

Brand Trust in Driving Brand Loyalty and Purchase Intention in the Digital Streaming Era: A Systematic Literature Review

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Received : July 3, 2025

Accepted : August 5, 2025

Published : August 30, 2025

Citation: Akrom, M, C. (2025). Brand Trust in Driving Brand Loyalty and Purchase Intention in the Digital Streaming Era: A Systematic Literature Review. *Commercium : Journal of Business and Management*, 3(3), 203-219. <https://doi.org/10.61978/commercium.v3i3>

ABSTRACT: Brand trust plays a strategic role in shaping long-term consumer relationships in digital streaming services, where user interactions are primarily virtual and consumers constantly face competing content choices. This study synthesizes recent empirical research to develop an integrative framework positioning brand trust as a mediating construct that links consumer engagement strategies with behavioral outcomes such as brand loyalty and purchase intention. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted using the PRISMA protocol, analyzing 34 peer-reviewed open-access articles published between 2015 and 2025, selected from the ScienceDirect database through a refined Boolean search process. Thematic analysis revealed that antecedents such as content marketing quality, perceived brand authenticity, social media interaction, and user-generated content (UGC) play a significant role in trust formation. Emotional drivers like brand love and perceived sincerity enhance psychological attachment, while technological features including AI-based personalization, live streaming, and immersive metaverse experiences foster trust when implemented with ethical clarity. Cultural and demographic factors were also identified as important variables, indicating that trust formation is context-sensitive and non-universal. The proposed framework offers both theoretical contribution and practical relevance by demonstrating that brand trust operates not merely as a result, but as a dynamic strategic lever in digital consumer behavior. By integrating emotional, functional, and technological dimensions, the framework underscores the multidimensional nature of trust-building in platform-mediated environments. The study concludes by calling for further empirical validation across various streaming contexts to strengthen brand management strategies.

Keywords: Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, Digital Consumer Behavior, Digital Streaming, Purchase Intention.



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INTRODUCTION

The expansion of digital technologies has profoundly reshaped the media and entertainment landscape, particularly within the streaming sector. Platforms such as Netflix, Disney+, and various regional Video-on-Demand (VOD) services have altered how consumers engage with content, offering more personalized and immediate experiences. However, this evolution has intensified

market competition, compelling streaming platforms to secure consumer loyalty through strategies that extend beyond functional quality .

Brand trust understood as consumers' willingness to rely on a brand to consistently and ethically fulfill its promises (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2017)—has become a central driver of consumer behavior(Huseynov et al., 2024). In virtual settings where direct interaction is limited, trust reduces perceived risk, reinforces psychological assurance, and supports sustained consumer engagement (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Although several studies have addressed trust-related antecedents such as content value, brand sincerity, and interactive platforms, the literature remains fragmented. Prior research tends to investigate these factors in isolation, with limited attention to how trust functions as a mediating mechanism between digital brand strategies and consumer outcomes such as loyalty and purchase intention(Keni & Kusumawati, 2024; Mohammadian et al., 2024). Moreover, existing models often underemphasize the emotional and technological dimensions that may reinforce or undermine trust in digitally mediated contexts.

Addressing these gaps, this study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to develop an integrative conceptual framework. It synthesizes empirical findings across 34 peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2025 to explore, how does brand trust mediate the relationship between digital brand communication strategies and consumer loyalty and purchase intention in the streaming industry?

The framework incorporates content creation, perceived authenticity, social engagement, and user participation, while also accounting for emotional value and emerging technologies such as AI personalization and metaverse interfaces.

By consolidating existing evidence, the study contributes theoretically by proposing a comprehensive model of trust dynamics in streaming environments. Practically, the findings offer structured insight into how digital brand strategies can be aligned with trust-building mechanisms to support long-term consumer commitment. In doing so, the review informs future research and managerial practices on the critical role of trust in shaping sustainable consumer-brand relationships in digital service industries.

Framework

Brand trust has long been recognized as a pivotal construct in consumer-brand relationships, serving not only as a foundation for repeated transactions but also as a buffer against market volatility and perceived risk. In digital streaming environments—characterized by minimal physical interaction and algorithm-driven personalization—trust plays a heightened role in influencing user commitment and behavioral intention.

