaction tie
According to social capital theory, social capital is conceptualised as the sum of the assets or resources inherent in interpersonal relationships among individuals or in their connections with the networks (Chang and Chuang, 2011; Chao et al., 2007). Social interaction tie is categorised as the structural dimension of social capital, indicating the overall pattern and strength of the relationship, such as the amount of time spent, the frequency of interaction, and the emotional intensity among individuals in the same network (Liao and Chou, 2011; Hsiao and Chiou, 2012; Chiu

et al., 2006). Ties based on social interaction can be established via SNS because users can express themselves and communicate with others to develop and maintain their interpersonal networks through this online platform (Lin and Lu, 2011; Kim et al., 2008). As such, social interaction ties are the fundamental roots of building relationships and holding relationships together, due to the strength of social bond (i.e. a close interpersonal relationship), which is also associated with the relationship continuity (Chao et al., 2007; Liao and Chou, 2011; Chiu et al., 2006). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) argue that the underlying proposition of the social capital theory is a tie/ties in a network providing access to resources (Chiu et al., 2006), which has an enormous impact on one's behavioural intention (Huang et al., 2013). A close interpersonal relationship may enclose the social capital inherent in the relationship that may result in members' higher engagement in a network (Chao et al., 2007).

Social capital theory reports structural social capital (social interaction tie) is an essential driver of the relational social capital (affective commitment) (Jones and Taylor, 2012), referring to the affective nature of social relationships within a collective (Wiertz and Ruyter, 2007). This tenet is consistent with Granovetter's (1973) theory of strong ties and weak ties, given that an individual's attachment toward a relationship is likely to blossom, if a strong tie exists between the two parties (Lin and Lu, 2011). The communicative interplay between organisations and customers plays a principal role in forging their relational bonds, and the relationship quality may also be enhanced, due to the high quality of interaction between the two parties (Sánchez-Garcia et al., 2007; Wiertz and Ruyter, 2007). The hypotheses below were thereby developed:

*H4***:** Social interaction tie has a positive effect on fans' engagement in fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

H5: Social interaction tie has a positive influence on fans' affective commitment to fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

2.3.2 Self-image congruence

Self-concept theory and image congruency theory suggest that individual's behaviour is directed toward the protection, maintenance and enhancement of his or her self-concept (sense of self) (Heath and Scott, 1998; Kwak and Kang, 2009; Jahn and Kunz, 2012; Diamantopoulos et al., 2005; Parker, 2009; Liu et al., 2012; Andreassen and Lanseng, 2010). Self-image congruence notes that consumers evaluate and select consumption objects according to how the objects' images correspond to the consumer's self-image (Andreassen and Lanseng, 2010; Kanga et al., 2012;

Grzeskowiak et al., 2016), because consumer tends to embrace a brand based on the congruity between his or her self-concept and the brand image or its symbolic meaning (Diamantopoulos et al., 2005; Ibrahim and Najjar, 2008; Liu et al., 2012). Brand image refers to consumers' perceptions and beliefs held about a particular brand, or the set of brand associations held in consumer memories (Keller, 1993; Kotler and Armstrong, 1996; Matthiesen, 2010; Hu et al., 2012; Ross and Harradine, 2011; Carlson et al., 2008). Keller (1993) proposed that brand image plays a vital role in conceptualizing brand equity in addition to brand awareness (i.e. recognition and recall), and it is comprised of brand personality, product attribute and benefits of a brand (Bian and Moutinho, 2011; Ross and Harradine, 2011; Carlson et al., 2008). Chang and Liu (2009) note that brand image is one of the vital ingredients in establishing brand-customer relationship, and that organisations' brand's value as well as brand's intangible assets are also likely to be improved via brand image development. Therefore, self-image congruence is essential for understanding consumers' decision making and representation of their insight (Bosnjak and Rudolph, 2008; Ibrahim and Najjar, 2008).

