

# Bibliometrics of Brand-related Social Media Content

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## ABSTRACT

### Keywords:

Social media marketing,  
Brand-related social media content,  
Firm-generated content,  
User-generated content,  
Bibliometric analysis.

This study presents bibliometric analysis of brand-related content on social media. By filtering by topic in the WOS database, publications between 2000 and 2021 on two types of social media content, firm-generated content (FGC) and user-generated content (UGC), are examined. For FGC, 47 articles in the database are reviewed, while 3502 articles are included in the analysis for UGC. The research results found that while the FGC studies of the researchers mainly were "Business," the UGC articles were "Computer Science Information Systems" predominantly. In addition, the journal that gives the most place to studies with the FGC topic is the Journal of Marketing. On the other hand, the journals New Media & Society and Sustainability published 46 articles each for UGC studies. As a result of the co-word network analysis, although there were five themes in the map of the FGC articles, more than ten themes were found in the map of the UGC articles. The research results are expected to shed light on researchers who will work on brand-related social media content in the following years.

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## 1. Introduction

One of the most important factors that changed our lives in the "information age" we live in has been that technology and, therefore the new opportunities it provides have become a part of our daily lives and routines over time (Choi et al., 2016). Many technologies, such as wearable technologies that even only dreamed of seeing in science fiction or social media platforms that allow simultaneous content sharing, have surrounded our lives in all aspects. So much so that today, as of July 2022, around five billion people worldwide have an internet connection, while approximately 4.7 billion of these people with an internet connection have personal accounts on social media platforms, which is one of the new media tools (Statista, 2022). In the last few decades, thanks to the dizzying changes and developments in information and communication technologies, individuals living in society have been consciously or unconsciously undergoing a technological transformation, trying to adapt to the era they live in, in order to benefit from these benefits that make their lives easier in many areas and not to fall behind social norms.

Social media, one of the most familiar concepts in which the information age impacts daily and business life, is used intensively by end users. Corporate users, especially businesses and government organizations, use social media more intensely. For instance, in addition to strengthening their corporate identities (Vardaman et al., 2018), businesses use social media to promote their products and

to carry out marketing activities with motivations such as influencing consumer behavior (Kim & Ko, 2012; Alalwan, 2018; Jacobson et al., 2020). Social media, which emerged with the help of Web 2.0, also known as the "web of human" (Coşan, 2022), dramatically affects the traditional marketing approach, while the relations between marketing practitioners and stakeholders are changing with social media. In marketing strategies, the power used by marketing practitioners is now shared with consumers on social media. In the era of "pro-am" framed by Anderson (2008) to express that professionals and amateurs can do the same tasks, while consumers as social media users can exchange information by communicating and interacting with each other about the products and services offered to them in the democratic environment provided by social media. It also forces companies to adapt their traditional marketing methods to this new market (Ertemel & Ammoura, 2016).

Although the creation and dissemination of content have been constant for hundreds of years, the ordinary consumer's potential to communicate and influence a broad audience has only recently become accessible with the advent of Web 2.0 technologies (Daugherty et al., 2008). According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), "the ideological overlapping technologically with the Web 2.0 revolution" social media such as Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, Tiktok and Meta content on different platforms in order to interact with businesses, their customers and potential customers, to increase brand awareness and finally to affect consumer

Review Article

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behavior and it produces and publishes content on its platforms (Godey et al., 2016; Yadav & Rahman, 2017). The content on social media, which has 4.74 billion users worldwide (Kepios, 2022) as of October 2022, is not only produced by the owned media, and social media users can also generate social media content about products, services, brands, people and destinations (Li & Bernoff, 2011). The content on social media platforms is divided into two: firm-generated content and user-generated content (Dedeoğlu et al., 2020). Briefly, the creation of social media content by consumers about a product, service, destination, or brand is called user-generated content, while the company's professional team creating social media content is called firm-generated content. For example, a domestic or foreign tourist's blog or social media account creating content about Türkiye as a tourism destination is an example of user-generated content. On the other hand, the creation of content about Türkiye by the GoTürkiye official account, managed by professionals, is firm-generated.

