

## The Impact of Social Media Marketing in the Real Estate Sector on Consumer Behavior and Consumer Education

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### ABSTRACT

With the advancements in communication technologies, the widespread use of the internet has introduced new platforms, methods, and opportunities for businesses to reach their customers. In this context, marketing strategies in the real estate sector have undergone a significant transformation with digitalization and the rise of social media. Social media platforms play a crucial role in reaching potential buyers and tenants, enhancing brand awareness, and strengthening customer trust. Professional visuals, virtual tours, content marketing, and targeted advertising strategies improve customer experience in the real estate sector while making marketing processes more effective and measurable. The increasing dominance of social media-driven marketing strategies over traditional methods has become an inevitable necessity for firms seeking a competitive advantage. This study adopts a quantitative and descriptive research model to analyze the attitudes, perceptions, and decision-making processes of consumers engaged in real estate marketing through social media. The findings indicate that variables such as gender, marital status, income level, and occupational group significantly influence perceptions of social media marketing. It was found that female participants are more sensitive to social media marketing compared to males, married individuals show greater interest in fashion-related content, and private sector employees react more strongly to entertainment and fashion content on social media than public sector employees. While educational level does not appear to be a decisive factor in the perception of social media marketing, an individual's occupational group significantly affects their social media consumption habits. As consumers' perceptions of social media marketing increase, their purchase intentions also rise. Particularly, entertainment and fashion-oriented content strongly influences consumer purchasing decisions. Consistent with previous studies, social media advertisements are found to guide consumer behavior, facilitate the formation of an emotional connection with brands, and encourage impulse purchasing decisions.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Information and Communication Technologies, Consumer Behavior, Real Estate Marketing, Consumer Education.

### INTRODUCTION

As an indispensable element of our era, digitalization has become a regulatory force and key actor in everyday life, social interactions, consumer behaviors and habits, and businesses' marketing tools. Parallel to advancements in communication technologies, a new social structure and consumer awareness have emerged, driven by cultural industries, shaped through advertisements, and prioritizing commercial characteristics (Yılmaz, 2022, p. 149). In this context, digital marketing offers more advantages and conveniences compared to traditional marketing practices and methods. Traditional marketing communication methods are often insufficient in reaching buyers in the real estate sector. Consequently, businesses have been compelled to conduct marketing activities in virtual environments known as social media. In this regard, social media marketing practices have gained significant importance in the real estate industry, as companies operating in the sector use social networks to promote their listings.

In recent years, in addition to traditional marketing methods, the necessity for companies to establish a presence on social networks has become essential in terms of cost efficiency, consumer accessibility, and brand prestige. For this reason, appropriate marketing strategies must be identified to enhance sales through consumer/buyer-oriented marketing techniques in the real estate sector.

Social media marketing in the real estate industry plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions, increasing brand awareness, and enhancing customer engagement. Additionally, the informative content provided

through social media platforms contributes to consumers making more informed and educated decisions regarding real estate investments and property acquisition.

### **The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior in Purchasing and Decision-Making Processes**

The influence of social media on consumer behavior has become a significant topic in the field of marketing in recent years. As the use of social media continues to increase, its impact on consumers' purchasing and decision-making processes has become more pronounced. Understanding how social media affects consumer purchasing behavior plays a crucial role in helping businesses determine their marketing strategies and effectively reach their target audiences (Thompson & Martinez, 2020, p. 85).

The impact of social media on consumer behavior manifests in several ways. First, social media platforms provide consumers with access to information about products and services, enable the sharing of product reviews, and facilitate access to user comments (Özdemir & Yılmaz, 2021, pp. 60–73). Consumers tend to observe the experiences of other users with products on social media and make purchasing decisions based on these experiences. Consequently, social media has become a critical factor influencing consumers' purchasing decisions (Williams, 2020, pp. 55–68).

### **The Contribution of Social Media to Consumer Education**

Social media significantly contributes to consumer education in the real estate sector by helping buyers and investors make informed decisions. The informational content provided on various platforms guides consumers on topics such as the home-buying process, investment strategies, mortgage and financing options. Video content, blog posts, interactive live broadcasts, and expert opinions enable consumers to stay updated on industry developments and make well-informed decisions. Additionally, the interactive communication environment facilitated by social media allows consumers to ask questions, share experiences, and receive direct information from experts. As a result, social media functions not only as a marketing tool but also as an effective educational resource that informs and guides consumers (Jones & Davis, 2014; Kara, 2022).