The perception of similarity or overlap with a particular brand enables brand admirers to engage in the brand's online community, or its activities, at a higher level (Jahn and Kunz, 2012; Carlson et al., 2008; Casalo et al., 2010). Thus, the following hypotheses were offered:

H6: Self-image congruence has a positive effect on fans' engagement in fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

H7: Self-image congruence has a positive effect on fans' affective commitment to fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

2.3.3 Content value
Content value in this study was derived from intrinsic and extrinsic motivational perspectives (Lee et al., 2005), in turn, represented by hedonic value and utilitarian value (Foster et al., 2010; Poyry et al., 2013; Jahn and Kunz, 2012; Hsu and Lu, 2007; Premkumar et al., 2008; Kim, 2012). The two types of values are notably important, when it comes to participation in online communities (Jin et al., 2010; Hsu and Lu, 2007; Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002) or in online activities on social networking sites (Foster et al., 2010; Poyry et al., 2013; Jahn and Kunz, 2012).

Hedonic value represents an intrinsic motivation, and refers to the extent that participating in an online community is perceived as enjoying, entertaining and pleasant (Luo et al., 2011; Hsu and Lu, 2007; Hunt et al., 2012; Dholakia et al., 2004).

Hence, hedonic value plays a significant role in content posted on social networking sites (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002; Jahn and Kunz, 2012). Consumers tend to make favourable evaluations and engage in playful behaviours, demonstrating a direct effect of enjoyment on behavioural outcomes (Luo et al., 2011).

Utilitarian value resembles the conception of perceived usefulness in TAM (Lee et al., 2005), indicating the cognitive evaluation with respect to the utility or content of SNSs (Zhou et al., 2012; Premkumar et al., 2008; Kim, 2012). Information value is deemed as a predominant utilitarian value, accrued in online communities for accomplishing or achieving purposive tasks (Zhou et al., 2012; Wiertz and Ruyter, 2007; Park and Cho, 2012), and also as a determinant of participation in online brand communities (Shang et al., 2006) as well as social networks (Foster et al., 2010; Jahn and Kunz, 2012). Moreover, members of a virtual community may feel attracted to the social group, if their motives are achieved or needs are fulfilled, due to the usefulness or the information value provided by the community (Zhou et al., 2012; Cheung and Lee, 2009). Thus, the following hypothesis was presented.

H8: Content value has a positive influence on fans' engagement in fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

H9: Content value has a positive effect on fans' affective commitment to fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.

Based on the aforementioned hypotheses, the research model of this study is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Here

3. Research Methodology\

3.1 Measurement

The questionnaire of this study was designed to measure the effect of social interaction tie, self-image congruence and content value on fans' engagement on the fast-fashion brand's Facebook fan page as well as on affective commitment to the brand, and also whether or not these aforementioned constructs will lead to fans' continued intention to use the fan page. As shown in Appendix, each measured item in each construct was adapted from credible prior studies to ensure the content validity. Content value, a second order latent variable, was measured by utilitarian and hedonic values. All measurement items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, with anchors ranging from 'strongly disagree', represented by 1, to 'neutral' at the

midpoint (4), and to 'strongly agree', represented by 7. The questionnaire was revised and confirmed by senior marketing academics with the content validity. All measures were pretested and verified during the pilot study.

3.2 Data collection

The survey was conducted by a self-administered questionnaire in Taiwan through convenience sampling because Facebook users account for 83.8% of the whole population (Internet World Stats, 2016). To avoid the systematic response bias from using a single method of data collection, both paper-and-pencil questionnaire and online survey were employed. Respondents were users of any fast-fashion brand's Facebook fan page and requested to identify their most used fast-fashion brand's Facebook fan page in the past 6 months before completing the main questionnaire. After eliminating the invalid questionnaires with missing values, 202 valid questionnaires were retained from 242 survey questionnaires distributed. In more detail, 85 samples were collected from university students, 53 samples were obtained from customers in a downtown department store, and 64 samples were collected via Facebook. Before assessing the measurement model, reliability analysis was conducted, Cronbach's Alpha was measured to prove internal consistency of each construct. The degree of reliability of all constructs were excellent, ranging from 0.854 to 0.926 (Nunnally, 1978). To check the common method bias, Harman's single-factor test (Podsakoff et al. 2003) was conducted using unrotated principal component analysis. The result showed that no single factor accounted for most of the variance in the variables, suggesting there are no common method bias issues in the data.

