

Master Thesis
In the master's program

International Corporate Communication and Media Management

at the University of Applied Sciences Neu-Ulm

**The Impact of Social Media Platforms on Consumer Purchasing Decisions for Precision
Technology Companies: A LinkedIn Case Study Analysis of Nordson EFD**

1st examiner: Professor Dr Wilke Hammerschmidt

Author: Zainab Omobolanle Tafa (Enrolment number: 332464)

Topic received: 01.01.2025

Date of submission: 01.06.2025

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the impact of LinkedIn marketing strategies on consumer purchasing decisions in the precision technology sector, using Nordson EFD as a case study. A qualitative research approach was adopted, using content analysis to examine secondary data sources, including Nordson EFD's LinkedIn campaigns (2021-2024), academic literature, industry reports, and company publications.

The study identifies three key themes: Content Strategy and Professional Engagement, Metrics and Sales Influence, and Platform Challenges and Optimization. Findings reveal that educational content (e.g., case studies, whitepapers) generates higher engagement, while conversion-focused metrics, such as demo request click-throughs, strongly correlate with sales outcomes. Challenges include content saturation and the resource intensity of high-performing video content.

This analysis, informed by organizational data and academic research, demonstrates that strategic intervention is required to maximize LinkedIn's potential in B2B precision technology markets. The platform can significantly enhance rather than complicate purchasing decisions through optimized content governance, CRM-integrated analytics, and ethical engagement practices. The future of B2B social media marketing hinges on striking a balance between innovative platform features and the need for trustworthy, technically substantive communication.

To address existing gaps, the study recommends continued focus on: (1) privacy-respectful data utilization, (2) equitable access to platform tools, (3) governance-aligned performance measurement, and (4) ethical accountability in digital engagement. These pillars should form the foundation for LinkedIn marketing strategies in precision technology, ensuring alignment with industry-specific purchasing behaviors while fostering inclusive growth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE	4
INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	5
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	7
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	9
1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	9
1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS.....	9
1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY	10
1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	10
1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	11
CHAPTER TWO	12
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	12
2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	12
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	32
2.3 EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK	36
2.4 CONCLUSION	39
CHAPTER THREE	41
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	41
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	41
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN	41
3.3 RESEARCH METHOD: CONTENT ANALYSIS	42
3.4 DATA COLLECTION.....	43
3.5 DATA ANALYSIS	44
3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	47
3.7 CONCLUSION	48
CHAPTER FOUR	50
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION	50
4.0 INTRODUCTION.....	50
4.1 PRESENTATION OF DATA.....	50
4.2 CONNECTING THE CONTENT ANALYSIS WITH THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	54
4.3 CONCLUSION	56
CHAPTER FIVE	58
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION	58
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	58
5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	59
5.3 CONCLUSION	61
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	63
5.4 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	64
REFERENCES	65

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

With the rise of social networking sites, customers are increasingly engaged with businesses across various platforms. LinkedIn has become particularly important for B2B marketing enterprises, especially in the precision technology sector, where purchasing decisions are often made through complex decision-making processes. LinkedIn provides professional networking opportunities, enabling businesses to establish direct connections with potential customers and enhance their brand visibility. Targeted content and interactions ensure the quality and appropriateness of interactions, ultimately influencing purchasing decisions (LinkedIn, 2023).

LinkedIn has created a special avenue for building expertise, trust, and relationships between buyers and sellers in the precision technology industry. This is due to the highly technical nature of the products and the presence of multiple stakeholders in buying decisions. Nordson EFD is a leading company specializing in precision dispensing solutions. This section will serve as a perfect example of how one company can effectively utilize this channel to strategically communicate its value propositions. Examining how sponsored content, professional groups, and analytics can help Nordson EFD drive their target audience toward making a purchase (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Although LinkedIn is noted to have very high potential, there is a significant lack of empirical research focused on how it influences consumer purchasing decisions in niche markets such as precision technology. While general studies of social media marketing have identified platforms like LinkedIn as helpful in B2B contexts, the precision technology industry has unique needs that require a more specific investigation. This study examines how Nordson EFD's strategy on LinkedIn influences its customers' purchasing decisions.

Therefore, this research will analyze Nordson EFD's marketing strategy on LinkedIn, assess how this engagement influences customer purchasing behaviours, and provide recommendations on optimizing business engagement on LinkedIn for firms operating in the precision technology sector. This research is expected to be informative for marketers, as it articulately pursues a practical B2B social media approach for niche markets (Anjorin, Raji, & Olodo, 2024).

