

Effect Of Social Media Review on Trust of Libyan Students Purchasing Digital Products

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Abstract

Over recent decades, social media has profoundly reshaped both interpersonal communication and consumer behavior. One area that has attracted increasing academic interest is the role of social media reviews in shaping purchasing decisions. However, despite a growing body of literature, limited attention has been given to how such reviews influence students' trust—particularly in relation to buying digital products. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the extent to which social media reviews affect the trust of Libyan students when making digital purchases. A cross-sectional descriptive design was adopted, utilizing a structured questionnaire informed by established scales from prior research. The questionnaire was disseminated through various social media platforms to reach Libyan student respondents. To analyze the relationships among the key constructs, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was applied. The study's outcomes provide valuable insights into how specific attributes of social media reviews contribute to building trust among students, especially within the digital purchasing environment.

Article Info

Keywords:
Social Media, Digital Products, Purchasing Behavior, Students, Libya

INTRODUCTION

Online reviews have emerged as a pivotal element within the e-commerce landscape, exerting considerable influence over consumer purchasing behavior and expenditure patterns. In the context of today's digitally connected society, the seamless exchange of information via wireless networks has facilitated the rise of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), now considered a vital source of information for online consumers. Among the most prevalent manifestations of eWOM are product and service evaluations shared by users (Bradley et al., 2015; Kwok & Xie, 2016). Notably, more than half of American consumers reportedly consult online video reviews before finalizing their purchasing decisions. The expansion of multi-sided platforms (MSPs)—which enable direct interactions between buyers and sellers—has further accelerated the growth of digital marketplaces (Baker & Kim, 2019; Li, Meng, Jeong, et al., 2020). These platforms often serve as critical spaces where consumers seek out peer evaluations to inform their perceptions of brand value, thereby enhancing their purchasing intentions. Online reviews, typically defined as user-generated feedback based on personal experiences with products or services, are frequently hosted on both company websites and third-party platforms. As noted by Xu (2018), the proliferation of internet access and social media usage has amplified the exchange of consumer opinions, with many individuals now placing greater trust in online reviews compared to traditional advertising and media channels.

Online word-of-mouth (WOM) has become one of the most efficient and influential forms of communication, particularly in countries such as Nepal, where social awareness and cultural dynamics have evolved significantly in recent years. According to Li, Meng, and Pan (2020), Nepalese consumers exhibit strong responsiveness to peer recommendations and user-generated content shared on social media platforms, particularly Facebook, which plays a central role in shaping their trust in digital purchasing decisions. In addition to peer input, evaluations provided by industry experts and social influencers are also considered valuable sources of information. Challenging earlier assumptions about limited digital engagement, recent studies by Kim and Han (2022) and Sotiriadis (2017) indicate that over 60% of female consumers in Nepal are not only familiar with online reviews but actively engage with them when making consumption choices.

Extensive research has underscored the significance of social influence in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors. Among these influences, word-of-mouth (WOM) has been consistently recognized as a particularly persuasive factor in guiding purchase-related decisions. Online reviews, as a modern extension of WOM, serve not only as informational tools but also enable consumers to engage in vicarious experiences—forming evaluations of products without the need for direct interaction (Tata et al., 2021). Favorable WOM tends to enhance perceived product quality, fostering positive attitudes and increasing the likelihood of purchase, while unfavorable WOM can undermine product appeal. These effects have been widely documented in the literature on social influence and consumer psychology. Notably, when online reviewers present a unified perspective, consumers are more likely to perceive this consensus as trustworthy (Kim & Lee, 2022). Conversely, a lack of agreement among reviewers can create ambiguity, leading to hesitation and uncertainty as consumers struggle to navigate divergent viewpoints without clear guidance (Niu & Fan, 2018)..