4. Analysis and Results

Among a total of 202 respondents, 56% are male and the other 44 % are female. Age group between 18 to 24 (38.1%) and 25 to 34 years old (42.57%) occupied the majority of respondents. 71.8 % of respondents held a bachelor (university/college) degree followed by master degree (17.82%) and high school (8.42%). Nearly half of the respondents' income are below 20,000 Taiwanese dollars (47%), followed by 29% of respondents whose monthly income were between 20,000 to 40,000 Taiwanese dollars, and 14.85 % of them had income between 40,000 to 60,000 Taiwanese dollars. Moreover, most commonly used fast-fashion brand's Facebook fan page by respondents are ZARA (34.7%) and UNIQLO (32.7%).

4.1 Measurement model

Two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was adopted to

examine the measurement model and structural model using AMOS 21.0. The confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the measurement model. Table I shows the result of CFA. The chi square/df was less than the recommended threshold of 3 (CMIN/DF= 1.888, p = 0.000), thereby model fit to the data is excellent (Hayduck, 1987). Also, other model fit indices (GFI=0.872, NFI=0.913, TLI=0.947, CFI=0.957, RMSEA=0.066) were all satisfactory (Segars and Grover, 1993; Seyal et al, 2002). Each factor loading conformed to the recommended threshold between 0.5 to 0.95 and even achieved the more strict threshold value of 0.7 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). Moreover, the factor weights of hedonic value and utilitarian value (first-ordered constructs) for content value (second order construct) were 0.88 and 0.91 respectively.

Table I. Here

Reliability and convergent validity of the factors were examined by composite reliability (CR) and by the average variance extracted (AVE). Table II displays the convergent and discriminant validities of the measures in the proposed model. CR of each construct reached the acceptance value at 0.7, ranging from 0.882 to 0.929, thereby all constructs were revealed as highly reliable (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 1998). AVE of each construct all reached the acceptable level of 0.50 suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), indicating a high portion of variance in items explained by the construct. All factor loadings (0.5 to 0.95), CR (> 0.7) and AVE (> 0.5) reached their recommended threshold, and each construct's CR all exceeded its AVE (Hair et al., 1998; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Thus, convergent validity of the measurement model was confirmed. Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the squared correlation between two constructs with AVE between each pair of constructs and it is confirmed when the squared correlation between two constructs is greater than AVE between each pair of constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table II. Here

4.2 Structural model
The results of structural model analysis show that overall model fit was highly qualified and satisfactory (CMIN/DF= 1.700, p = 0.00, GFI=0.889, NFI=0.926, TLI=0.958, CFI=0.968, RMSEA= 0.059) (Hayduck, 1987; Segars and Grover, 1993). Moreover, social interaction tie, self-image congruence, content value explained approximately 69.4% of the variance on engagement in this research model. Affective commitment was explained 71.6 % of the variation by this model. The model

accounts for 78.6% of the explained variances in continued intention to use. Hypotheses testing was conducted via structural equation modeling after the overall model fit was confirmed. Figure 2 demonstrates the results of the proposed research model and standardised path coefficients for all hypotheses.

Figure 2. Here

The significantly direct effects of engagement (β=0.272, p=0.005) on continued intention to use were found, supporting H1. The relationship between engagement and affective commitment was verified to be significantly positive (β=0.409, p< 0.001), supporting H2. The significantly direct effects of affective commitment (β=0.427, p< 0.001) on continued intention to use were found, supporting H3. Social interaction tie (β=0.740, p< 0.001) was positively related to engagement, supporting H4. The effect of social interaction tie on affective commitment was observed as insignificant (β=0.105, p=0.287), rejecting H5. The direct effects of self-image congruence on engagement (β=0.129, p=0.098) was not significant, rejecting H6. Yet, the path of self-image congruence to affective commitment (β=0.239, p=0.005) was verified, supporting H7. Content value had no significant effect on engagement (β=0.045, p=0.541), rejecting H8. However, it had significantly direct effect on affective commitment (β=0.274, p < 0.001), supporting H9. The hypothesis testing results are summarised in Table III. Overall 6 of 9 hypotheses were supported (H1, H2, H3, H4, H7, H9).