### **The Role of Social Media in Real Estate Marketing**

Real estate marketing facilitates the swift and effective sale or rental of properties. A well-planned marketing strategy attracts potential buyers and tenants while helping property owners maximize the value of their assets. Real estate marketing ensures that properties reach the right target audience. Targeted marketing campaigns capture the interest of buyers and tenants, encouraging them to engage with the property (Tuncer, 2016, pp. 45–56).

Effective marketing can enhance the appeal of a property and make potential buyers more willing to pay higher prices. Real estate marketing can be leveraged to gain a competitive advantage. A well-executed marketing strategy allows firms to stand out among competitors and attract the attention of potential buyers and tenants. Additionally, marketing helps track industry trends and understand customer needs. Successful marketing techniques in the real estate sector are employed to attract potential buyers and tenants, increase sales, and enhance brand awareness (Yavuz, 2017, p. 300). The most effective real estate marketing techniques include the following:

**Virtual Tours and 3D Modeling:** Virtual tours and interactive 3D modeling provide potential clients with the opportunity to explore properties remotely. These technologies are particularly useful for attracting buyers and tenants from a distance and allow for a more detailed examination of properties. Virtual reality (VR) enables potential buyers and tenants to experience properties in real-time. Through VR technology, users can virtually tour properties, inspect rooms, and closely observe details. VR tours, brochures, videos, and other promotional materials help potential buyers and tenants explore and envision properties more comprehensively. Real estate developers can also utilize augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies to create project showcases and promotional stands. These tools allow potential buyers and investors to examine projects more closely and experience their completed form virtually (Doğan, 2020, pp. 85–96).

**Online Marketing and Digital Platforms:** The internet plays a crucial role in real estate marketing. Real estate companies can showcase their property portfolios through websites and social media platforms, reaching potential clients and increasing brand awareness.

**Targeted Advertising and Marketing Strategies:** By identifying the target audience, marketing campaigns can be tailored to their preferences and needs. For example, marketing strategies targeting young families looking to buy a home would differ from those aimed at investors.

**Real Estate Listings and Platforms:** Real estate companies list properties on real estate listing websites and advertise on various platforms to capture the attention of potential buyers and tenants. These listings and platforms

serve as an effective means of promoting properties to a wide audience. Since these platforms are accessible online, potential buyers and tenants can easily browse properties, thereby expanding the reach of marketing efforts (Aydm, 2018, p. 66). Real estate professionals can create premium property listings, run advertisements, or publish sponsored content. This variety enhances marketing flexibility and enables companies to reach diverse target audiences (Demir, 2017, pp. 71–88).

**Content Marketing:** Content marketing in the real estate sector is used to educate and inform potential buyers through blog posts, e-books, video guides, and infographics. This approach can enhance customer loyalty and build trust (Erdoğan, 2019, pp. 105–116).

## METHOD

In this study, a quantitative and descriptive research model was adopted to analyze the attitudes, opinions, and decision-making processes of consumers engaged in real estate marketing through social media. The judgmental sampling method was used to collect data from foreign consumers, who were consciously selected. The data were obtained through a survey method and analyzed using SPSS software, ensuring participant anonymity and encouraging objective responses. The findings highlight the key determinants of consumer perception regarding social media marketing, providing valuable insights into digital marketing strategies in the real estate sector.

Since there are studies in the literature supporting the use of parametric methods for Likert-type scales, these methods were applied in the comparison of scale scores (Norman, 2010). Accordingly, independent samples t-tests were used for comparisons between two independent groups, while one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to test hypotheses involving more than two group means. For values found to be statistically significant in groups with more than two categories, Tukey's post hoc test results were evaluated.

Descriptive statistics for continuous variables were expressed as mean (M), standard deviation (SD), minimum (Min.), and maximum (Max.) values, while frequency (n) and percentage (%) were used for categorical variables. The reliability of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS 22, and the statistical significance level was set at 0.05.

## RESULTS

The study examines participants' **demographic characteristics, social media usage habits, and attitudes toward real estate listings**. According to the findings, a significant portion of participants (47.5%) reported using social media for **0–2 hours daily**, while **78.4%** stated that they had received real estate listings through social media. When evaluating the impact of listings on **purchasing decisions**, **39.5%** found them to be influential, and **17.0%** considered them highly influential.