This paper employs a bibliometric analysis of the studies published in the journals in the WOS database between 2000 and 2021, the topic of which is firm-generated and user-generated content. The study's main purpose is to unveil the progress of the studies on firm-generated and user-generated content over the years and to co-word analyses. Although studies on social media as a more inclusive concept have increased in the last decade, the limited number of empirical and theoretical studies on social media marketing and brand-related content types in social media is the research gap that this study aims to fill. The research results will shed light on the researchers who intend to work on brand-related social media content in the following years.

## 2. Theoretical Background

Lovett and Staelin (2016) suggest that the types of content in social media consist of three classes owned, paid, and earned media, depending on the generator of the content. Similarly, in previous studies on social media marketing, two types of brand-related content are treated as firm-generated and user-generated (Luca, 2015; Akyol & Arica, 2015; Kim & Johnson, 2016; Poulis et al., 2019). The main difference between user-generated content that creates an echovese in terms of brand communication (Hewett et al., 2016) and FGC, which directly serves the social media marketing activities of the business (Colicev et al., 2019), is the level of control of the brand over the content (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

FGC is characterized as communication under the control of a brand, whether it is a brand representative or a marketing practitioner (Bruhn et al., 2012). Companies create any form of information communication to be shared directly through their official social medias (Laroche et al., 2013). Mangold and Faulds (2009) argue that FGC is essential to the firm's promotion components. Brands can use the content created by the company for brand equity

components such as recognition, recall, and creation and development of brand image on social media. In the content created by the company, the sensitivity of the message (sentiment), the users' response to the messages, and the general tendencies of the users toward social media should be taken into account (Kumar et al., 2016). It is important to note that FGC relies on consumer response in several formats: they can "like" the FGC and be invited to comment or share posts. A brand evaluation may increase or decrease according to consumers' positive or negative reactions toward the content (Ceballos et al., 2016; Kumar et al., 2016). For example, FGC activates users' reactions through engaging content (Araujo & Neijens, 2012), increase brand loyalty by increasing the sense of belonging and loyalty, and encourages positive attitudes and purchasing behavior. The purpose of FGC is to open a communication avenue between the brand and an emerging market in the form of new customers, as well as to offer topics of conversation that can build relationships (UGC) among consumers (Ceballos et al., 2016)

UGC refers to media content created or produced by the general public, not paid professionals (Daugherty et al., 2008). Brand-related content that the business cannot control (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) the tone, time frame, or frequency of content sharing is communication created entirely and directly by users outside the control of the brand (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). Having the opportunity to create content beyond the control of the business encourages consumers to produce content such as reviews, recommendations, referrals, and ratings. Users can produce content on social media with motivations such as promoting themselves, enjoying, or changing other consumers' perceptions of the brand (Krumm et al., 2008). UGC has become a new source of valuable information for other consumers and companies (Merz et al., 2018). Additionally, Muñiz and Schau (2011) argue that user-generated content and electronic word-of-mouth are separate concepts, although they are similar. Accordingly, user-generated content expresses only user-created content itself, while electronic word-of-mouth refers to users creating content themselves and disseminating content created by the company.

A few bibliometric studies have recently been done on social media marketing. Knoll (2016) reviewed 51 articles on social media advertising and listed the seven emerging themes: usage, attitudes, targeting, user-generated content, electronic word of mouth, consumer-generated content, and other advertising effects. In another study, Leung et al. (2017) combined two bibliometric analysis methods to provide a systematic and holistic review of the academic literature on social media. They reviewed a total of 406 publications on social media from 16 business and hospitality/tourism journals between 2007 and 2016. As a result of the co-citation analysis they applied, they expressed word-of-mouth marketing as the primary theoretical basis of social media research in the business literature. On the other hand, Zeren and Kaya (2020)