Table III. Here

5. Discussion and implications
5.1 Discussion and theoretical implications
This study makes significant contributions to the SNSs literature and fashion retailing marketing. First, this study proposes and tests a new research model to discover essential components of continuous brand-customer relationship, by examining determinants of fans' intention to continue using fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages. Second, this study is the pioneer to investigate antecedents that influence the formation of the brand-customer relationship via SNSs from three dimensions of social capital theory, self-congruity theory and motivation perspectives. The findings of this study not only extend the extant literature in the fast-fashion contexts but also provide useful implications for marketers.

The overall result provides support for the proposed model of this study. The direct

effects of engagement and affective commitment on continued intention to use were both found to be significantly positive. Also, the significantly indirect effect of engagement on continued intention to use was observed, through the mediation of affective commitment. Among three antecedents of this model, social interaction tie was observed to be the most influential in nurturing the relationship between fans and a brand, in terms of engagement and affective commitment. Additionally, the findings provide theoretical and managerial contributions to the growing body of knowledge on engagement in company-hosted Facebook fan pages.

Primarily, this study provides significant implication that engagement is an essential indicator for the formation and extension of brand-customer relationship. Theoretical extensions of engagement are contributed from three viewpoints: (1) Engagement was found to be a determinant of continued intention to use. The directly positive impact of engagement on continued intention to use is consistent with Poyry et al.'s (2013) study. This result suggests that continuance intention of fan-page usage or one's membership is significantly related to his/her engagement in company-hosted Facebook pages. (2) Engagement and affective commitment were proven to be catalysts of the long-lasting relationship between fans and a brand. And the significantly positive relationship between engagement and affective commitment extends the engagement model of Vivek et al.'s (2012) study. Thus, fans' affective commitment to a brand or its social networking site will be strengthened and evolved from the emotional involvement in brand interactions (Luo et al., 2011, Brodie et al., 2013; Poyry et al., 2013; Jahn and Kunz, 2012). Moreover, this study verifies the indirectly positive relationship between engagement and continued intention to use mediated by affective commitment, suggesting that the whole context of fans' emotional responses can ultimately develop their behavioural intention to continue the brand-customer relationship. (3) Results of this study supported the directly positive effects of social interaction tie on engagement, in the context of fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages. Since relationship ties are established based on social interactions (Tsai and Men, 2013), this study conceptualises interactions between fans and SNSs representatives of brands as the predominant antecedent to engagement. The significantly positive relationship between social interaction tie and engagement is in accordance with prior studies (Wiertz and Ruyter, 2007; Kim and Ko, 2012), given that frequent and intense interactions between users and brand representatives will strengthen his or her quality and quantity of participation as well as contribution to brands' social network platforms.

Secondly, affective commitment was found to have the strongest impact on continued intention to use. This study provides a new insight toward community continuance intention by identifying the relationship between affective commitment

and continued intention to use, based on individual's affection or psychological bond with a particular brand (Choi et al., 2010). Most prior studies record that individuals' continuance intention is based on his/her attachment to a collective entity or to the social group (Jin et al., 2010), such as SVW (social virtual world) services (Zhou et al., 2012) or virtual communities (Cheung and Lee, 2009). As opposed to findings of these prior studies, this study provides a new continuance model, which deems brand-driven or self-experienced attachment as the most essential motif in continuance intention toward company-hosted SNSs.

Thirdly, this study adopts social interaction tie from structural dimension of social capital in social capital theory to examine its effect on brand-customer relationship embodied through engagement and affective commitment. This study discovered that, if the interactive or interpersonal relationship between two parties has no emotional basis, this customer may not be motivated to consolidate the psychological bond.

Furthermore, in line with Zhang and Bloemer's (2008) study, self-image congruence was found to positively influence affective commitment, given that the congruency between customers' self-concept and brand image is rather vital in the ready-to-wear section. Self-image congruence in this study predominantly refers to fans' self-identification with a particular brand, in other words, the image congruity between fans' actual-self concept and the brand's brand image. As the emphasis of image congruity between fans and a brand in this study, identification with a company-hosted Facebook fan page is therefore regarded as identification with the brand (Kim et al., 2008).

Lastly, numerous extant research verifies the significantly positive effect of hedonic value on affective commitment, but the relationship between utilitarian value and affective commitment was found to be insignificant (Wiertz and Ruyter, 2007; Zhou et al., 2012; Cheung and Lee, 2009; Hsu and Lu, 2007). In contrast, the construct of content value, a combination of both hedonic and utilitarian value from motivational perspectives was found to have the significantly positive effect on affective commitment. If content value is tempting, enjoyable and valuable, content receivers may increase their affective commitment to the brand, as a behavioural outcome is derived from the intrinsic/emotional and extrinsic/purposive gains (Luo et al., 2011).