Trust is considered a foundational component of social interaction, reflecting an individual's belief that another party will act reliably, even in the absence of direct oversight or control. While both trust and social media have been the subjects of extensive individual research, studies that explore the intersection of these two domains remain relatively limited. Over the past decade, scholarly interest in social media has surged, with more than 37,000 academic publications addressing the topic, particularly in recent years (Ahmad & Guzmán, 2021a; Liu et al., 2018; Peng et al., 2016). However, the subset of this literature that specifically examines trust within social media contexts remains comparatively small (Cheong et al., 2020; Siddiqi et al., 2021). Moreover, few studies have delved into the mechanisms by which trust is formed on social networking platforms or identified the determinants that influence its development. Given the established role of trust in shaping users' willingness to engage with these platforms (Huang et al., 2019; R. Wu et al., 2022), it is essential to better understand the factors that drive trust in these digital environments. In light of the ongoing expansion of social networking services, this study seeks to investigate the specific characteristics of social media reviews that affect students' trust when making digital product purchases.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The length of an online review may offer insights into its perceived quality, whereas the valence—or emotional tone—of the review often serves as an indicator of consumer trust in a product. In digital review

systems, valence is commonly expressed through star ratings, which function as a heuristic for assessing both product popularity and overall quality. Kevin et al. (2020) identified review valence as a significant determinant in the formation of consumer trust. A wide body of research supports the notion that favorable reviews contribute positively to business performance, while unfavorable ones tend to have detrimental effects. In a study conducted by Dominique et al. (2022), Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was employed to assess the influence of review valence on trust in the context of digital product purchases. Drawing on data from 215 respondents, their findings revealed a moderately significant relationship between these variables. In line with this evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Review valence has a significant and positive direct effect on consumer trust in the purchase of digital products.

Review relevance encompasses both the perceived similarity between the reviewer and the reader, as well as the alignment of their expressed sentiments. While review credibility has often been emphasized in the literature, Ghebremariam (2021) contends that relevance is an equally important factor in determining the effectiveness of online product reviews. Supporting this perspective, Petrescu et al. (2022) argue that relevance plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer decision-making processes. Similarly, research by Wang et al. (2022) demonstrates that the perceived relevance of a review significantly enhances its informational value. Hsieh and Li (2020) further assert that among various evaluative factors, relevance exerts the greatest influence on consumers' assessments of online products. In light of these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Review relevance has a significant and positive direct effect on consumer trust in the context of purchasing digital products.

Lo and Yao (2019) emphasize that the perceived trustworthiness of an online review is largely influenced by the reader's judgment of its authenticity. In this context, authenticity refers to the degree to which the review content genuinely reflects the reviewer's personal experience and sentiments. This perceived genuineness is crucial, as it serves as a valuable source of information for both prospective consumers and sellers. Building on this perspective, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Review authenticity has a significant and positive direct effect on consumer trust in the purchase of digital products.

Credibility, in the context of online information, refers to the degree to which content is perceived as accurate and trustworthy. Many e-commerce platforms, such as Amazon, enhance credibility by labeling reviews with a "verified purchase" badge, signaling that the reviewer has actually used the product. This designation not only reinforces the reviewer's legitimacy but also enhances their perceived expertise, making their opinion more persuasive to potential buyers. It helps distinguish genuine consumer feedback from content potentially generated for promotional purposes. Additionally, consumers tend to place greater trust in reviewers who they perceive as relatable or similar to themselves, thereby increasing the likelihood of relying on peer-generated content. Drawing on these observations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Review credibility has a significant and positive direct effect on consumer trust in the purchase of digital products.

Book and Tanford (2019) demonstrated that the volume of online reviews plays a significant role in shaping consumers' intent to purchase. Their study, which examined customer behavior toward coffee shops in Hanoi, Vietnam, revealed that a greater number of reviews was positively associated with increased brand purchase intentions. When consumers encounter a high volume of reviews—particularly those perceived as authentic and independent of commercial influence—their trust in the product or brand tends to grow, reinforcing positive brand perceptions and increasing the likelihood of purchase. Furthermore, the researchers highlighted that a large quantity of reviews signals a wide range of customer experiences, which may serve to validate the brand's reliability and attract potential buyers. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H5: Review volume has a significant and positive direct effect on consumer trust in the context of purchasing digital products.