subjected 334 studies on digital marketing in TR Index and National Dissertation and Thesis Database to bibliometric analysis. As a result of the research has reported that the most frequently used keywords are digital marketing, social media marketing, mobile marketing, digital content marketing, electronic word of mouth, and phenomenon marketing. The researchers also reported on the data collection methods, data analysis methods, and sample sizes of the 334 studies they selected according to these specific criteria. Nusair (2020) conducted a bibliometric analysis of the social media literature in his research. This article examined hospitality and tourism literature studies in three sub-periods (2002-2006, 2007-2012 and 2002-2006, 2007-2012, and 2013-2018). While the jump in the number of contexts, platforms, methodological approaches, and research implications examined between 2007 and 2012, they pointed out the beginning of social media as a new phenomenon, while they stated that one of the leading contributors to social media research between 2017 and 2018 was the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management. Akyildiz and Yilmaz (2020) conducted a bibliometric analysis of articles from the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection database with the Science Mapping Analysis Tool (SciMAT) program, using the science mapping method. Similar to the Nusair (2020) study, in this study, the article data were analyzed comparatively in three five-year periods "2005-2009", "2010-2014" and "2015-2019" in order to evaluate the development in the field of social media based on periods. As a result of the analysis, it has been determined that the number of articles published in the field of social media has increased significantly in the last period; the USA is the country with the highest number of publications, the engine theme of the "2005-2009" period is "social media," and the main engine themes of the "2010-2014" period are "social media," "participation," "word of mouth marketing," "network," "social media," "word of mouth marketing," "political participation" and "adolescents" were the primary engine themes of the "2015-2019" period.

### 3. Methodology

This study aims to determine the bibliometrics of the two primary content types in social media literature articles. The bibliographic analysis method is the statistical analysis of studies conducted on a subject in the current literature (Pritchard, 1969). The bibliographic analysis is actually a scientific mapping approach in which the relationships between various studies are revealed (Ercan, 2022). In the research, bibliometric analysis is based on the analysis of the contents of the studies carried out on any topic. The papers examined within the scope of this study are obtained from the Web of Science (WOS) database following the limitations of the current research, and the data are analyzed using document review and analysis methods (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). The procedure in this study followed Weber's (1990) protocol is shown in Figure 1.

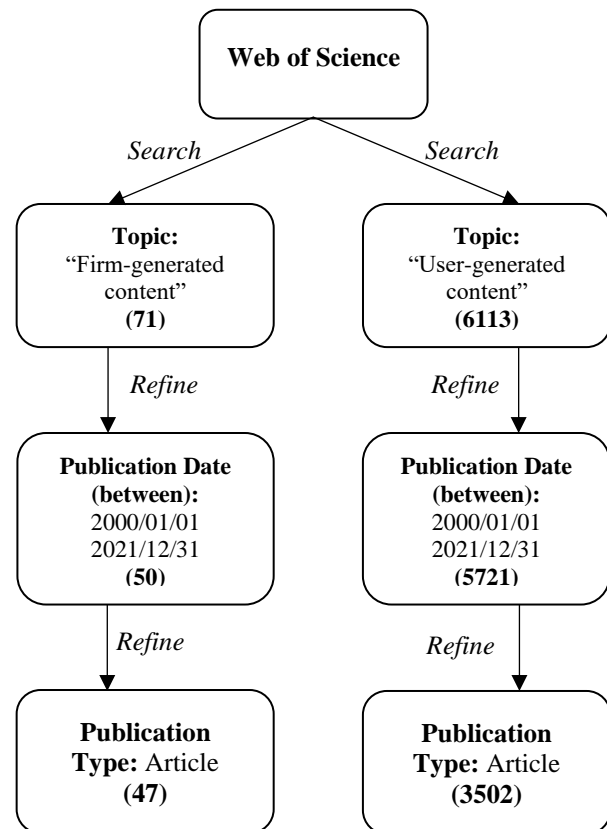


Figure 1. Schema of the study

Source: Elaborated by Autor

As shown in Figure 1, to examine "firm-generated content" and "user-generated content" in social media, the concept was first searched by topic separately in the WOS database. Subsequently, the publications between 2000/01/01 and 2021/12/31 were refined. In the next stage, a new refinement was made by choosing "article" as the publication type.