5.2 Managerial implications

The findings provide significant managerial contributions to brand communicators or representatives and help them further comprehend the mechanism to underpin and strengthen the brand-customer relationship via SNSs. To improve fans' engagement level, page managers are suggested to frequently initiate and participate in the dialogues with fans through constant listening, answering and sharing to enhance their

experiential value and interactivity. Moreover, offering creative or interactive activities to increase the interactions between fans and the brand is also recommended. For instance, page managers can host a poll on their fan pages in lights of the most favourable fashion style/category or ask fans' opinions regarding the current or upcoming fashion trends. By doing so, it can not only help companies understand fans' present preference or needs but facilitate interactions between fans and brand communicators via SNSs.

Moreover, the delivery of fast-fashion brands' image via Facebook is an essential tactic for building the continuous relationship with customers. Page managers should often create or post contents that reflect the brand image via communication tools (e.g. text, image, video) and constantly propagate the tenet or spirit of the brand in the way of storytelling. Content equipped with both hedonic and utilitarian values may evolve fans' brand attachment over time and gradually cultivate their intention to maintain the brand-customer relationship, as a result of their psychological dimension of loyalty. Therefore, as a brand communicator, page managers should propagate the content of brands' SNSs that is amusing, enjoyable, informative and incentive to fulfill fans' needs. With aim to nurture and foster fans' continuance intention toward the brand-customer relationship as well as the usage of brands' SNSs, brand communicators should amplify the interaction with fans and constantly increase their experiential value as well as emotional bond with the brand.

5.3 Limitations and future research

Primarily, the behaviour of male and female towards fan page may differ, future research is therefore suggested to investigate the impact of gender on fan page continuance usage. Moreover, the other limitation is that this study focused on the fast-fashion fan page users in Taiwan, so the findings cannot be generalised to other countries or other industries, because of the culture and industry differences. Despite the fact that the sample of this study represents the target young group of fashion retailers, the small sample size implies that the findings may not be generalisable. As such, a cross-cultural study using larger sample collected from different sectors is recommended for future research. Furthermore, this study acknowledges the disadvantage of convenience sampling. Future research can conduct random sampling for data collection to increase generalisability.

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Appendix

Constructs and measures

Construct	Items

Social interaction ties (Lin and Lu, 2011; Chang and Chuang, 2011)	ST1: I often interact with the page manager on this fast-fashion brand's Facebook fan page
	ST2: I spend a lot of time interacting with the page manager on this fast-fashion brand's Facebook fan page
	ST3: I have frequent communication with the page manager on this fast-fashion brands' Facebook fan pages.
Self-image congruency (Rhee and Johnson, 2011; Choi et al., 2010; Govers and Schoormans, 2005)	SC1:This fast-fashion brand is consistent with how I see myself
	SC2: This fast-fashion brand matches me a lot.
	SC3: I think fast fashion brands' image is closely related to my self-image.
Hedonic value (Jahn and Kunz, 2012; Thong et al., 2006; Poyry et al., 2013	HV1: The content of this fast-fashion brand's fan page is pleasant
	HV2: The content of this fast-fashion brand's fan page is entertaining
	HV3: The content of this fast-fashion brand's fan page is enjoyable
Utilitarian value (Jahn and Kunz, 2012; Wiertz and Ruyter, 2007)	UV1: The content of this fast-fashion brand's fan page is helpful for me
	UV2: The content of this fast-fashion brand's fan page is useful for me
	UV3: The content of this fast-fashion brand's fan page is practical for me
Engagement (Poyry et al., 2013; Casalo et al., 2010; Laroche et al., 2012)	EG1: I participate actively in this fast-fashion brand's Facebook fan page. For example, by posting to the page or commenting other's posts
	EG2: I usually provide useful information to complement the brand's or others' posts
	EG3: In general, I engage with this fan page with a great excitement and frequency.
Affective commitment (Gustafsson et al., 2005; Gupta et al., 2010; Sanchez-Franco and Rondan-Cataluna, 2010)	AC1: I am very committed to my relationship with the fast-fashion brand on the Facebook fan page
	AC2: Even if I could, I would not leave this Facebook fan page.
	AC3: My affective bonds with this fast-fashion brand's fan page are the main reason why I'm still using.
Continued intention to use (Lin and Lu, 2011;	CI1: It would be hard for me not to use this fast-fashion retailer's Facebook fan page