Defined as consumers' willingness to rely on a brand to fulfill its promises reliably and ethically (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2017), brand trust comprises both functional expectations (e.g., platform reliability, content availability) and emotional resonance (e.g., sincerity, empathy, transparency).

However, the mechanisms through which trust is formed remain uneven across empirical studies, and variation in trust dynamics is often shaped by platform type, cultural context, and demographic segments—a nuance that is frequently underexamined.

Four main antecedents contribute significantly to the development of brand trust in the streaming environment:

1. Content Marketing

Strategically curated content—when perceived as valuable, consistent, and authentic—can reinforce brand credibility (Payal et al., 2024). However, not all content strategies yield uniform effects. For instance, platform-specific expectations differ: audiences on subscription-based platforms (e.g., Netflix) may emphasize originality and diversity, while users of ad-supported platforms may prioritize accessibility and frequency. Moreover, content perceived as overly commercial or algorithmically curated may reduce perceived sincerity and hinder trust formation.

2. Brand Authenticity

Authenticity, as perceived alignment between brand identity and consumer values (Papadopoulou et al., 2023), is a strong emotional lever in trust-building (Ren & Wang, 2024). Yet, its effectiveness varies across cultural orientations. In collectivist societies, authenticity may be tied to social responsibility and inclusivity, while in individualist contexts it may emphasize uniqueness and transparency. This calls for caution against universalizing authenticity cues without considering cultural sensitivity.

3. Social Media Engagement

Real-time interaction on social platforms helps humanize brands and increase perceived responsiveness (Lim & Rasul, 2022). Still, engagement alone does not guarantee trust. The tone, consistency, and perceived sincerity of responses matter greatly (Mani & Kundargi, 2024). Moreover, engagement fatigue or the perception of automated replies can undermine the intended relational function of social media presence.

4. User-Generated Content (UGC)

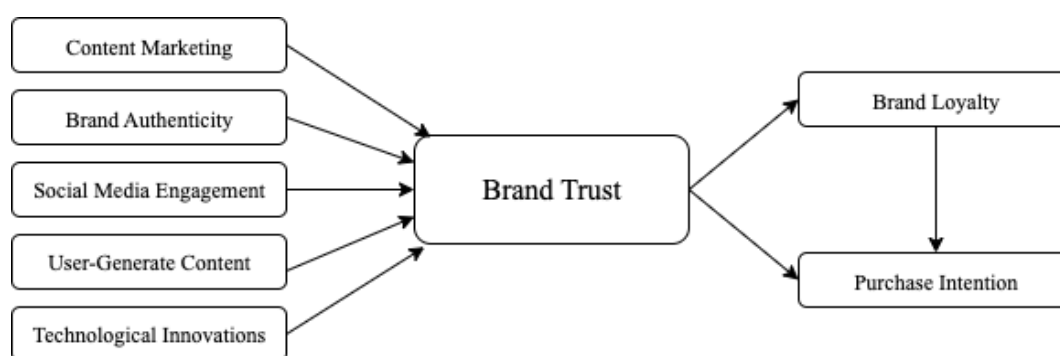
UGC—ranging from reviews to fan content—serves as decentralized endorsements. Consumers tend to perceive such content as more credible than brand-driven narratives (Méndez-Lazarte et al., 2025). However, reliance on UGC introduces challenges related to content quality control and credibility verification. Furthermore, demographic variations (e.g., Gen Z valuing peer recommendations more than older cohorts) suggest the need for differentiated strategies in leveraging UGC (Mimouni-Chaabane & Parguel, 2025; Xie-Carson et al., 2023).

In addition to these antecedents, emotional and technological moderators shape the trust-building process. Emotional value—such as brand love, perceived care, or affective attachment—enhances the resilience of trust even in cases of minor service failures (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2017). Technological innovations (e.g., AI personalization, live streaming, metaverse) offer immersive

engagement but introduce new vulnerabilities. While these tools may improve perceived responsiveness, they also risk diminishing trust when perceived as invasive or manipulative (Lefkeli et al., 2024). The ethical deployment of technology thus becomes a crucial condition for trust enhancement.