### 4. Research Findings

Seventy-one publications were found when the WOS database was searched with the "firm-generated content" by topic. As 71 articles were refined with 2000/01/01 and 2021/12/31, 20 were removed from the list. It should be clarified that although there were 21 publications on FGC before the year 2000, these 21 articles found by the WOS search engine did not address FGC as it is considered within the scope of this study. Three more articles were removed from the pool when refined by the publication type. The number of publications and citations by years of FGC studies, which consists of 47 articles in total, is shown in Figure 2.

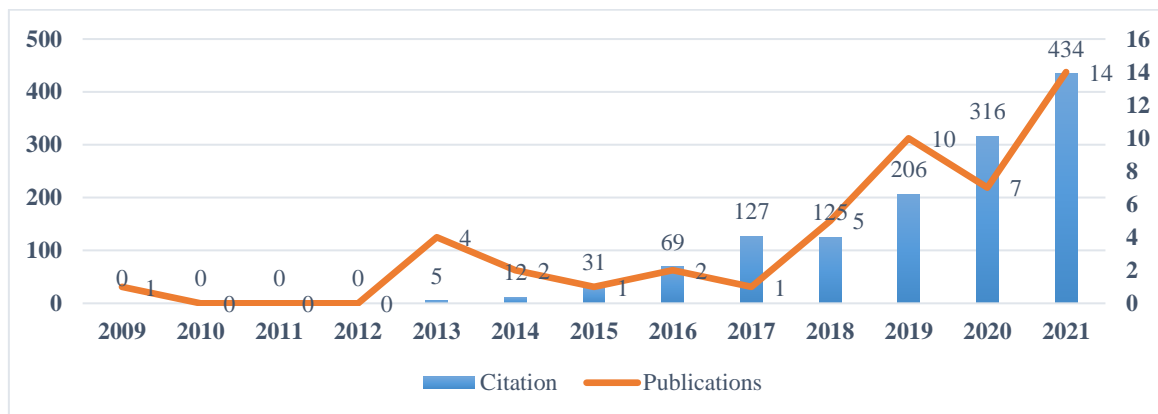


Figure 2. Progression of FGC Publications by Years

Source: Web of Science

It is seen in Figure 2 that the first study on FGC was published in 2009, and there has been no publication on this topic for about five years since the first publication. The number of FGC studies has been increasing since 2013 (except 2018), and the number of citations for these studies has also increased cumulatively. The general statistics regarding the articles published in the selected years are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of FGC Articles

Date Range	2000-01-01 / 2021-12-31
First Article (year)	2009
Number of Articles	47
Number of Citing Articles	1531
Number of Citing Articles (without self-citation)	1506
Times Cited	1699
Times Cited (without self-citation)	1652
Times Cited (avarege per item)	36.15
H-Index	19.0
Top 5 fields with the highest number of articles	Business (22), Management (15), Information Science Library Science (6), Computer Science Information Systems (4), Economics (4)

Source: Web of Science

As shown in Table 1, the first study with the FGC topic was published in 2009. The H-Index of 47 selected articles is 19.0. As of November 21, 2022, citations to these articles (without self-citation) are over 1500. Most of the paper published in FGC is on business and management. Table 2 shows the top 5 journals in which FGC articles were published.

Table 2. Top Five Journal for FGC Articles

Journal	Number of Article	Impact Factor
Journal of Marketing	4	15.360
Information Systems Research	3	5.490
Journal of Interactive Marketing	2	11.318
Current Issues in Tourism	2	7.578
Journal of Electronic Commerce Research	2	4.0

Source: Web of Science

In Table 2, it is seen that two of the five journals in which FGC articles are published the most are marketing-themed journals with a relatively high impact factor. Figure 3 shows the co-word analysis of words found together at least twice in FGC studies.