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Social media has revolutionized the marketing landscape, presenting new opportunities that were previously unimaginable. Companies can now connect with their customers instantly, making it a powerful tool for engagement and brand loyalty. For example, LinkedIn has become an integral part of many companies, particularly B2B organisations, enabling them to reach a wider audience and foster meaningful interactions. In the precision technology industry, professional networking on LinkedIn has become a crucial decision-making platform, involving numerous stakeholders and requiring meticulous attention to detail (Librarything, 2023).

With over 900 million users, LinkedIn is uniquely positioned to create a network where businesses and professionals can connect, share ideas, and build relationships. LinkedIn offers services like LinkedIn Pulse, professional networks, and sponsored content advertising, enabling companies to reach a targeted audience with relevant content. This precision is particularly suited for the technology industry, which is highly technologically advanced and specialised in products and services. The sector requires marketing strategies that effectively convey complex information and build trust with potential buyers (Grewal et al., 2015).

Precision technology industries encompass sectors such as aerospace, automotive, and medical devices, where products require highly specialized information and knowledge before purchase. The sectors face marketing challenges because a significant amount of information is needed, and multiple stakeholders are involved in the buying process. On the other hand, LinkedIn's professional environment is ideal for businesses to share in-depth product information, case studies, and thought leadership content that will help prospective buyers make intelligent buying decisions (Ahmad et al., 2022). Nordson EFD is a world leader in supplying high-precision fluid dispensing systems. Their marketing strategy directly addresses their target audience. The company utilizes LinkedIn to post relevant content, i.e., industry news, new product releases, and best practices. The firm creates value through the exchange of information. The effort to dominate the market enables the company to earn trust from its prospective consumers, a crucial factor in purchasing decisions for precision technology (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Nordson EFD also effectively utilizes LinkedIn for niche marketing. LinkedIn provides information about the roles, industries, and locations of the users, and Nordson EFD can use this to target

customers who are interested in their products. Targeting that is personalized not only makes content more relevant but also boosts engagement and pushes prospects further down the sales funnel (Yang, 2024).

Additionally, Nordson EFD is a member of several precision manufacturing and technology groups on LinkedIn. Through the groups, the company participates in discussions, shares its experiences, and provides insights to the target market on various forums. This positions the company as a thought leader in the industry, providing access to professional networks and enabling it to reach potential customers and maintain its market presence (Anjorin, Raji, & Olodo, 2024).

In other publications derived from the LinkedIn application, recent social media trends in consumer purchase behaviour have been noted. B2B purchasers continue to rely on social media as a primary source of information about suppliers and for evaluating potential new partners. Grewal et al. (2015) found that B2B customers use social media to assess a company's competencies, reputation, and product quality before initiating contact for purchasing. This reinforces the argument made by Ahmad et al. (2022) that LinkedIn is significant for precision technology firms in effectively conveying their value propositions.

LinkedIn plays a dual role in the purchasing decision making process. It is a platform that enables businesses to provide comprehensive product information, display customer feedback, and engage directly with potential buyers. Nordson EFD's use of LinkedIn to share case histories and product demonstrations helps address common questions. It reduces the perceived risk of purchasing high-dollar, complex technology, as highlighted by Yang (2024).

It also presents challenges for precision technology companies. With numerous businesses demanding creative content creation to capture attention, it's difficult to measure the direct impact of LinkedIn activities on sales outcomes. As Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) noted, most B2B purchases involve multiple touches from various sources and lengthy decision-making processes.

According to Anjorin, Raji, and Olodo (2024), LinkedIn analytics provide precise insights through engagement metrics. These metrics, refined strategies, and the illustration of the value of social efforts demonstrate the effectiveness of a business's content when executed in a marketing campaign. Tracking likes, comments, and shares helps companies to quantify the value of their content.

LinkedIn has emerged as a primary point of interaction for precision technology companies to connect with their interested audience and influence purchasing decisions. Ultimately, by leveraging focused content, professional interaction, and leadership principles, businesses can effectively drive growth and foster strong relationships. Since all digital platforms are characterized by long-term development, further research is needed to confirm that they provide insights into how they influence buying behaviours in such markets and are helpful to marketers in precision technology companies.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Integrating social media into the corporate environment has revolutionized how businesses engage with their target audiences in the B2B industry. Ahmad et al. (2022) found that targeted advertising and LinkedIn's professional network are the most effective platforms for connecting with decision-makers in complex markets, such as the precision technology sector. However, few empirical studies have explored how well LinkedIn facilitates purchasing decisions for buyers of precision technology. Remarkably, the knowledge about what resonates in this context remains limited, a gap that a company like Nordson EFD needs to address when trying to raise awareness and influence niche audiences on LinkedIn.