Among the most **inspirational social media channels**, **Instagram (32.3%)**, **Facebook (22.3%)**, and **YouTube (14.8%)** were the most prominent. The most critical factors in real estate listings were identified as **location and surrounding area information (25.9%)**, **interior photos (18.4%)**, and **price/payment conditions (17.7%)**. Participants also indicated that **furnished rooms and detailed descriptions** made listings more attractive.

The analyses revealed that **perceptions of social media marketing** were significantly associated with **gender, income level, occupational group, and social media usage duration**. Specifically, **women, high-income groups, and private sector employees** exhibited a higher perception of **social media marketing**. Furthermore, a strong correlation was identified between the **type of social media content** and **purchase intention**.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Participants' Social Media Usage Habits and Interest in Real Estate

		n	%
Approximately how much time do you spend on social media channels per day?	0-2	209	47,5
	3-5	187	42,5
	6-8	38	8,6
	More than 8 hours.	6	1,4
Have you ever received a real estate listing through any social media channel?	Yes	345	78,4
	No	59	13,4
	I do not recall	36	8,2
How influential do you think social media posts about real estate properties are on your purchasing decision??	No influence	15	3,4
	Slight influence.	49	11,1
	Moderate influence.	127	28,9
	Influential.	174	39,5
	Highly influential.	75	17,0
	Facebook	98	22,3
	Instagram	142	32,3

Which social media channel do you find the most inspiring for real estate properties?	Twitter	28	6,4
	Pinterest	12	2,7
	Snapchat	1	0,2
	TikTok	58	13,2
	Twitter	3	0,7
	XING	3	0,7
	YouTube	65	14,8
	Other	30	6,8

**Table 1 presents data on participants' social media usage habits and their perceptions of the real estate sector.** Approximately **47.5%** of participants spend **0–2 hours** per day on social media channels, **42.5%** spend **3–5 hours**, **8.6%** spend **6–8 hours**, and only **1.4%** report spending more than **8 hours** daily. Additionally, **78.4%** of participants stated that they had received a **real estate listing through a social media channel**, while **13.4%** reported having no such experience, and **8.2%** indicated that they did not recall.

Regarding the perceived influence of social media posts on **real estate purchasing decisions**, **39.5%** of participants considered them **influential**, **17.0%** found them **highly influential**, **28.9%** reported a **moderate influence**, **11.1%** indicated a **slight influence**, and **3.4%** stated that they had **no influence** on their decision-making.

When asked about the **most inspiring social media channel for real estate properties**, participants most frequently selected **Instagram (32.3%)**, followed by **Facebook (22.3%)**, **YouTube (14.8%)**, and **TikTok (13.2%)**. Meanwhile, **LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, Twitter, XING, and other platforms** were reported at lower rates.

**Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Consumer Attitudes Toward Real Estate Listings**

		n	%
I am more interested in listings that show only the exterior (facade) of the property.	Strongly Disagree	68	15,5
	Disagree	128	29,1
	Neutral	100	22,7
	Agree	110	25,0
	Strongly Agree	34	7,7
I am more interested in listings that show only the interior (rooms) of the property.	Strongly Disagree	61	13,9
	Disagree	110	25,0
	Neutral	112	25,5
	Agree	111	25,2
	Strongly Agree	46	10,5
I am more interested in listings that display empty rooms.	Strongly Disagree	65	14,8
	Disagree	143	32,5
	Neutral	129	29,3
	Agree	77	17,5
	Strongly Agree	26	5,9
I am more interested in listings that display furnished rooms.	Strongly Disagree	34	7,7
	Disagree	107	24,3
	Neutral	122	27,7
	Agree	106	24,1
	Strongly Agree	71	16,1
Listings in which the location of the property is clearly visible.	Strongly Disagree	33	7,5
	Disagree	34	7,7
	Neutral	79	18,0
	Agree	145	33,0
	Strongly Agree	149	33,9
Listings in which the sale or rental price of the property is clearly stated.	Strongly Disagree	29	6,6
	Disagree	27	6,1
	Neutral	53	12,0
	Agree	157	35,7
	Strongly Agree	174	39,5
I would like to see the floor plan of the property within the listing.	Strongly Disagree	32	7,3
	Disagree	43	9,8
	Neutral	79	18,0