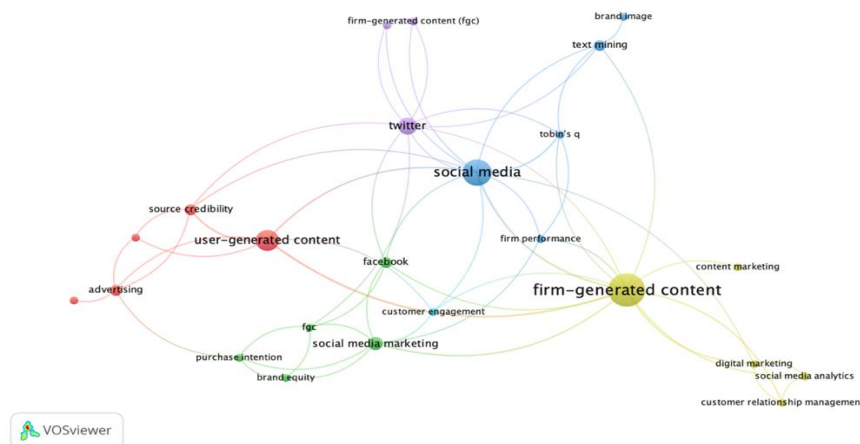


Figure 3. Visualized co-word network of FGC Articles

Source: Web of Science

Five clusters were found in the visualized co-word network, which consists of words that appear together at least twice in FGC publications. These five clusters represent each theme. The first of the interconnected clusters, the green cluster, represents studies examining the impact of social media marketing activities on consumers' attitudes and behaviors through FGC. The yellow-colored cluster represents articles on social media analytics, consistent with customer relationship management, often based on quantitative data. The cluster of studies in blue mainly includes text mining and Tobin's q, a performance measure representing studies based on computational knowledge, similar to the clustered yellow. The red-colored cluster represented by the FGC topic studies conducted in the past years are articles related to the context of advertising and source credibility. Finally, the purple-colored cluster is the set of studies on FGC via Twitter. The word-cloud consisting of author keywords in FGC articles is shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Word-Cloud for FGC (by Article Keywords)

Source: Web of Science

As the WOS database was searched with the topic "user-generated content," 6113 publications were found. When 6113 publications were restricted to 2000/01/01 and 2021/12/31, 5721 publications remained. As stated in the findings regarding FGC, it should be clarified that although there were 392 publications on UGC before the year 2000, these 392 articles found by the WOS search engine did not address UGC as it was already considered within the scope of this study. When refined with the Publication type, 2219 more articles were removed from the pool. The number of publications and citations by years of UGC studies, which consists of 3502 articles in total, is shown in Figure 5.

As shown in Figure 5 that the first study on UGC was published in 2001. The number of UGC studies has been increasing steadily since 2006, and the number of citations of these studies has also increased cumulatively. The descriptive statistics regarding the articles published in the selected years are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of UGC Articles

Date Range	2000-01-01 / 2021-12-31
First Article (year)	2001
Number of Article	3502
Number of Citing Articles	61827
Number of Citing Articles (without self-citation)	59823
Times Cited	94819
Times Cited (without self-citation)	87720
Times Cited (avarege per item)	27.08
H-Index	128
Top 5 fields with the highest number of articles	Computer Science Information Systems (664), Communication (612), Business (451), Information Science Library Science (346), Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism (336)

Source: Web of Science

The year of the first study on the UGC topic was published in 2001. The H-Index of 3502 selected articles is 27.08. As of November 21, 2022, the number of citations to these articles (without self-citation) is around 90,000. Most of the studies in the field of UGC are in computer science information systems and communication. Figure 6 shows the co-word analysis of words found together at least twice in UGC articles. Table 4 represents the five journals that have published the most UGC articles.