Precision technology purchases are characterized by their complexity, involving prolonged evaluations, multiple stakeholders, and significant investment. Unlike consumer goods, where purchase decisions can be influenced by emotional triggers or impulse buying, precision technology purchases are driven by technical specifications, performance outcomes, and long-term value. The decision-making process typically involves detailed research, comparisons, and consultations, making it imperative for companies to provide comprehensive and credible information to potential buyers (Grewal et al., 2015).

While much of the literature on social media marketing focuses on consumer goods and broader B2B markets, precision technology markets have received limited attention. While LinkedIn offers general benefits such as improved brand visibility and networking, evidence of its influence on purchasing decisions within specialised industries is scarce (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This knowledge gap

divides the attention of researchers, potentially hindering firms from capitalizing on the business growth opportunities that LinkedIn presents.

The effectiveness of LinkedIn marketing efforts can significantly influence the purchasing decisions of current and potential buyers. Traditional sales channels have easily traceable outcomes, but the impact on consumer behaviour is not straightforward. While likes, shares, and comments indicate audience engagement, according to Ahmad et al. (2022), they do not necessarily indicate purchase intent or conversion. In this regard, precision technology companies should conduct accurate studies of specific LinkedIn metrics that drive sales outcomes to refine their marketing strategies further.

Precision technology companies must develop a comprehensive LinkedIn strategy to meet the needs and preferences of their target audience. Some generic marketing approaches may be practical in broader B2B sectors, but they may not be as effective in engaging niche audiences that demand highly specialized information and personalized communication methods. Companies like Nordson EFD face the challenge of developing content that captures the audience's attention while providing the depth of information required to facilitate such complex purchasing decisions (Yang, 2024).

Another strategic challenge Nordson EFD faces is that the effectiveness of LinkedIn cannot be proven through empirical evidence. This inability to gauge certain activities associated with buying behaviour can lead to failure and poor resource use. Ultimately, this will hinder their ability to demonstrate a return on investment (ROI) from social media investments and optimize LinkedIn strategies, thereby limiting their potential for business growth (Anjorin, Raji, & Olodo, 2024).

This research gap should be filled so Nordson EFD and other companies can optimize their marketing activities on LinkedIn. This study aims to establish the relationship between LinkedIn engagement and consumer purchasing decisions, providing actionable insights to inform the development of targeted, data-driven marketing approaches. By identifying the LinkedIn engagement metrics linked to successful sales outcomes, the research will guide technology industry players in leveraging and optimizing their use of LinkedIn, as recommended by Grewal et al. (2015).

Utilizing LinkedIn in the marketing strategies of precision technology companies presents significant opportunities and challenges. While it is a unique channel to a business market, the fact that no empirical research has been conducted regarding its effect on purchasing within niche markets is

highly warranted. The results from the present study will, therefore, contribute significantly to narrowing the prevailing gap and enhancing the strategic use of LinkedIn in the precision technology setting, ultimately improving marketing results and fostering further business growth.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are some of the research questions that may help in solving the research problem:

- How does LinkedIn impact the purchasing decisions of Nordson EFD's target customers?
- What LinkedIn engagement metrics correlate with successful sales outcomes?
- What actionable strategies can Nordson EFD adopt to enhance its LinkedIn marketing impact?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The following are the study's objectives, which are closely aligned with the identified research problem of understanding the effect of LinkedIn on purchasing decisions within the precision technology industry using Nordson EFD as a case study. The objectives are:

- Analyzing Nordson EFD's LinkedIn marketing strategies.
- Evaluating LinkedIn engagement's influence on consumer purchasing decisions.
- Recommending best practices for LinkedIn optimization in the precision technology industry.

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H1: Application of specific marketing strategies on LinkedIn by Nordson EFD would yield a positive effect on the engagement level in the form of likes, shares, comments, and click-through rate for its target audience in the precision technology industry.

H2: There is a statistically significant positive relationship between LinkedIn engagement, as measured by likes, shares, comments, and click-through rate, and purchase decisions related to precision technology.

H3: Best practices in LinkedIn marketing strategies significantly help increase brand visibility, build trust, and improve conversion rates for precision technology industry players.

The hypotheses stated are derived by testing LinkedIn's cause-effect relationships and effectiveness as a marketing tool for driving purchasing decisions in a specific industry context.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research looks at the LinkedIn platform of Nordson EFD, a leading company specializing in precision technologies. The study's scope will encompass content strategy, engagement tactics, and advertising methods. The practical contribution of this channel in influencing customer buying decisions is assessed here based on the results provided by LinkedIn analytics, customer engagement, and sales data. This research will be grounded in the precision technology sector. A case study will be applied to Nordson EFD, and the findings could be relevant or usable for firms within similar industrial categories.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study could be a valuable contribution to academic research and industrial practice. It fills a gap in the literature by providing empirical evidence on LinkedIn's impact within niche B2B markets, particularly the precision technology sector. This study sheds light on the role of social media marketing in complex purchasing processes, contributing to a deeper understanding of the field. It also establishes a framework for future research in similar contexts.