The conceptual framework proposed in this study integrates these relationships into a cohesive model. It highlights how content marketing, brand authenticity, social media engagement, and UGC collectively build brand trust, which in turn fosters brand loyalty and strengthens purchase intention. Emotional value and technological innovation act as reinforcing mechanisms that enhance or moderate these connections.

Figure 1 - Conceptual framework – illustrating the role of brand trust in driving brand loyalty and purchase intention.



Source: Developed by the authors based on the systematic literature review

As shown in Figure 1, the proposed conceptual framework integrates these antecedents and moderators to explain how brand trust functions as a mediating mechanism between engagement strategies and consumer behavior outcomes—namely, brand loyalty and purchase intention (Chatzipanagiotou et al., 2019). Unlike previous models that isolate marketing variables, this framework emphasizes the interdependence of emotional, technological, and contextual factors. It also opens room for comparative exploration across platforms (e.g., global vs. regional streamers) and audiences (e.g., niche communities vs. mass-market consumers).

Importantly, this model is not intended as a universal blueprint. Its components and pathways should be viewed as context-sensitive, requiring empirical validation across different market types, user segments, and cultural environments. For instance, the relative influence of UGC versus content marketing may differ between emerging markets with high peer reliance and developed markets with established brand ecosystems.

Overall, this framework offers a more integrative and critically informed basis for analyzing trust-building strategies in digital streaming. It encourages future researchers to move beyond functional models toward a multidimensional understanding of how brand trust is formed, moderated, and operationalized in platform-mediated consumer relationships.

METHOD

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to comprehensively synthesize and analyze the role of brand trust in shaping brand loyalty and purchase intention within the digital streaming context. The SLR method allows for a rigorous, transparent, and replicable process that consolidates fragmented findings and provides a holistic understanding of the research topic (Moher et al., 2009; Vangeli et al., 2023).

Review Protocol and Design

The review process followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to ensure methodological rigor. The PRISMA framework involves four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. This structured approach enables systematic filtering of literature to include only the most relevant and high-quality studies.

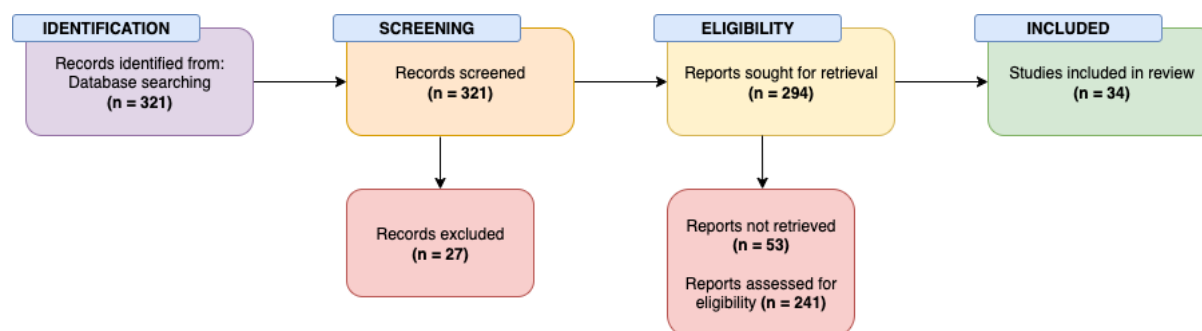
Database and Search Strategy

The primary database employed for this review was ScienceDirect, selected for its broad and multidisciplinary coverage of peer-reviewed journals in business, marketing, psychology, and digital technology. Although limiting the search to a single database may restrict the breadth of included sources, ScienceDirect offers a consolidated index of high-quality publications curated by Elsevier, which ensures relevance to the study's focus on digital consumer behavior and trust dynamics. This choice also aligns with prior systematic reviews in related fields that prioritize methodological consistency and data accessibility across a clearly defined corpus.

"brand trust" AND ("media industry" OR "streaming") AND ("brand loyalty" OR "purchase intention")

The initial query returned 321 articles. To enhance rigor and relevance, a set of predefined inclusion filters was applied: publication year (2015–2025), article type (original empirical research), subject areas (Business, Management & Accounting; Psychology; Social Sciences), language (English), and access type (open access and open archives). These filters were established to ensure both methodological transparency and full-text availability for thematic analysis. After applying all criteria, a total of 34 articles were retained for full-text review and synthesis.

