

BRAND AWARENESS, VALUE, AND ACCESSIBILITY CONSUMER USAGE OF X (FORMERLY KNOWN AS TWITTER) AS A NEWS SOURCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the factors influencing consumer usage of X (formerly known as Twitter) as a news source, using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Uses and Gratifications Theory as foundational frameworks. Quantitative research was employed to measure the effects of the three independent variables (brand awareness, value, and accessibility). To conduct the survey, snowball sampling was utilized via an online questionnaire to collect a total of 408 responses and then analyzed using statistical software. Results from the statistical analysis determined that all three independent variables had a significant influence on consumer usage of X as a news source, thus supporting all three proposed hypotheses.

Keywords: Name Recognition, Pervasive Influence, Popularity, Customization, Variety of Content, Speed of Information, Availability, Affordability, Content Sharing.

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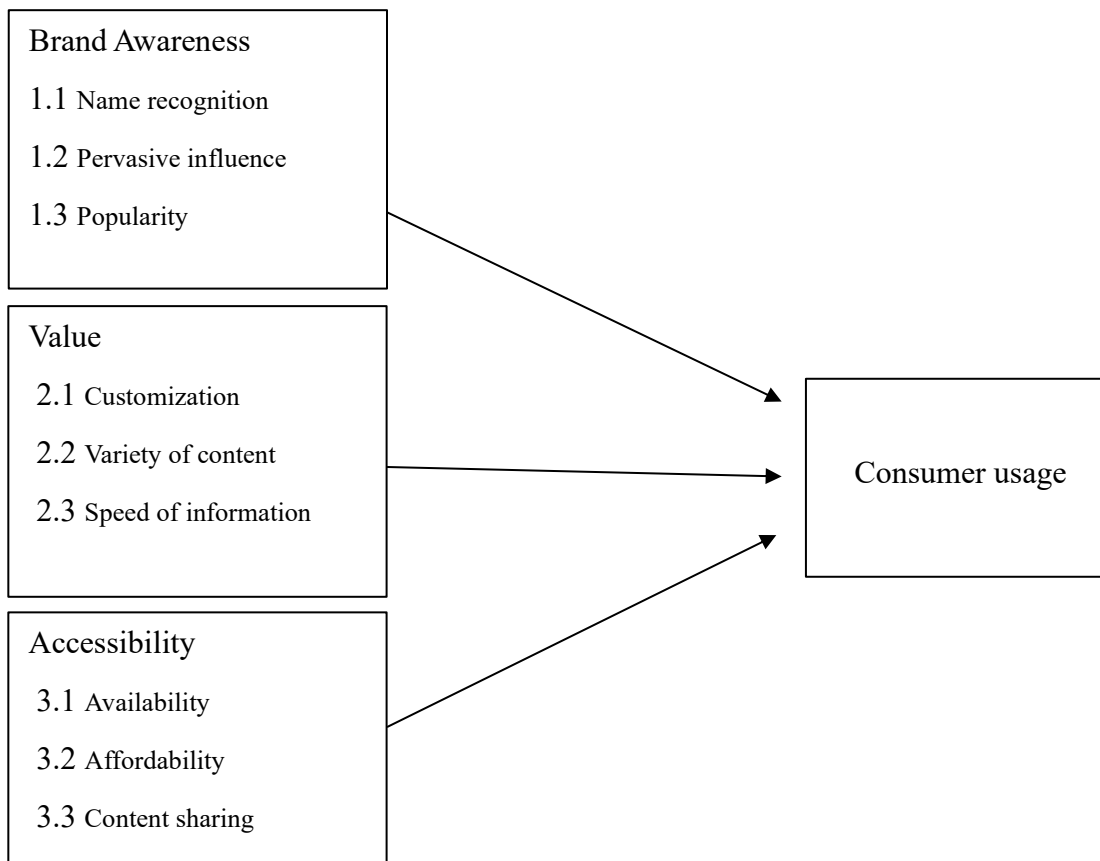
INTRODUCTION

This study examines the influence of brand awareness, value, and accessibility on consumer usage of X as a news source, given that social media has become an ever-present part of society, with its adoption becoming commonplace worldwide. Since its inception, social media has transformed from a platform designed for personal communication into a versatile, multifunctional platform. Given X's wide user base and extensive presence of independent and corporate news media organizations, this study conducted a survey to determine if these attributes are conducive to adopting X as a news source, measuring the independent variables of brand awareness, value, and accessibility. Brand awareness was selected due to the limited existing literature on X since its official rebrand from Twitter in July 2023, as prior literature on Twitter's role in news dissemination and sourcing is becoming outdated and therefore less applicable to X's current iteration. The variables of value and accessibility were chosen with consideration to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which employs usefulness and ease of use as its two main variables, and this study aimed to corroborate TAM by applying its principles to X's use as a news source.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

1. To study the impact of brand awareness factor name recognition, pervasive influence, and popularity on consumer usage.
2. To study the impact of value factor customization, variety of content, and speed of information on consumer usage.
3. To study the impact of accessibility factor availability, affordability, and content sharing on consumer usage.