This research would also guide marketers in leveraging LinkedIn for business outcomes within the precision technology verticals. By building trust in purchase decisions through better and more effective metrics and engagement methods, marketers can enhance the return on investment in social media marketing. This will enable companies like Nordson EFD to allocate resources more effectively and sustain their competitive edge in a rapidly evolving digital environment.

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- i. **Precision Technology:** High-technology products and services with specific standards commonly used in industries such as aerospace, automotive, and medical devices.
- ii. **LinkedIn:** A professional networking site where businesses and individuals connect, particularly in the business-to-business (B2B) sector.
- iii. **B2B Marketing:** Business-to-business (B2B) marketing involves selling products or services from one business to another. This process often requires building a relationship, which can lead to a longer sales cycle.
- iv. **Engagement Metrics:** Measurable metrics of likes, shares, comments, and click-throughs that quantify how users interact with the content on a social platform.
- v. **Thought Leadership:** Content that makes a particular company or person appear as an authority in their specialty is often created to build trust with potential audiences.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 Introduction

Over the years, social media has evolved and become an integral part of business communications in the B2B environment. Platforms like LinkedIn offer businesses a straightforward way to bridge communication gaps, share valuable and targeted content, and establish relationships with key decision-makers in niche industries.

This study will examine how LinkedIn can influence purchasing decisions within the precision technology industry, with Nordson EFD as a case study. Most precision technology products must be evaluated both commercially and technically by all key stakeholders for their long-term value; hence, understanding how LinkedIn enables the buying decision-making process in such niche markets will be very helpful in optimizing marketing strategies.

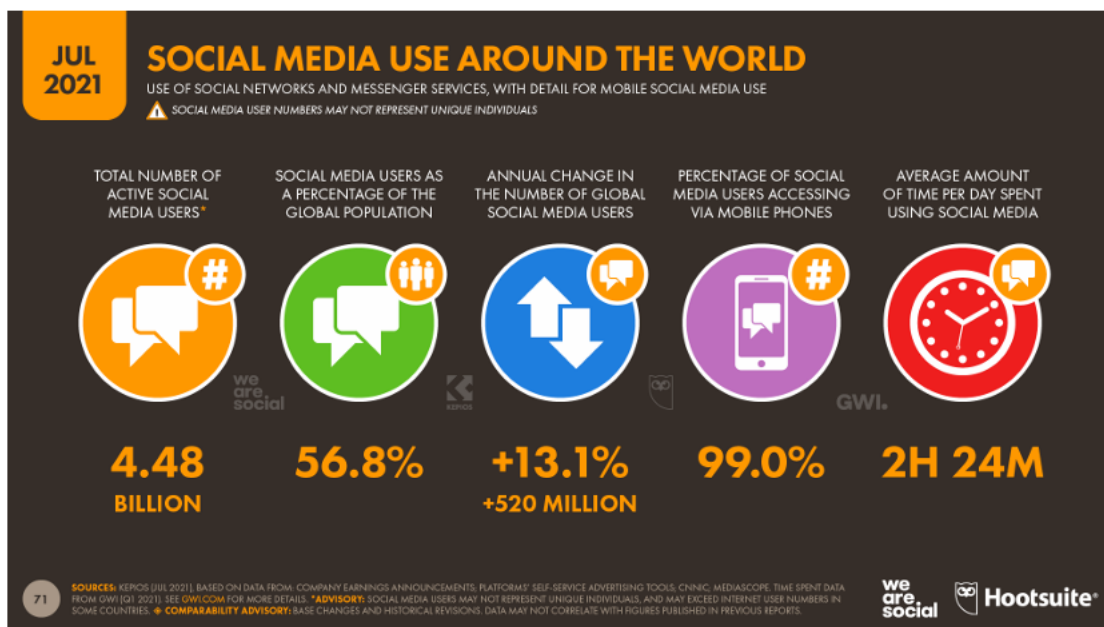


Figure 1: Global social media overview (Datareportal, 2021) <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-global-overview-report>

The graph above shows there were 4.48 billion social media users worldwide in July 2021, representing approximately 57% of the global population. This data indicates that over 99% of internet users use social media monthly. In the past years, social media usage has surged, with 520 million more people joining the platform in 2021 alone. This represents a remarkable 13.1% yearly growth rate, equating to approximately 1,612 new users every second on average. However, comparing social media users to the total world population may underestimate actual value/usage, as most platforms restrict access to users under 13 years old.