Figure 2 - PRISMA Flow Diagram of Systematic Article Selection Process



Source: Adapted from Page et al. (2021), PRISMA 2020 statement

The review included peer-reviewed empirical studies that examined brand trust in digital or streaming contexts, either as a mediator or primary outcome. Only articles published in English were selected to maintain consistency in terminology and facilitate reliable thematic analysis, while acknowledging the possibility of language-related bias. Conceptual papers and studies lacking methodological transparency or full-text access were excluded.

Data Extraction and Analysis

Data from the final set of 34 articles were systematically extracted using a structured coding framework that covered:

- study objectives and contextual scope;
- key variables, including antecedents, mediators, and outcomes;
- methodological characteristics; and
- main findings related to brand trust, loyalty, and purchase intention.

A deductive thematic coding process was conducted to identify recurring conceptual patterns. To ensure consistency and mitigate subjectivity, the coding was independently performed by two researchers and subsequently compared. Inter-coder reliability was assessed using Cohen's Kappa, which yielded a coefficient of 0.81, indicating substantial agreement. Discrepancies were resolved through discussion until full consensus was reached. This process enhanced the credibility and dependability of the thematic synthesis. The final codes were then categorized into four thematic clusters based on conceptual proximity and frequency across the literature.

A thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and conceptual relationships. The studies were categorized into four thematic clusters:

1. Brand trust as a mediator between brand communication and purchase intention.
2. The role of social media engagement, content marketing, live streaming, and virtual communities in building trust.
3. The impact of brand authenticity, emotional value, and perceived sincerity on trust.
4. Contextual insights from emerging technologies such as metaverse, AI, and virtual influencers.

Quality Assessment

Each article was evaluated using PRISMA criteria to ensure methodological rigor and relevance. Criteria included clarity of research questions, appropriateness of research design, transparency of data collection and analysis, and validity of conclusions. Only articles meeting high methodological standards were included in the final synthesis.

Synthesis Approach

A narrative synthesis approach was used to integrate findings across diverse study contexts. Key insights were visualized through a conceptual framework diagram and a PRISMA flow diagram illustrating the article selection process. This systematic methodology ensured a comprehensive

understanding of the dynamic role of brand trust in the digital streaming industry, providing a solid foundation for the conceptual framework and practical recommendations proposed in this study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This systematic literature review analyzed 34 peer-reviewed articles to explore how brand trust functions as a mediating mechanism linking brand communication strategies with consumer loyalty and purchase intention in the digital streaming industry. A thematic synthesis approach was applied, using manual open coding to identify recurring constructs, followed by axial coding to group them into four key themes. Coding frequency, conceptual intensity, and consistency across studies served as criteria for theme selection.

Publication and Context Distribution

The selected articles showed a noticeable increase in publication volume between 2020 and 2025, reflecting the heightened relevance of trust-building strategies amidst a surge in digital media consumption during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Although most studies were conducted in Asia and Europe, the thematic patterns suggest varying regional emphasis. Asian-based studies often focused on technology-driven engagement, while European research tended to emphasize emotional value and authenticity. This regional divergence indicates the contextual sensitivity of trust formation, suggesting that universal strategies may not be uniformly effective.

Thematic Synthesis and Key Patterns

Based on the coded data, four dominant themes emerged that explain how brand trust develops and mediates behavioral outcomes: (1) trust as a mediator, (2) social and content-driven engagement, (3) brand authenticity and emotional value, and (4) technological enablers and digital trust. These themes capture both functional and affective mechanisms shaping trust across diverse consumer and platform contexts.

1. Brand trust as a mediator

Five studies explicitly positioned brand trust as a mediating construct between marketing communication strategies and behavioral outcomes. Communication efforts, whether through curated content, direct engagement, or experiential campaigns, were found to influence consumer decisions primarily through their impact on trust. Interestingly, the strength of this mediation varied by platform type: for example, transactional VOD platforms exhibited stronger links between trust and purchase intention, whereas subscription-based models showed more robust connections between trust and loyalty retention. This indicates that platform business models moderate how trust influences downstream behavior.