	Agree	167	38,0
	Strongly Agree	119	27,0
The more written information about the property, the better.	Strongly Disagree	37	8,4
	Disagree	36	8,2
	Neutral	98	22,3
	Agree	136	30,9
	Strongly Agree	133	30,2
The more images of the property, the better.	Strongly Disagree	36	8,2
	Disagree	41	9,3
	Neutral	88	20,0
	Agree	120	27,3
	Strongly Agree	155	35,2
AI-supported listings attract my attention.	Strongly Disagree	57	13,0
	Disagree	80	18,2
	Neutral	126	28,6
	Agree	104	23,6
	Strongly Agree	73	16,6

**Table 2 presents detailed insights into how different presentation elements in real estate listings influence participants' interest.** When **only the exterior (facade) of the property** was displayed in listings, **44.6%** of participants (**15.5% "strongly disagree" and 29.1% "disagree"**) expressed a negative attitude, while **32.7%** (**25.0% "agree" and 7.7% "strongly agree"**) responded positively; the remaining **22.7%** remained **neutral**. Similarly, when **only interior (rooms) images** were included in listings, **38.9%** (**13.9% + 25.0%**) reacted negatively, **35.7%** (**25.2% + 10.5%**) responded positively, and **25.5%** were **neutral**.

For **listings showcasing empty rooms**, approximately **47.3%** (**14.8% + 32.5%**) of participants showed **disinterest**, while only **23.4%** (**17.5% + 5.9%**) reacted positively. Conversely, **listings featuring furnished rooms** were viewed more favorably, with **24.1% "agree" and 16.1% "strongly agree"**, whereas negative responses (**7.7% + 24.3%**) remained lower.

In listings where the **property's location was clearly presented**, **67.0%** of participants (**33.0% + 33.9%**) found this feature **useful**, while only **15.2%** (**7.5% + 7.7%**) rejected it. Similarly, when **sales or rental prices were explicitly stated**, **positive responses reached 75.2%** (**35.7% + 39.5%**), while negative reactions remained limited to **12.7%**.

Including a **floor plan** in the listing was positively received by **65.0%** of participants (**38.0% + 27.0%**), and **detailed written descriptions** were also favorably perceived, with **61.1% approval (30.9% + 30.2%)**.

The **availability of multiple property images** was a preferred feature, with **62.5%** of participants (**27.3% + 35.2%**) supporting it. **AI-supported listings** attracted **40.0%** (**23.6% + 16.6%**) of participants, while **31.2%** (**13.0% + 18.2%**) viewed this feature negatively; the remaining participants remained **neutral**.

**Table 3: The Most Inspiring Social Media Channel for Real Estate Properties**

		S.					
		N	Place.	Deviation	Min	Max	p
Entertainment	Facebook	98	10,53	3,06	3,00	15,00	0,020
	Instagram	142	10,61	2,89	3,00	15,00	
	Twitter	28	10,89	2,23	6,00	15,00	
	Pinterest	12	10,08	2,27	5,00	13,00	
	Snapchat	1	12,00		12,00	12,00	
	TikTok	58	11,31	2,26	5,00	15,00	
	Twitter	3	7,00	1,73	6,00	9,00	
	XING	3	13,67	1,53	12,00	15,00	
	YouTube	65	10,88	2,41	3,00	15,00	
	Other	30	9,43	2,90	3,00	13,00	
Engagement	Facebook	98	6,51	2,16	2,00	10,00	0,185
	Instagram	142	6,30	2,06	2,00	10,00	
	Twitter	28	6,29	1,98	3,00	10,00	



	Pinterest	12	5,00	1,13	3,00	6,00	
	Snapchat	1	4,00		4,00	4,00	
	TikTok	58	6,34	2,14	2,00	10,00	
	Twitter	3	4,00	0,00	4,00	4,00	
	XING	3	7,67	1,15	7,00	9,00	
	YouTube	65	6,23	1,96	2,00	10,00	
	Other	30	6,10	2,06	2,00	10,00	
Fashion	Facebook	98	6,96	2,19	2,00	10,00	0,004
	Instagram	142	6,91	2,08	2,00	10,00	
	Twitter	28	7,75	1,76	4,00	10,00	
	Pinterest	12	6,42	1,51	3,00	9,00	
	Snapchat	1	5,00		5,00	5,00	
	TikTok	58	7,81	1,82	2,00	10,00	
	Twitter	3	6,33	0,58	6,00	7,00	
	XING	3	9,33	0,58	9,00	10,00	
	YouTube	65	7,18	1,94	2,00	10,00	
	Other	30	6,23	1,99	2,00	10,00	
Perceived Social Media Score	Facebook	98	24,00	6,71	8,00	35,00	0,030
	Instagram	142	23,82	6,22	7,00	35,00	
	Twitter	28	24,93	5,02	13,00	35,00	
	Pinterest	12	21,50	4,40	11,00	28,00	
	Snapchat	1	21,00		21,00	21,00	
	TikTok	58	25,47	5,12	9,00	35,00	
	Twitter	3	17,33	1,53	16,00	19,00	
	XING	3	30,67	2,52	28,00	33,00	
	YouTube	65	24,29	5,34	7,00	35,00	
	Other	30	21,77	6,16	8,00	33,00	