Table 4. Top Five Journal for UGC Articles

Journal	Number of Article	Impact Factor
New Media & Society	46	5.310
Sustainability	46	4.089
Journalism Practice	40	2.328
Multimedia Tools and Applications	37	2.577
Information Systems Research	36	5.490

Source: Web of Science

Table 4 shows that in three of the five journals in which UGC articles are published, most are journals on media

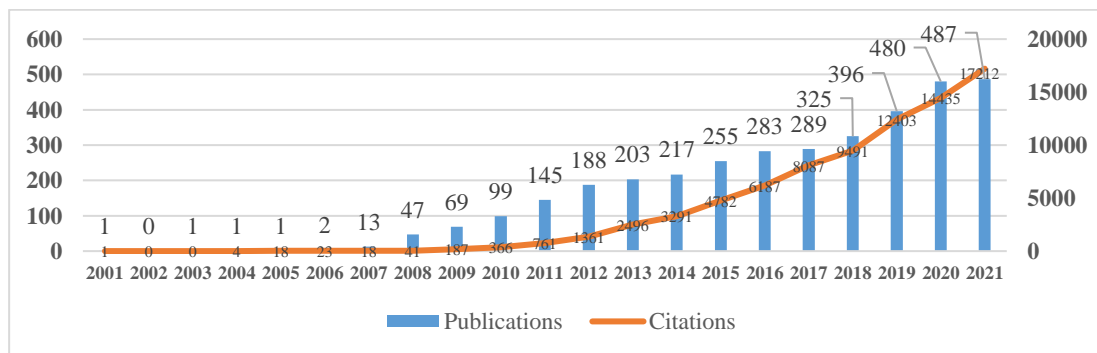
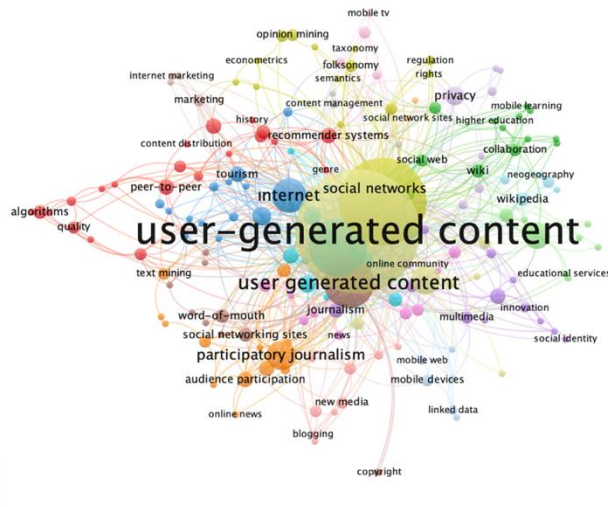


Figure 5. Progression of UGC Publications by Years

Source: Web of Science



**Figure 6. Visualized co-word network of UGC**

Source: Web of Science

and journalism. Figure 6 shows the co-word analysis of words found together at least twice in studies with the UGC.

In the visualized co-word network of words that appear together at least twice in UGC publications, minimal clusters were found, each compassing a different theme and context. The themes in the co-word map of the previous year's papers made with the UGC topic are composed of red, orange, blue, yellow, green, and purple colors. The articles in the red cluster represent marketing efforts made through peer-to-peer and communication generated with the help of algorithms. Studies in the orange cluster predominantly represent articles in new media and journalism. On the other hand, articles in yellow contain more socio-cultural concepts such as folksonomy and regulation rights. The studies in the green cluster are the articles that focus on the social and value co-creation of the web. Finally, the cluster in purple represents certain concepts, such as social identity creation through social media. The word cloud consisting of author keywords in UGC articles is shown in Figure 7.