2. Social media, content marketing, and virtual communities

Seven studies Shih et al., (2024) emphasized the role of interactive content and community engagement in building trust. Content marketing and social media engagement were consistent trust drivers, but their impact varied across age segments and user familiarity (Wasif et al., 2024). Younger consumers, for instance, showed stronger trust responses to co-creation activities (e.g., polls, fan art), while older demographics responded more positively to expert-based or curated content. Studies also suggest that perceived interactivity and platform responsiveness are stronger predictors of trust than content volume alone.

Live streaming and virtual communities, especially those facilitating two-way communication, helped humanize brands and enhance immediacy. However, the efficacy of these tools was contingent on perceived authenticity; overly scripted or brand-dominated engagements often had neutral or negative effects on trust formation (Jiang et al., 2025).

3. Brand authenticity and emotional value

Seven articles (e.g., Papadopoulou et al., 2023) highlighted the pivotal role of emotional resonance and perceived sincerity in trust-building. Authenticity was particularly valued in regions with high skepticism toward corporate messaging, such as Western Europe and urban North America. Emotional cues such as brand love, transparency, and ethical conduct served as resilience factors—strengthening consumer forgiveness in cases of minor service failures (Ata & Tılfarlıoğlu, 2024; Saracevic & Schlegelmilch, 2024).

Interestingly, cultural orientation also influenced emotional interpretations. In collectivist societies, authenticity was more strongly associated with value congruence (alignment with social or religious norms), whereas in individualist cultures it was more often linked to personal identity fit.

4. Technological innovations and digital trust (Farha et al., 2024)

Fifteen studies investigated how AI personalization, metaverse experiences, and virtual influencers influence brand trust (Park & Huh, 2024; Rizvi & Zarifis, 2024). While immersive technologies often enhanced perceived relevance and responsiveness, their effects on trust were not uniformly positive. Consumer awareness of AI presence was a critical factor; undisclosed algorithmic decisions or excessive automation reduced trust, particularly among privacy-conscious users.

Virtual influencers generated mixed results: they performed well in entertainment and fashion domains but were less effective in contexts requiring perceived expertise or realism (Huang et al., 2024). These findings underscore the importance of transparency and ethical signaling in technology-mediated interactions.

Integrated Conceptual Insights

Synthesizing these themes reveals a coherent pattern: brand trust consistently emerges as the key mediator between various brand engagement activities and consumer behavioral outcomes. The combination of functional strategies (e.g., content marketing, UGC) and emotional factors (e.g., authenticity, brand love) works synergistically to build robust trust foundations.

Table 1. Thematic coding matrix: antecedents and dimensions of brand trust in streaming services

Description	Sample Codes Used	Frq	Regional Focus	Platform Types	Key Demographics
Brand Trust as a Mediator	trust-building mechanism, mediation, communication impact	5	Asia, Europe	All (VOD, subscription)	General population
Social Media, Content Marketing, and Communities	eWOM, co-creation, virtual community, live interaction	7	Asia, Latin America	Social platforms, Streaming	Gen Z, digital natives
Brand Authenticity and Emotional Value	brand love, perceived sincerity, emotional bonding, storytelling	7	Western Europe, North America	SVoD, music, podcasting	Millennials, individualist cultures
Technological Innovations and Digital Trust	AI, metaverse, gamification, virtual influencers, transparency	15	Mixed-global	Immersive/int eractive platforms	Mixed: youth + digital migrants

(Source: Author's analysis based on 34 selected SLR articles)

This matrix illustrates not only the convergence of themes across geographic and technological boundaries, but also the contextual variations that future empirical studies should address. For example, while AI and metaverse elements are discussed globally, their ethical reception varies significantly between North American and Southeast Asian consumers. Similarly, emotional bonding and authenticity resonate more strongly in individualist cultures (e.g., North America, Europe) compared to collectivist settings, where community validation via UGC plays a more dominant role (Tran & Hoang, 2024). These findings validate the need to adapt trust-building strategies based on regional digital maturity, cultural values, and consumer psychographics.