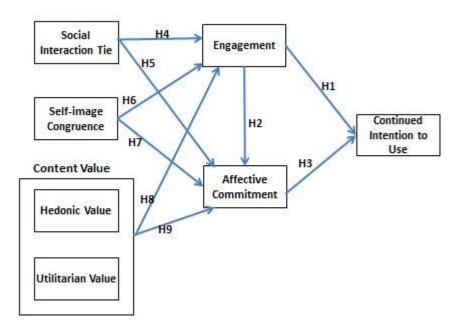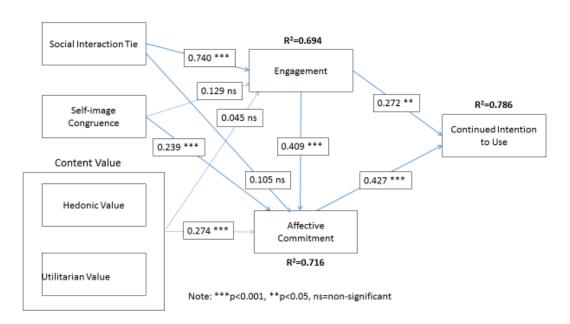|	
Chiua, 2013; Poyry et al., 2013; Fang and Chiu, 2010)	CI2: I intend to spend more time on fast-fashion retailers' Facebook fan pages than on other categories of pages.
	CI3: It is likely that I will continue interacting with the page manager in the future

Figure 1. The research model

Note: ***p<0.001, **p<0.05, ns=non-significant

Figure 2. Results of Structural model analysis

Table I. CFA Results

Construct	Item	Loading	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α
Social Interaction Tie	ST1	0.858	3.27	1.750	0.913
	ST2	0.869	3.03	1.630	
	ST3	0.950	3.09	1.769	
Self-image Congruence	SC1	0.868	4.70	1.151	0.926
	SC2	0.834	4.66	1.170	
	SC3	0.870	4.75	1.241	
Hedonic Value	HV1	0.831	4.86	1.181	0.897
	HV2	0.714	4.33	1.336	
	HV3	0.902	4.67	1.156	
Utilitarian Value	UV1	0.839	4.76	1.131	0.913
	UV2	0.824	4.83	1.170	
	UV3	0.815	4.79	1.216	
Engagement	EG1	0.930	3.51	1.774	0.920
	EG2	0.931	3.56	1.908	
	EG3	0.799	3.92	1.573	
Affective Commitment	AC1	0.868	4.11	1.399	0.874
	AC2	0.853	4.27	1.489	
	AC3	0.811	4.03	1.353	
Continued Intention to Use	CI1	0.854	3.83	1.520	0.854
	CI2	0.827	4.22	1.402	
	CI3	0.875	3.98	1.593	

Table II. Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	EG	ST	SC	CV	AC	CI
EG	0.918	0.790	0.889					
ST	0.922	0.798	0.823	0.893				
SC	0.893	0.735	0.525	0.496	0.857			
CV	0.929	0.867	0.425	0.382	0.690	0.931		
AC	0.882	0.713	0.715	0.650	0.695	0.671	0.844	
CI	0.888	0.726	0.806	0.768	0.607	0.549	0.804	0.852

* The diagonal terms indicate the square root of AVE for each construct, the off-diagonal terms show the correlations

Table III. Summary of hypothesis testing results

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Engagement → Continued Intention to Use	Supported
H2: Engagement → Affective Commitment	Supported
H3:Affective Commitment → Continued Intention to Use	Supported
H4: Social Interaction Tie → Engagement	Supported
H5: Social Interaction Tie → Affective Commitment	Rejected
H6:Self-image Congruence → Engagement	Rejected
H7:Self-image Congruence → Affective Commitment	Supported
H8:Content Value → Engagement	Rejected
H9:Content Value → Affective Commitment	Supported