In the context of online commerce, where direct, face-to-face interaction is absent, trust becomes a pivotal factor in facilitating financial transactions between consumers and vendors. Existing literature consistently emphasizes the crucial role of online trust in e-commerce, as it not only enhances the likelihood of successful electronic transactions but also mitigates perceived risks and fosters repeat purchasing behavior (Bhattacharyya, 2022; Q. Chen et al., 2021; Fan et al., 2021; Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2022; D. P. Xu, Deng, et al., 2022; D. Zhang et al., 2022). Without a foundation of trust, the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) characteristics on consumer behavioral intentions is likely to be diminished. Trust serves as the cornerstone of enduring relationships between consumers and online sellers, shaping both initial and ongoing engagement. When trust is established, consumers are more inclined to act in alignment with their favorable perceptions, reduce the time spent searching for alternatives, and ultimately develop long-term loyalty. Prior research has confirmed a direct link between consumer trust and repurchase behavior. For instance, M. Y. Chen et al. (2016) found that trust in an online vendor significantly enhances the likelihood of repeat visits and transactions. Accordingly, the impact of eWOM traits may extend beyond immediate purchase intentions, potentially exerting an indirect influence on consumer behavior through the mediation of trust in online vendors.

METHODS

This study adopts a descriptive research design, consistent with established methodological standards. According to Sekaran et al. (2009), descriptive research allows for a comprehensive exploration of specific issues, phenomena, or variables related to individuals, organizations, industries, or other relevant contexts, providing valuable insights into the subject under investigation.

SAMPLING

The target population for this study comprised university students in Libya. Data collection was conducted through the distribution of online questionnaires shared via instant messaging applications and social media platforms. According to Libyan Monthly (2021), the total number of university enrollees in Libya is estimated at approximately 127,207 students. Libya was selected as the research setting due to the high proportion of social media users within the university-age demographic. A total of 500 questionnaires were disseminated, with participation being entirely voluntary. The survey was administered in English, and respondents were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. A convenience sampling technique was employed to facilitate data collection.

DATA COLLECTION

As noted by Sekaran and Bougie (2009), a questionnaire is a structured instrument composed of pre-designed questions intended to gather meaningful input from respondents. In this study, the questionnaire functioned as a primary data collection tool, facilitating the measurement of key research variables. Each variable was assessed using a set of five items, with responses captured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement. The instrument was organized into two main sections: Part A focused on collecting demographic information, while Part B addressed the core constructs under investigation. To enhance the clarity and effectiveness of the questionnaire, a pilot test was administered to a sample of approximately 40 to 50 individuals. Feedback from this preliminary phase was used to refine the wording and structure of the questions prior to the final data collection. The sources informing the development of the questionnaire items are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Variable, Items, Scale and Source

Variables	Items	Source	Scale
Review valence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review was negative. The review was positive. The review received a negative rating. The review received a positive rating. 	(U. Mishra, 2021)	5 point Likert Scale

Review relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social media review on the digital product is relevant to me • The social media review is appropriate for my needs • The social media review is related to my digital product purchase decision • The social media review is related to my digital product search. 	(Mumuni et al., 2020)	
Review content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media reviews on digital product brand X are defined. • Social media reviews on digital product brand X are explained. • Social media reviews on digital product brand X are detailed. 	(Chakraborty & Bhat, 2018)	5 point Likert Scale
Review creditability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will perceive Social media reviews as reliable • I will perceive the Social media reviews as trustworthy • I will perceive the Social media reviews as accurate • I will perceive the Social media reviews as not biased 	(Izogo et al., 2022)	5 point Likert Scale
Review volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More reviews on digital products improve purchasing decision. • More rating on digital products improve purchasing decision. • More likes on digital products post improve purchasing decision. • More videos on digital products improve purchasing decision. 	(Kordrostami et al., 2021)	5 point Likert Scale
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, most social media reviewers evaluate without influence. • Most social media reviewers are honest • The typical social media reviewers are sincerely concerned about their opinion • Usually, I think that social media reviewers are trustworthy 	(Bregman & Karimov, 2012)	5 point Likert Scale

RESULTS

Questionnaire links were disseminated to a total of 500 students enrolled in five well-regarded higher education institutions situated in Tripoli, Benghazi, and Bayda, Libya. Of these, 321 completed responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 64.2%. To maintain data integrity, measures were taken to address missing values, and up to 50% of responses with substantial missing data were excluded from further analysis. Ultimately, 298 valid responses were retained for final statistical evaluation.