Furthermore, technological innovations act as amplifiers, enhancing the impact of these strategies when executed transparently and ethically. This integrated understanding supports the proposition that brand trust is not merely an isolated outcome but an essential mechanism that shapes long-term loyalty and drives repeat purchase intentions in digital streaming contexts.

The proposed conceptual framework (illustrated in Figure 1) integrates these factors, demonstrating the pathways from marketing strategies as well as emotional and technological enablers to brand trust, which then influences brand loyalty and purchase intention. This framework addresses a critical gap in the literature by consolidating previously fragmented insights into a comprehensive model that can guide future research and managerial practice.

Table 2 provides a concise summary of the four key themes identified from the systematic review, outlining the antecedents and mechanisms that drive brand trust. This summary distills complex and multidimensional insights into an accessible overview, making it easier to understand how each thematic area contributes to strengthening brand trust and its downstream effects.

Table 2. Summary of key themes and their relevance to brand trust

Themes	Key Insights	Relevance to Brand Trust
Brand trust as a mediator	Brand trust serves as a central mediator linking marketing communication strategies to brand loyalty and purchase intention.	Strengthens the understanding of trust as an active mechanism, not just an outcome.
Social media, content marketing, and virtual communities	Social media engagement, content marketing, and virtual brand communities enhance transparency, interaction, and consumer participation.	Build perceived authenticity and deepen emotional connections, which directly reinforce trust.
Brand authenticity and emotional value	Authentic messaging and emotional factors (e.g., brand love, perceived sincerity) build psychological bonds and foster forgiveness in crises.	Position trust as an emotional foundation that drives long-term loyalty beyond functional benefits.
Technological innovations and digital trust (Ünal & Köksal-Tuncer, 2024)	AI personalization, live streaming, metaverse experiences, and virtual influencers create immersive, personalized interactions but require ethical transparency.	Act as amplifiers that can either strengthen or weaken trust depending on implementation quality and perceived sincerity.

Source: Developed by the authors based on the systematic literature review findings.

The information presented in Table 2 illustrates that each theme highlights a distinct but interrelated set of drivers that collectively shape brand trust. The combination of marketing strategies, social engagement, authenticity, emotional value, and technological innovations demonstrates that trust is built through both functional and emotional pathways. These insights confirm that brand trust serves not only as a transactional safeguard but also as a powerful relational asset that fosters long-term loyalty and encourages purchase intention. The interplay among these themes underscores the importance of adopting an integrated, multi-dimensional approach when designing strategies to cultivate and maintain consumer trust in digital streaming contexts.

The findings of this study reveal that brand trust acts as a central mediator linking content marketing, brand authenticity, social media engagement, and user-generated content to brand loyalty and purchase intention in the digital streaming industry. Content marketing and social media activities strengthen perceived transparency and credibility, while brand authenticity and emotional value deepen psychological connections and promote forgiveness in the event of brand failures. Technological innovations, such as AI-driven personalization, live streaming, and metaverse experiences, further enhance brand trust when implemented ethically and transparently (Kleopas & Folinas, 2023). Collectively, these insights demonstrate that brand trust is not merely a passive outcome but an active strategic asset that drives long-term consumer loyalty and purchasing behavior.

Theoretical Contributions

These findings reinforce and extend the Social Exchange Theory, which suggests that trust is essential for fostering strong, reciprocal relationships between consumers and brands. By

demonstrating how emotional, functional, and technological factors interact to build trust, this study proposes a comprehensive framework that integrates previously fragmented insights.

The integrative model developed in this study also aligns with Signaling Theory, which posits that brands send cues to consumers to communicate reliability and authenticity. In digital streaming contexts, transparent content, community interaction, and ethical technology use function as crucial signals that enhance trust and influence behavioral outcomes.

Furthermore, by synthesizing emotional value and technological innovation within a single conceptual framework, this study addresses a notable gap in the literature (Bargoni et al., 2023). It moves beyond examining these factors in isolation and emphasizes the dynamic interplay that underlies trust formation and sustenance in digital streaming services.