Social media marketing has been influencing consumer behaviour across industries. It has been reported that 71% of consumers use social media to inform their purchase decisions, highlighting the platform's potential to reshape business strategies, as Aleh (2020) claims. The professional platform offers the possibility for targeted content and data-based analytics, making it suitable for precision technology companies. This conceptual framework is developed by incorporating theoretical constructs and empirical insights on the influence of LinkedIn on consumer purchasing decisions, addressing the problem statement outlined in Chapter 1.

2.1.2 Social Media Marketing in B2B Contexts

Social media has become a paramount tool for modern marketing, enabling effective communication, engagement, and brand visibility. For B2B companies, social media platforms like LinkedIn serve as crucial channels for building relationships, establishing trust, and influencing complex decision-making processes. LinkedIn's professional orientation makes it particularly effective in addressing the needs of industries like precision technology, where buyers demand highly technical information and personalized communication (Ahmad et al., 2022).

2.1.3 Key Functions of LinkedIn for B2B Marketing

- i. Targeted Content Sharing:** LinkedIn's demographic, professional roles, and industrial segregation capabilities enable Nordson EFD to present content tailored to its target market. This relevance and engagement potential are significant in complex B2B transactions, as suggested by Yang (2024). Targeted postings of product innovation, industry insights, and best practices build up credibility and authority.

- ii. **Professional Networking:** Unlike platforms like Facebook or Instagram, LinkedIn focuses on professional connections, allowing companies to engage directly with decision-makers and stakeholders. This capability is essential for B2B companies, as it supports trust-building and relationship development (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).
- iii. **Advanced Analytics and Metrics:** It provides granular, engagement-based metrics, including likes, shares, comments, and click-through rates. Such analytics provide valuable and actionable insights that enable firms to fine-tune their strategies and optimize content for better results. Anjorin, Raji, & Olodo (2024).

2.1.4 Understanding Precision Technology and B2B Buying Behaviour

Precision technology encompasses industries such as aerospace, automotive, and medical devices, where products are highly specialized and technically advanced. The buying decision involves multiple decision-makers and, therefore, includes long sales cycles and investments. All these factors make precision technology distinct from general consumer markets, and this is why platforms like LinkedIn are indispensable for effective communication and marketing within them.

B2B Consumer Behaviour in Precision Technology

Precision technologies' B2B buyers rely on technical specifications, product reliability, and long-term value; emotional or impulse factors are rarely considered in their buying cycle. Most purchases are facilitated by structured evaluations, research, and comparisons, hence underscoring the dire need for credible, detailed information support (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

2.1.5 Role of LinkedIn in Solving the Needs of B2B Consumers

The professional ecosystem of LinkedIn allows such precision technology companies to respond precisely to these special needs by providing the following:

- i. **Educational Content:** In-depth articles, white papers, and webinars answer technical questions and demonstrate the capability to perform tasks.
- ii. **Case Studies/Demonstrations:** Real examples of how the products are applied and their benefits accrue make buyers feel less hesitant.
- iii. **Interactive Discussions:** Participating in group discussions on LinkedIn helps facilitate interactive discussions with other professionals in the industry, thereby building trust and credibility.

Nordson EFD's best practices include posting targeted messages, engaging in professional forums, and using analytics to help refine its approach.

2.1.6 The Buying Cycle in Precision Technology

The conceptual framework also identifies five steps in the B2B buying decision process, explaining how LinkedIn works its way into each one (IEduNote, 2021):

i. Problem Recognition

Buyers become aware of a need for new solutions. This can be through LinkedIn advertisements and posts related to industrial solutions for specific problems. Nordson EFD creates posts about precision dispensing solutions, identifying potential pain points while providing actionable solutions to address them.

ii. Information Search

A starting point for buyers to learn about an industry could be LinkedIn, where they can acquire as much information as possible about the product and the vendor. Features like LinkedIn Pulse and professional group discussions facilitate informed decision-making (Grewal et al., 2015).

iii. Alternative Evaluation

Buyers evaluate vendors based on the content they post, customer testimonials, and peer reviews. The professional credibility factor that the site chooses to focus on makes the evaluation process more accessible for trust-building purposes (Chahat, Sachin, & Raj, 2020).

iv. Purchase Decision

The actual buying behaviour is determined through engagement metrics and personal dialogues with the company's representatives. For example, Nordson EFD, through LinkedIn messaging, offers personalized consultations, which clear doubts and reassure buyers about their choice.

v. Post Purchase Evaluation

The feedback, user reviews, and educational updates offered through LinkedIn help maintain customer satisfaction for a more extended period through ongoing dialogue.