The demographic composition of the sample revealed that 197 participants (66.11%) identified as male, while 101 (33.89%) were female. The majority of respondents were pursuing undergraduate studies, accounting for 211 students (70.81%), followed by 58 students (19.46%) enrolled in Master's programs, and 26 individuals (8.72%) holding diploma qualifications. A small subset of participants, comprising three individuals (1.01%), were enrolled in doctoral programs.

Regarding social media engagement, Facebook was the most commonly used platform, with 291 students (97.65%) indicating active use, particularly in the context of evaluating digital products. YouTube also demonstrated significant reach, with 113 students (37.92%) reporting regular usage. Moderate levels of engagement were observed for Instagram and a platform labeled 'X', used by 37 (12.42%) and 43 (14.43%) students, respectively. Platforms such as LinkedIn and other unnamed services had comparatively lower usage rates, with 23 (7.72%) and 15 (5.03%) respondents indicating interaction. The cumulative percentage surpassing 100% reflects the tendency of participants to rely on multiple social media channels when gathering information to support their purchasing decisions.

In terms of product categories, social media reviews were reported to have the strongest influence on entertainment-related purchases, affecting 247 students (82.89%). Digital applications followed closely, with 205 students (68.79%) indicating influence, while software products impacted 118 students (39.60%). Fewer participants reported being influenced by reviews when purchasing e-books (68 students, or 22.82%) and academic papers (47 students, or 15.77%). The 'Other' category accounted for minimal influence, with only 6 students (2.01%) selecting this option. Similar to platform usage, the combined percentages exceeding 100% suggest that students consult reviews across a range of digital product categories concurrently.

Table 2: Analyzing Path Analysis

	Path Coefficient	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values	Results	2.5%	97.50%
REVC -> TRUST	0.020	0.053	0.385	0.700	Not Accepted	-0.078	0.126
REVCr -> TRUST	-0.174	0.058	2.971	0.003	Accepted	-0.291	-0.060
REVR -> TRUST	0.234	0.059	3.999	0.000	Accepted	0.119	0.350
REVV -> TRUST	0.418	0.066	6.352	0.000	Accepted	0.280	0.543
RV -> TRUST	0.207	0.058	3.567	0.000	Accepted	0.092	0.321

The study demonstrates that REVC has no meaningful impact on Trust. The results show that REVR has a large and positive influence on both Trust (0.234), with relationship being statistically significant. This suggests that relevant reviews play a crucial part in trust while digital purchase process. The discovery that the factor of 'Review Credibility' has a negative impact on 'Trust' (-0.174), offers a contradictory situation that requires a thorough examination. The study emphasizes a significantly strong positive impact of REVV on Trust (with a path coefficient of 0.418), indicating that the number of reviews plays a vital role in establishing trust among students.

DISCUSSION

Relevance Value (RV) has a substantial influence on Trust (0.207, $p < 0.001$). The strong correlation between RV and Trust is consistent with the general understanding of customer behavior in the online marketplace. The overall sentiment of evaluations, whether favorable or negative, plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' perception of the credibility and use of the information provided. Positive evaluations frequently bolster the perceived credibility of the product, since they indicate contentment and endorsement

from fellow users. This assertion is substantiated by research that emphasizes the significance of favorable oral communication in establishing consumer confidence (Chen et al., 2021; Ho et al., 2020; Mittal & Agrawal, 2022).

Cultural and societal factors can influence the interactions among Libyan students in this context. In many Middle Eastern countries, including Libya, the community plays a central role, and the value placed on shared thoughts and experiences is significant. Positive reviews, therefore, have the potential to greatly enhance trust in a product or service. This collective mindset may increase individuals' receptiveness to the favorable opinions of others, especially when the review conveys an overall positive sentiment. The community-oriented culture encourages greater acceptance of these shared experiences, reinforcing trust in the item or service being reviewed.