Comparison with Previous Studies

Previous studies have typically focused on individual dimensions of trust formation. For example, some emphasized content marketing's role in improving brand credibility, while others highlighted social media engagement as a tool for enhancing consumer interaction. Research on brand authenticity has shown that genuine communication fosters emotional bonds and increases consumer forgiveness. Technological innovations have also been examined independently, often highlighting their potential for enhancing personalization and engagement.

This study integrates these previously separate insights, demonstrating that combining content quality, authenticity, social engagement, and ethical technology use generates a synergistic effect that significantly strengthens brand trust. This holistic approach offers a richer understanding of how to cultivate and maintain trust in highly competitive and dynamic digital environments.

Practical Contributions and Managerial Implications

From a practical perspective, the integrative framework offers actionable guidance for streaming platforms and digital content providers. First, brands should prioritize authentic, high-quality content that reflects transparency and aligns with consumer values. This approach not only improves brand credibility but also nurtures emotional connections.

Second, fostering active social media engagement and encouraging user-generated content are critical for transforming consumers from passive viewers into active brand advocates. These activities create a sense of ownership and belonging, further reinforcing trust.

Third, while technological innovations such as AI personalization and metaverse experiences can significantly enhance engagement, their implementation must be transparent and ethically sound. Clear communication about data use and privacy protections is essential to prevent consumer skepticism and potential trust erosion.

Fourth, investing in emotional marketing strategies to build brand love and deeper psychological bonds can offer brands a competitive edge. Emotional loyalty is more enduring than transactional loyalty, providing resilience against market shifts and competitive threats.

To translate thematic insights into practical strategies, Table 3 summarizes the managerial implications of each key theme identified in this review.

Table 3. Managerial implications of key themes identified in the review

Theme	Managerial Implications
Brand trust as mediator	Strengthen content authenticity and maintain transparent communication to reinforce long-term loyalty and reduce churn.
Social media & UGC	Develop interactive campaigns and encourage user-generated content to foster community belonging and active brand advocacy.
Brand authenticity	Invest in consistent emotional storytelling and authentic brand messaging to create deeper psychological connections.
Technological innovations	Implement AI-driven personalization and immersive technologies transparently and ethically to enhance consumer trust.

Source: Developed by the authors based on the systematic literature review findings

As presented in Table 3, the themes provide actionable guidance for managers aiming to cultivate brand trust and enhance loyalty. By aligning these strategies with consumer expectations and technological developments, brands can strengthen their market positioning and achieve sustained competitive advantage.

Challenges and Barriers to Implementation

Despite its strategic advantages, implementing a trust-centered model presents several challenges. Consumer skepticism toward technological innovations, especially concerning data privacy and AI manipulation, remains a significant barrier. Moreover, developing and maintaining high-quality content and active engagement strategies require substantial resources and continuous investment.

Cultural differences may also influence consumer perceptions of authenticity and trust, making it necessary for brands to tailor their strategies to regional and demographic contexts. Additionally, rapidly evolving technology landscapes create uncertainty, requiring brands to adapt quickly while maintaining consistent and ethical practices.

Future Research Directions

Future research should empirically validate the proposed integrative framework through quantitative studies and longitudinal analyses to understand how trust evolves over time. Cross-cultural studies can explore variations in trust formation mechanisms across different regions, providing insights for global branding strategies.

Furthermore, qualitative investigations focusing on consumer perceptions of authenticity, emotional value, and ethical technology use would add depth to the understanding of trust dynamics. Exploring the psychological underpinnings of consumer responses to AI and immersive

technologies, for example, could provide valuable insights for developing more human-centered digital strategies. Table 4 outlines the key research gaps identified through this review along with recommended future research directions to advance the field.

Table 4. Identified Research Gaps and Future Directions

Identified Gap	Future Research Directions
Limited cross-cultural analysis	Conduct cross-country comparative studies to understand cultural variations in trust formation and loyalty.
Lack of longitudinal studies	Employ longitudinal designs to explore the evolution of trust and its long-term effects on loyalty and purchase intention.
Scarcity of empirical validation	Empirically test and validate the proposed conceptual framework across different digital contexts.
Limited behavioral insights	Integrate behavioral and psychological approaches to deepen understanding of trust mechanisms and consumer decision-making.

Source: Developed by the authors based on the systematic literature review findings.