Figure 2: The Stages of the B2B Buying Process. <https://openstax.org/books/principles-marketing/pages/4-4-stages-in-the-b2b-buying-process>

2.1.7 Importance of LinkedIn Engagement Metrics

In today's digital marketing age, particularly for business-to-business (B2B) communication, data is an essential element for steering and aligning approach strategies. This is especially true in companies within high-precision sectors, such as industrial dispensing technology, where solutions and services are particularly high-value and technologically challenging to understand. LinkedIn, being the premium professional networking website, has evolved into an integral B2B marketing platform, serving not only as a content delivery medium but also as a key measuring tool for its success, in the form of engagement metrics (J. Kim, 2021).

Engagement metrics such as likes, shares, comments, click-through rates (CTR), and post reach are not vanity metrics. Instead, they provide actionable data on content performance, audience response, and the strategic adjustments needed. Companies like Nordson EFD can use these data points to navigate the complexities of digital marketing. They help determine whether content engages target audiences, assess its level of engagement, and compare it to industry norms (Zhao et al., 2018).

2.1.7.1 Significant Metrics and Their Strategic Implications

Shares and Likes

As two of the most readily available and ubiquitous measures of engagement, likes and shares offer immediate feedback on the relevance of content. One 'like' amounts to low-effort agreement, and the user's implicit signal that they accept the content as relevant, informative, or helpful (Hong & Cha, 2013). Conversely, a 'share' means a higher perceived value; it indicates that the viewer found the content necessary enough to share with their network, thereby creating reach organically. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) note that this type of engagement affects LinkedIn's algorithmic ranking of content, thereby increasing visibility and facilitating exposure to a secondary audience.

For Nordson EFD, B. Lu et al. (2016) suggested that this magnification can convey their message to neighboring industries, such as robotics or additive manufacturing, potentially identifying new demand verticals. Moreover, shares can generate exponential visibility when shared by influencers, thought leaders, or individuals with strong connections. The implied endorsement in a share makes the brand seem more authoritative, especially in a conservative market like industrial technology, where credibility is paramount (Bohner et al., 1995).

Comments

Commenting is a higher order of engagement. Whereas shares and likes are passive approvals, comments require work and thought. Comments tend to be questions, views, suggestions, or personal experiences, providing feedback to the writer. For Nordson EFD's business, LinkedIn comments on posts can reveal what actual customers are genuinely interested in, what they are unsure of, and what aspect of the product they most identify with (Hong & Cha, 2013).

Also, comment streams can boost brand credibility. When a user notices a live discussion on a company's post, it is a sign of transparency, responsiveness, and customer care. This activity can also lead to content going viral, since lively discussion streams are more likely to get priority from LinkedIn's algorithm. From a sales perspective, this activity sets the stage for further interaction, which can progress to a lead or sale (Sundar, 2008).

Click-Through Rate (CTR)

CTR measures the ratio of users who have clicked on a call-to-action (CTA) placed in a LinkedIn post or advertisement. As per Aleh (2020), CTR is the most direct measure of how engaging the content is in terms of prompting user action. It measures the effectiveness of the message, the appeal of the presentation's visual elements, and the visibility of the CTA. For Nordson EFD, a high CTR may indicate that prospective buyers are engaging with technical datasheets, product demo videos, or whitepaper content that guides them through the sales funnel.

CTR also allows A/B testing. By comparing the relative performance of alternative headlines, thumbnails, or post types, Nordson EFD can continually refine its LinkedIn strategy to generate increased user action and move lead audiences to points of conversion (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).

Conversion from Engagement

Though engagement metrics are as helpful as they are, the most value that they bring is when they are utilized to generate actual business outcomes (Zhao et al., 2018). An extremely engaging article that does not result in any follow-up conversions (leads, product inquiries, or sales) may need to be reevaluated. By integrating social media metrics with web behaviour analysis and customer relationship management (CRM) data, Nordson EFD can close the loop on customer activity.

This integrated approach enables more accurate attribution and facilitates continuous refinement of the content strategy. Therefore, by analyzing patterns such as which postings lead to whitepaper downloads or demo sign-ups, Nordson EFD can guide future postings towards types and topics that have established conversion value. This leads to improved content planning effectiveness and a higher long-term return on investment (ROI) in marketing (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).

Audience Demographics and Behaviour

LinkedIn's most significant strategic differentiator is likely the depth and granularity of its demographic information. LinkedIn analytics provide businesses with insights into who is engaging with their content, including job function, industry, location, and even firm size. This is particularly important for Nordson EFD, as its products are marketed to technical professionals, including process engineers, quality assurance managers, and technical buyers (Vivek et al., 2012).

Additionally, long-term demographic trends can indicate whether a brand is expanding into new industries or markets, providing valuable insights for international business development or product localization programs (Zhao et al., 2018).