Furthermore, the occurrence of 'review skepticism' may also be a factor. According to previous researches (An & Ozturk, 2022; Kim & Lee, 2022; Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2022; Shou et al., 2022), when customers become more cognizant of the exploitation of internet evaluations, they may be inclined to view even good ratings with mistrust. Credibility pertains to the trustworthiness and dependability of the evaluation, whereas valence concerns the feeling or tone it expresses. The results indicate that although the emotional tone of reviews is crucial in establishing trust, it is not the only factor that influences purchasing choices. This differentiation emphasizes the complex and diverse nature of customer decision-making, in which trust is essential but not the sole requirement for making a purchase (Ahmad & Guzmán, 2021b; Ali et al., 2022; Hsu, 2022; Z. Zhu et al., 2022).

The increasing level of digital literacy could also account for the reason why positive reviews foster trust (Cheong et al., 2020; M. Lee et al., 2017; Sotiriadis, 2017). The conclusions are further complicated by the cultural and societal intricacies of the Libyan context. In civilizations characterized by a strong sense of collective trust and community decision-making, the positive or negative nature of reviews can have a substantial impact on the general impressions and feelings towards a product. Nevertheless, the conversion of this confidence into personal buying choices can be impacted by various other socio-cultural elements, including collective norms, society anticipations, and individual financial conditions.

To contextualize these findings, it is essential to consider the theoretical foundations of information processing and relevance. As noted by Lai et al. (2021), the core premise of this theory is that individuals are more likely to be influenced by messages they perceive as personally significant. Building on this concept, scholars such as Zhu et al. (2022) have examined its application within the domain of online reviews, highlighting that perceived relevance is a key determinant of both the usefulness and persuasiveness of digital information. In the case of Libyan students, the impact of online reviews on purchasing behavior may stem from the perception that such content is more personally relatable and aligned with their specific needs, thereby increasing its credibility. Trust, a concept extensively explored in the digital context, has been defined by Mayer et al. (1995) as the willingness of an individual to be vulnerable to the actions of another, based on the expectation of positive outcomes. When online review content aligns closely with consumers' expectations and informational needs, it can reinforce this sense of trust, thereby enhancing the likelihood of favorable purchasing decisions.

It is important to additionally examine the influence of social media platforms in creating these perceptions. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), the emergence of digital platforms has led to significant changes in how consumers engage with and interpret online information. Social media platforms serve as a medium for distributing reviews and also allow users to interact with information in ways that might either increase or decrease its perceived importance.

The findings of this study reveal that review content (REVC) does not have a statistically significant impact on trust. This outcome is somewhat unexpected, given that existing literature and conventional understanding often emphasize the critical role of review substance in shaping consumer trust. Prior studies have consistently suggested that the content of online reviews directly influences consumer perceptions and decision-making processes (M. Lee et al., 2017; Ma & Lee, 2014; Mi et al., 2014). However, the lack of a significant effect in this context may be attributed to several underlying factors. One plausible explanation is the overwhelming volume of information available online, which can lead to cognitive overload. In such situations, the distinctiveness or depth of individual reviews may be diminished, prompting consumers to rely

more heavily on heuristic cues—such as aggregate star ratings or the total number of reviews—rather than engaging with the detailed content of each review.

Additionally, this limited impact of REVC may reflect the evolving patterns of consumer behavior in digital environments. As noted by Kim and Lee (2022), online consumers often engage in selective perception, whereby they prioritize information that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs and attitudes while disregarding conflicting viewpoints. As a result, review content may have minimal influence on those who have already formed an opinion about a product. In such cases, the overall emotional valence of reviews may carry less weight in shaping purchasing decisions than previously assumed (Fan et al., 2021; Shaheen et al., 2020; Xiao et al., 2022).

It is imperative to take into account the cultural background of Libyan students. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory posits that cultural values have a substantial influence on consumer behavior (Petrescu, 2011). In countries characterized by strong uncertainty avoidance, such as many Middle Eastern cultures, customers may exhibit greater skepticism towards the content and sentiment expressed in internet evaluations. Instead, they tend to depend more heavily on personal experiences or recommendations from individuals they are acquainted with. The absence of a substantial influence from review content and valence on trust indicates that the development of trust in online settings is a multifaceted process that extends beyond the simple evaluation of review attributes.