Strengths and Limitations

A key strength of this study lies in its comprehensive and systematic synthesis of recent literature, following a rigorous SLR protocol. The thematic synthesis approach provides a nuanced understanding of how multiple factors interact to build brand trust in digital streaming contexts.

However, certain limitations exist. The reliance on a single database may have excluded relevant studies indexed elsewhere, and the focus on English-language articles introduces potential publication bias. Additionally, the predominance of cross-sectional studies limits insights into causal relationships and long-term trust development.

Despite these limitations, this study offers a robust foundation for advancing theoretical and practical knowledge on brand trust in the digital streaming industry. The proposed framework provides a strategic roadmap for both academics and practitioners seeking to understand and leverage trust as a critical driver of loyalty and purchase behavior.

CONCLUSION

This review emphasizes brand trust as a dynamic mediator connecting various engagement strategies—content marketing, brand authenticity, social media interaction, and user-generated content—with consumer loyalty and purchase intention in digital streaming contexts. Synthesizing 34 peer-reviewed articles using the PRISMA-guided SLR method, this study offers an integrative framework that positions trust not merely as an outcome but as a strategic lever influencing behavioral commitment.

Theoretically, this review contributes by unifying previously fragmented constructs into a cohesive model, highlighting how emotional value, co-creation, and technological transparency converge in shaping trust. Importantly, this trust-building process varies across platform types, cultural regions, and generational cohorts—indicating that trust is not universally perceived, but contextually constructed.

Practically, the findings suggest that platforms must go beyond functional service delivery by cultivating authentic narratives, transparent personalization, and participatory communities. These approaches should be tailored to regional expectations (e.g., privacy sensitivity in Europe vs. co-creation emphasis in Asia) and platform formats (e.g., SVOD vs. social streaming).

This study, however, is limited by reliance on secondary sources, English-language bias, and conceptual scope. Future empirical research should test this framework across diverse cultures, using mixed-methods or experimental approaches to examine causality and long-term trust dynamics.

Ultimately, this review provides a nuanced lens through which digital platforms can design human-centered, trust-driven strategies, reinforcing loyalty amid rising technological and ethical complexities.

Several recommendations can be proposed to guide practitioners, policymakers, and future researchers in effectively implementing trust-centered strategies in the digital streaming industry. These recommendations aim to translate the conceptual insights into actionable steps that can foster stronger consumer relationships and drive sustainable growth.

1. Practical Recommendations for Streaming Platforms

- Integrate authentic, emotionally driven narratives into content strategies to build deeper psychological connections and reinforce brand values.
- Encourage user-generated content and community interaction to transform consumers into active brand ambassadors and foster a sense of belonging.
- Implement AI and technological innovations transparently and ethically, ensuring consumers understand data usage and feel secure in their interactions.
- Develop continuous consumer education initiatives to improve digital literacy and increase comfort with emerging technologies.

2. Policy Recommendations

- Develop regulatory frameworks that emphasize data transparency, consumer privacy, and ethical technology adoption in digital marketing practices.
- Provide incentives for platforms adopting trust-centered strategies, such as grants or tax benefits for initiatives that strengthen consumer protection and ethical engagement.
- Support cross-sector collaborations to enhance digital infrastructure, enabling broader reach and inclusive access to streaming services.

3. Theoretical and Research Recommendations

- Conduct empirical studies to test and validate the proposed integrative framework across different cultural and market contexts.
- Undertake longitudinal research to examine how trust-building strategies influence consumer loyalty and purchase behavior over time.
- Explore comparative cross-country analyses to understand regional differences in trust perceptions and responses to digital engagement.

- Incorporate psychological and behavioral perspectives to uncover deeper consumer motivations and emotional responses to digital brand interactions.

Integrating content marketing, authenticity, social media engagement, and technological innovations is not merely an optional strategy but an essential direction for streaming platforms seeking to build lasting brand equity and foster resilient consumer relationships. By adopting this integrative trust-centered framework, streaming platforms can evolve into more human-centric brands that simultaneously deliver entertainment value and build strong, enduring connections with their audiences. Future empirical research and supportive policy measures will be crucial to realize this potential and strengthen the industry's role in shaping positive digital consumer experiences

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