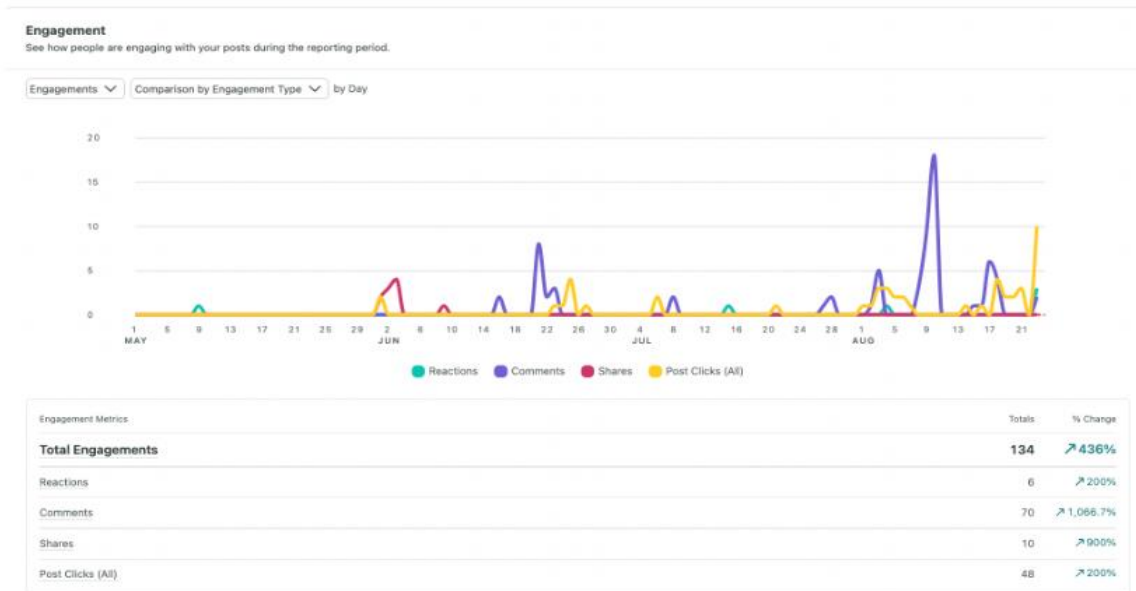


Figure 3: LinkedIn engagement dashboard. <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/linkedin-analytics/#:~:text=Engagement%20metrics%20provide%20insights%20into,was%20shown%20to%20LinkedIn%20users.>

2.1.8 Content Strategy: A Pillar of LinkedIn Marketing

Content strategy is the cornerstone of any successful LinkedIn marketing effort, particularly in the methodical B2B market, which is slow and highly information-driven. For companies marketing in high-tech applications, such as precision fluid dispensing, the challenge is to create content that is not only informative but also engaging, credible, and relevant to the immediate concerns of technical readers (Huotari et al., 2015).

A winning content strategy on LinkedIn is quality over quantity. In contrast to other social media platforms, such as Twitter or Instagram, where volume and virality can overshadow value, LinkedIn demands depth, relevance, and professionalism, especially for Nordson EFD, whose customers are engineers, operations directors, and procurement buyers looking for solutions, not distractions (Halligan & Shah, 2010).

2.1.8.1 Nordson EFD's Content Strategy: Directed Tactics

Thought Leadership

Developing and distributing thought leadership materials is an effective way to establish expertise. This can take the form of technical blog posts, op-eds, and collaborative research reports with Nordson EFD's engineers. Sath (2019) notes that B2B customers are far more likely to trust organizations that release insights rather than promotional materials.

By providing fluid dispensing technology solutions that address future industry trends and anticipate soon-to-be automated issues, Nordson EFD positions itself as a forward-thinking business. This builds credibility and facilitates brand recall, especially if buying decisions are being made (Halligan & Shah, 2010).

Product Demonstrations and Case Studies

In B2B markets, decision-makers often require evidence before making costly purchases. Ahmad et al. (2022) propose using multimedia formats to make abstract technical advantages more tangible and accessible. In the case of Nordson EFD, product demonstrations in video form, especially with subtitles for silent play, are capable of illustrating major differentiators such as dispensing precision, velocity, or integration compatibility (Zhao et al., 2018).

Case studies go one step further, illustrating the performance of products under real-world conditions. They should highlight quantifiable outcomes, such as cost savings, process improvements, or reduced defects. A practical case study can even act as a surrogate sales pitch, reducing the need for hard selling and creating informed leads (Jansen & Schuster, 2011).

Customer Testimonials

Testimonials enable peer affirmation, which is essential in technical industries because customers often consult with industry insiders before making a decision. Placing testimonials on LinkedIn in the form of text quotes, short videos, or infographics can help build product credibility. Customer voice is often regarded as more credible than corporate communication (Zhao et al., 2018).