*p: One-Way Analysis of Variance*

**Table 3 presents the comparison of participants' perceived social media sub-dimensions and total scores based on the social media channels they find most inspiring for real estate properties.** There is a **significant difference in entertainment scores** among participants based on their preferred inspiring social media channels ( $p = 0.020$ ). According to the **post hoc test results**, this difference exists between **TikTok and Other groups** ( $p < 0.05$ ). No significant difference was observed in **engagement scores** among participants based on their preferred inspiring social media channels ( $p = 0.185$ ). A **significant difference** was found in **fashion scores** among participants based on their preferred inspiring social media channels ( $p = 0.004$ ). The **post hoc test results** indicate that this difference is between **TikTok and Other groups** ( $p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, there is a **significant difference in perceived social media scores** among participants based on their preferred inspiring social media channels ( $p = 0.030$ ). The **post hoc test results** show that this difference is also between **TikTok and Other groups** ( $p < 0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that variables such as gender, marital status, income level, and occupational group significantly influence perceptions of social media marketing. It was observed that female participants are more sensitive to social media marketing than males, married individuals show greater interest in fashion-related content, and private sector employees exhibit a stronger response to entertainment and fashion content on social media compared to public sector employees. While educational level was not found to be a determining factor in perceptions of social media marketing, an individual's occupational group was shown to play a significant role in shaping social media consumption habits. Additionally, it was identified that individuals living alone tend to engage more with fashion content, and European participants demonstrated a higher perception of fashion-related content compared to other groups. These findings suggest that consumer reactions to social media content are shaped by demographic and cultural factors.

One of the most significant findings of the study is that as consumers' perceptions of social media marketing increase, their purchase intentions also rise. Specifically, entertainment- and fashion-oriented content was found to strongly influence consumer purchasing decisions. Consistent with previous research, social media

advertisements were observed to guide consumer behavior, facilitate emotional connections with brands, and encourage impulsive purchasing decisions. In this context, it is concluded that brands should customize their social media marketing strategies based on the varying needs of different demographic groups and consumer trends. Considering the interactive opportunities provided by social media platforms, the development of more targeted and personalized marketing strategies will play a critical role in increasing consumer purchase intentions.

## CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between social media marketing perception, consumer behavior, and demographic factors. According to SPSS analysis results, variables such as gender, income level, occupational group, family structure, time spent on social media, and content type have a significant impact on social media marketing perception. It was found that women have a higher perception of social media marketing compared to men, middle-income groups are more sensitive to social media advertisements, and private sector employees perceive social media marketing more strongly. Additionally, consumers showed greater interest in advertisements with high visual quality, detailed information, and AI-supported content. However, education level and nationality did not have a significant effect on social media marketing perception. The study highlights the need for customizing social media marketing strategies based on demographic and behavioral characteristics and emphasizes the critical role of content type in marketing success. The findings provide valuable insights for brands and industry professionals aiming to optimize their social media marketing strategies.

By examining the relationship between social media marketing, consumer behavior, and demographic factors, this study contributes to the development of target audience-oriented strategies. The findings suggest that women are more sensitive to social media marketing than men, married individuals exhibit higher purchase tendencies, and private sector employees are more responsive to social media advertisements. In terms of content types, entertainment- and fashion-themed posts attract consumer interest, while location, price transparency, and visual richness emerge as the most critical factors in real estate listings. Furthermore, increased time spent on social media enhances marketing perception and directly influences purchase intentions. User reviews, influencer collaborations, and interactive advertising campaigns have been found to significantly shape consumer decisions. Future research should further investigate the variations in social media marketing perception across industries, its relationship with consumer loyalty, and the long-term effects of AI-supported advertisements. In this context, adapting social media marketing strategies to cultural and geographical differences is becoming a strategic necessity for brands.

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