Nevertheless, the adverse influence of 'Review Credibility' on 'Trust' adds an intricate aspect to this correlation. The idea of skepticism towards internet content offers a viable explanation for this phenomena. The skepticism model of source credibility posits that perceiving a source as too credible can elicit skepticism, resulting in diminished confidence (Ju et al., 2021). This is especially significant in the current age of prevalent internet disinformation, when consumers are becoming more vigilant regarding the genuineness of digital content. For Libyan students, being exposed to a wide range of internet reviews may have made them more sensitive to the legitimacy of these evaluations, causing them to be skeptical even when the reviews are really reliable.

Moreover, the influence of cultural influences on the assessment of credibility must not be disregarded. Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, proposed by Hofstede in 1980, offers a structured approach to comprehending the impact of cultural values on consumer behavior. In cultures characterized by high uncertainty avoidance, such as most Middle Eastern countries, there is a propensity to scrutinize excessively positive assessments and see them as potentially implausible. The presence of this cultural element may partially account for the inverse correlation reported among Libyan students between the credibility of reviews and trust.

The significance of social media in influencing these perceptions is equally crucial. According to Karunasingha and Abeysekera (2022), social media has revolutionized the way consumers engage with information, shifting them from being passive recipients to active participants. Such active involvement may result in a more discerning assessment of the material, encompassing the veracity of reviews. Hence, whereas reliable evaluations can influence students to buy a product, they can also provoke a discerning evaluation of the intentions behind the reviews, impacting their trust.

Ultimately, the study's results provide a substantial contribution to the current body of knowledge on online advertising and customer behavior, specifically within the realm of social media evaluations (Aris, 2012; Genc-Nayebi & Abran, 2017; Stouthuysen et al., 2018). The study provides fresh insights into how consumers perceive and respond to online reviews by emphasizing the contradictory connection between review legitimacy and trust. It highlights the importance for marketers to embrace a more sophisticated strategy in utilizing online evaluations, which not only improves credibility but also preserves authenticity and cultivates trust. Moreover, the work establishes a basis for future investigations into the intricate mechanisms of trust that govern online consumer behavior, specifically in culturally heterogeneous environments.

According to Izogo et al. (2022), a large number of evaluations might generate a bandwagon effect, resulting in heightened trust. Nevertheless, the absence of a substantial correlation between the number of reviews and the choice to make a purchase goes against common expectations, questioning the belief that greater trust always leads to a higher likelihood of making a purchase. A possible reason for this difference could be the trade-off between the quality and quantity in how consumers perceive things. According to (Z.

Zhu et al., 2023), although a big number of reviews can create confidence by showing acceptance and engagement, it does not necessarily mean that the product is of high quality or relevance. These findings align with the research conducted by (Marmat, 2022), which suggests that consumers may regard a large number of evaluations as overwhelming or irrelevant. This perception can potentially result in choice paralysis instead of helping them make a decision to purchase.

To summarize, this study enhances our comprehension of the significance of review volume in establishing confidence and also presents opportunities for future investigation. Subsequent research endeavors could delve into the quandary of quality versus quantity in review systems and examine additional variables that might impact the correlation between the volume of reviews and trust. Furthermore, analyzing cultural and demographic factors could offer more profound understanding of how various consumer segments perceive and respond to the quantity of reviews in relation to trust and buying choices.

Conclusion

This study, with a specific focus on digital products, highlights the importance of understanding how the characteristics of social media reviews influence consumer trust in online purchasing contexts. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, five critical attributes of social media reviews were identified as potential determinants of consumer trust. A conceptual framework was developed based on these attributes and empirically tested using structural equation modelling. The findings offer valuable insights into the mechanisms through which social media reviews shape trust in digital product purchases. Beyond academic contributions, the study also provides a foundation for policymakers aiming to promote authenticity and transparency in online reviews—ultimately fostering greater consumer confidence and supporting more informed purchasing decisions.

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