SCOPE OF WORK



HYPOTHESIS TEST

H1: Brand awareness has a significant influence on people choosing to use X as a source of news.

H2: Value has a significant influence on people choosing to use X as a source of news.

H3: Accessibility has a significant influence on people choosing to use X as a source of news.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Author	Contention	Variable(s)
Andrivet, M. (2023)	The rebrand from Twitter to X was a risk given the potential to cause brand association confusion and a decrease in user loyalty.	Name recognition
Drenik, G. (2023)	A strong brand helps consumers to identify with a product and serves as a strong asset to the company.	Name recognition
Brannon, W., & Roy, D. (2024)	X is a faster medium of information dissemination than other outlets, such as newspaper or radio.	Speed of information
Leetaru, K. (2019)	Twitter (X) lags in dissemination of new news but excels in level of engagement and sharing.	Speed of information, content sharing
Zhu, X., Kim, Y., & Park, H. (2020)	Content which is negative in nature (characteristics, emotions) spreads more easily than positive content.	Speed of information
Kapidzic, S., Neuberger, C., Frey, F., Stieglitz, S., & Mirbabaie, M. (2022)	X posts related to the economy or politics are utilized by magazines, newspapers, and broadcasts, while tabloid newspapers utilize posts on human interest or gossip.	Variety of content
Davis, F. D. (1989)	Higher ease of use and usefulness in technology results in higher adoption.	Speed of information, availability, variety of content
Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973)	People actively seek out specific media to fulfill needs, such as information,	Variety of content, content sharing

	entertainment, or social interaction.	
Widyatama, R., & Mukhseni, M. R. N. (2023)	The logo change from rebranding had a significant effect on brand perception of X.	Name recognition
Shah, K. (2024)	The negative perception gained from X's rebrand has largely dissipated, but X is still struggling to be adopted colloquially over the former Twitter brand.	Name recognition

Theoretical Framework and Literary Analysis

The two key theories utilized for this study are the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Uses and Gratification Theory. TAM contends that adoption of new technology is driven by two key factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Davis 1989). Specifically, TAM was integral in selection of independent variables value and accessibility and was drawn upon in the development of this study's hypotheses, which are that both value and accessibility are significant influencers on usage of X as a source of news. Uses and Gratification Theory's contention that people actively seek out specific media to fulfill needs was used as foundation for specific sub variables (Variety of Content, Content Sharing) and incorporated throughout the survey questionnaire.

Other key literature pieces which was foundational to this study include Leetaru (2019) and Brannon and Roy's (2024) research on X's speed of information dissemination. Although related in topic, these two papers conflict in findings. Leetaru's findings indicated that while X excels at engagement and sharing, it is typically slower than other mediums in generation of new news information. Brannon and Roy's findings contradict this, citing X as a faster medium of information dissemination than newspaper and radio specifically. Therefore, this study aims to build upon these existing literature pieces to determine how X is perceived by individuals with respect to its speed of information flow.

METHODOLOGY

The respondents of this survey's questionnaire comprised of persons over the age of 18 who have used X at least once since its rebranding. Using Yamane's table for sample size, 400 samples were required to proceed with an accurate analysis of data for the population.

A quantitative research method in the form of a Google Forms questionnaire was used to collect data and utilized a 5-point Likert scale to assess the respondents' agreeance, with 1 = least agree and 5 = most agree. The questionnaire included a filtering question (Have you visited X since its rebranding in July 2023?) followed by 5 parts. Part 1: Demographic Data (8 questions for age, gender, nationality, education level, occupation, how frequently respondent uses any

social media platform, how frequently respondent uses X, primary reason respondent uses X); Part 2: Brand Awareness (9 questions related to sub-variables name recognition, pervasive influence, and popularity); Part 3: Value (9 questions related to sub-variables customization, variety of content, speed of information); Part 4: Accessibility (9 questions related to sub-variables availability, affordability, content sharing) and Part 5: Consumer usage (9 questions related to consumer usage of X as a news source)

Variable (sub variables)	Sample of Included Survey Statements
Brand Awareness (name recognition, pervasive influence, popularity)	I am familiar with the X interface and logo; I consider X to host accounts of many popular and important people; I believe most people use X.
Value (customization, variety of content, speed of information)	I can easily adjust the accounts I follow to ensure I receive content I enjoy; X allows me to find information on all my interests; I can find information the quickest by using X.
Accessibility (availability, affordability, content sharing)	I can access my X account easily, regardless of where I am; I believe that X is cheaper to use than other platforms or services that I receive news from; I can easily share news and content within the X platform.