**Figure 7. Word-Cloud for UGC (by Article Keywords)**

Source: Web of Science

## 5. Discussion and Implications

The current study focused on the types of content in social media to reveal the theoretical foundations and thematic development of social media research. One of the most important contributions of the study to the literature is the discussion of both firm-generated and user-generated content in social media. The first research results are related to the number of publications and citations on the specified dates. When the descriptive statistics summarized in Figure 2 and Figure 5 are compared, it can be seen that the number of publications and citations on FGC is very, very low compared to UGC. This finding favors researchers from previous years who prefer social media marketing, unintentionally and amateurishly performed by consumers as brand ambassadors, to brands as an operational process. In other words, researchers focus more on consumers' content related to the brand. Although this preference of the researchers is understandable, the massive difference between FGC and UGC studies implies that researchers have underestimated FGC. Clearly, in co-word networks (see Figure 3 and Figure 6), the topics and fields on FGC are poorer than UGC. Despite its ability to increase the attractiveness of brands, especially by creating an electronic WOM, UGC may also lead to situations such as disinformation or defamation of the brand. Therefore, the social media marketing activities carried out by the brands themselves are worth examining by the researchers.

## 6. Conclusion

This study systematically examined the types of social media content between 2000-2021. However, it tries to compare two concepts that have never been compared before fundamentally; it is not exempt from certain limitations. First, the articles reviewed in this study were limited to the WOS database. For future research, articles

may be selected in EBSCOhost, Science Direct, or TR INDEX. Another limitation of this study is the examination of only publications in the English and the articles. From this point of view, researchers may focus on different languages and publication types in the coming years. The research examined two concepts (FGC and UGC) for the first time and from introductory bibliometric analysis. Thus, researchers can benefit from methods that offer different and deeper insights, such as source effect and co-citation analysis. On the other hand, researchers are advised to review using FGC and SMM (social media marketing) or UGC and SMM using "and" / "or." Since this research carries the responsibility of a literature review, it is recommended that researchers who will work on social media content for the first time in the following years focus on FGC. Because instead of approaching the user-generated content in the form of numerical/computer science, where methods such as deep learning and artificial intelligence are used, it is recommended that FGC conduct research through quantitative and/or qualitative research from the perspectives of consumers. In addition to theoretical recommendations, some practical recommendations can be made based on the research findings. First of all, it is a very cardinal indicator for marketing practitioners that the previous year's studies on social media content were predominantly on the topic of UGC. Namely, it is recommended that brands that want to contact social media users more deeply as potential customers of their brands should be encouraged to produce content on behalf of the brand, like a brand advocate, instead of generating content themselves. For instance, marketing practitioners who carry out the marketing activities of a particular destination can create memorial "walls" or "corners" to encourage visitors to share social media posts. Moreover, since brands that analyze their social media content with computer-based methods such as text mining may miss sentimental details, it is recommended that they get human resources support that can focus on semantic dimensions in content analysis.

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## INFO PAGE

### Bibliometrics of Brand-related Social Media Content

#### Abstract

This study presents bibliometric analysis of brand-related content on social media. By filtering by topic in the WOS database, publications between 2000 and 2021 on two types of social media content, firm-generated content (FGC) and user-generated content (UGC), are examined. For FGC, 47 articles in the database are reviewed, while 3502 articles are included in the analysis for UGC. The research results found that while the FGC studies of the researchers mainly were "Business," the UGC articles were "Computer Science Information Systems" predominantly. In addition, the journal that gives the most place to studies with the FGC topic is the Journal of Marketing. On the other hand, the journals New Media & Society and Sustainability published 46 articles each for UGC studies. As a result of the co-word network analysis, although there were five themes in the map of the FGC articles, more than ten themes were found in the map of the UGC articles. The research results are expected to shed light on researchers who will work on brand-related social media content in the following years.

**Keywords:** Social media marketing, Brand-related social media content , Firm-generated content, User-generated content, Bibliometric analysis

#### Authors

Full Name	Author contribution roles	Contribution rate
<b>Burak Yaprak:</b>	Conceptualism, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Visualization, Supervision, Project administration, Funding acquisition	100%

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**This paper does not required ethics committee report**

**Justification:** The methodology of this study does not require an ethics committee report.