The online questionnaire was reviewed for validity and approved by advisor Dr. Sawitree Santipiriyapon. The reliability test pilot data were analyzed through using Cronbach's Alpha via the statistical software and found a total reliability of 0.93. The required value to be accepted is 0.7-1.0.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Demographics

The respondents were largely younger, college educated, with the most diverse demographic category being nationality. Of the 408 respondents, roughly 42% came from Thailand, 22% came from North America and 18% from other Southeast Asian countries. The most skewed demographic category is the education category, with roughly 87% of respondents having attained the level of bachelor's or master's degree, with 70% identifying as having a bachelor's degree. In the occupation demographic category, the leading occupation status is employed at 48.28%, followed by student at 32.84% and self-employed at 9%.

Mean and Standard Deviation

- Brand Awareness (Mean = 3.394, SD = 0.616), Agree
- Value (Mean = 3.340, SD = 0.704), Agree
- Accessibility (Mean = 3.204, SD = 0.672), Agree

Multiple Linear Regression

1. **Brand Awareness vs Consumer Usage:** Accepted with Adjusted R-square = .386, $F = 86.02$, $p < 0.05$ (Name Recognition: .009, not significant, Pervasive Influence: $< .001$, significant, Popularity: $< .001$, significant)
2. **Value vs Consumer Usage:** Accepted with Adjusted R-square = .667, $F = 272.614$, $p < 0.05$ (Customization: $< .001$, significant, Variety of Content: $< .001$, significant, Speed of Information: $< .001$, significant)
3. **Accessibility vs Consumer Usage:** Accepted with Adjusted R-square = .482, $F = 127.224$, $p < 0.05$ (Availability: $< .001$, significant, Affordability: $< .001$, significant, Content Sharing: $< .001$, significant)

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data

Most survey respondents were within the age range of 18-32 (78.2%) and college educated (88.5%), skewing the results towards being younger, educated persons, who are generally more accustomed to use of social media. Occupation status was more evenly spread, with 48.28% of respondents identifying as employed and 32.84% identifying as students. For the primary reason in which respondents use X, responses were mixed, with the majority identifying entertainment (34.56%) as the primary reason, followed by news and information (30.64%), professional networking and marketing (12.01%), and interacting with friends or family (10.05%). This indicates a wide range of utilization which the X platform offers consumers.

Literature

This study corroborates and aligns with the two main incorporated frameworks: TAM and Uses and Gratification Theory, as reflected in research results which signify value and accessibility as a significant influence on X as a source of news. The additional significant research literature was built upon from this study and corroborates Brannon and Roy's study, which stated that X is a fast medium of news dissemination, given speed of information being accepted as a significant influence. This can be attributed to Leetaru's work being outdated compared to Brannon and Roy's (2019 vs. 2024) and the vast number of changes to the X platform since Leetaru's paper.

Attitudes Towards Variables

- **Brand Awareness:** Respondents were generally agreeable to sub-variables name recognition and pervasive influence but were disagreeable towards sub-variable popularity. Overall, respondents were agreeable to brand awareness.
- **Value:** Respondents were generally agreeable to sub-variables customization, variety of content and speed of information. Overall, respondents were agreeable to value.
- **Accessibility:** Respondents were generally agreeable to sub-variables availability, affordability, and content sharing. Overall, respondents were agreeable to accessibility.

Hypotheses Support

All three hypotheses were supported by the empirical results. The significant influence of brand awareness, particularly through pervasive influence and popularity, reflects X's growing recognition since its 2023 rebrand. Value's strong impact, driven by customization, variety, and speed, corroborates TAM's usefulness construct, while accessibility's role aligns with ease of use, enhancing X's adoption as a news source. These insights build on prior research (e.g., Brannon & Roy, 2024) and address gaps noted by Leetaru (2019), suggesting platform improvements since 2019.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study's demographic skew towards younger, college educated adults limits generalizability of results, therefore requiring deeper research with a more diverse pool demographic makeup. A more in-depth study which makes a direct comparison between X and all Facebook, for example, would provide more granular data and help researchers understand how the two social media sites compare against each other. Additionally, given the variance in news sources worldwide, research focusing on a specific nation, such as Thailand or Thai citizens, would help to provide clearer insight into the influences of X as a source of news for a more specific focus group.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Utilization of qualitative research methods would help provide a deeper understanding of the influences of consumer usage of X as a source of news. Given the utilization of a rigid, 5-point Likert scale, the use of interviews would provide respondents the opportunity to provide more insight into their utilization of X and allow for a more nuanced response which would enrich data. This study indicates that X is interpreted to be a valuable source of news, attributed to variables brand awareness, value, and accessibility. Given X's prominence as a news source, companies or organizations operating in news and information should increase their presence on the platform to maximize their reach. For lawmakers, this is a signal that X has significant reach to their constituency. Therefore, not only should X be utilized as an effective way to communicate policy and information to the masses, but it should also signify the importance of policy areas such as free speech, internet access, and technology adoption.

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Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

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