White Papers and Technical Briefs

While often overlooked, lengthy technical white papers are a goldmine for B2B marketing. LinkedIn’s ability to upload documents and lead-gen forms makes it the perfect platform to publish white papers on solving specific engineering problems or in-depth examinations of Nordson EFD’s dispensing technologies. These resources serve two purposes simultaneously: they market education and generate qualified leads through gated downloads (Hong & Cha, 2013).

Community Engagement and Collaboration

Participating in LinkedIn groups, responding to posts from industry publications and thought leaders, and co-presenting webinars with partner companies can increase visibility and establish Nordson EFD as a collaborative partner within the manufacturing industry. This interaction does not have to be one-sided. It also makes the brand more relatable and human. For example, if Nordson EFD sales leaders or engineers are conversing with customers, it means the company prioritises community engagement over posting messages. Instead, they focus on dialogue and shared, co-created learning (J. Kim, 2021).

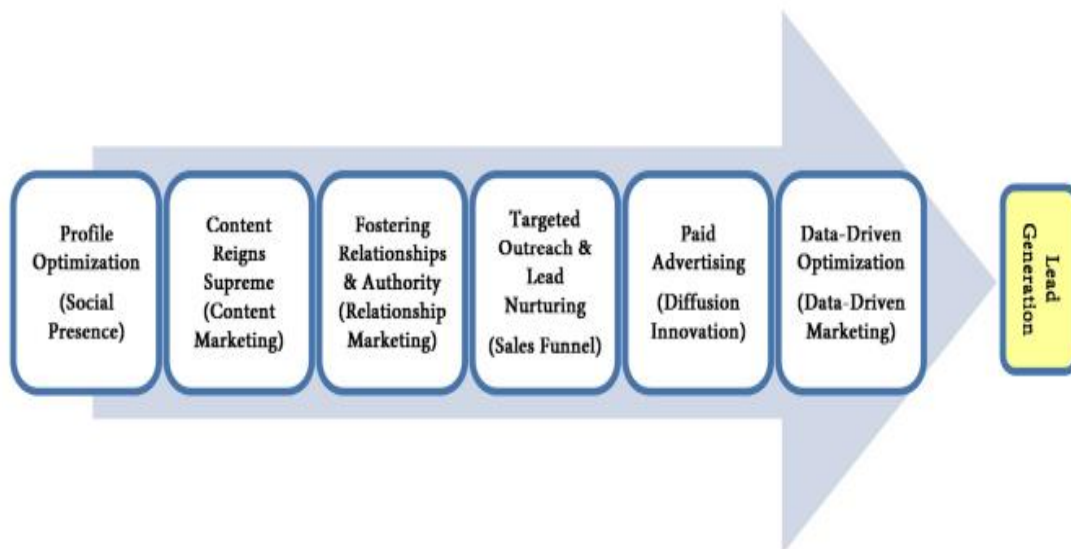


Figure 4: Strategic framework for lead generation on LinkedIn.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357746605_Digital_Content_Marketing_Conceptual_Review_and_Recommendations_for_Practitioners

2.1.9 Coping with Challenges and Constraints

Undeniably, LinkedIn offers numerous benefits for B2B marketing; however, it is essential to acknowledge its potential pitfalls. These must be proactively addressed to ensure an optimal return on investment and strategic alignment with overall organisational goals.

i. **Content Oversaturation:** The LinkedIn professional feed is becoming increasingly noisy. Millions of businesses post daily, with visibility being scarce. Aleh (2020) argues that poor targeting and unengaging content are significant factors contributing to low engagement. To break through the noise, Nordson EFD must create visually distinct and contextually distinct posts. Carousel posts, branded infographics, and short explanatory videos break through monotony and sustain attention longer (Breitbarth, 2019). Timing and frequency also count. Through LinkedIn analytics, Nordson EFD can determine the busiest hours of their target group and share when they are most likely to be viewed. Furthermore, using particular hashtags (#FluidDispensing, #MedicalManufacturing) instead of general ones allows content to be more readily discovered by specialist experts.

ii. **Long Sales Cycles:** Precision in dispensing equipment is not an impregnable impulse buy. The purchasing process can be complex, involving technical evaluations, procurement approvals, and extensive tests. Social media is seldom the final stage in the B2B buying process, according to Kaplan & Haenlein (2010). It becomes essential for brand awareness, learning, and mid-funnel nurturing.

Marketing automation tools and attribution modelling address this problem. By linking LinkedIn activity to CRM information, Nordson EFD can monitor the customer's journey through touchpoints, including webinars, email newsletters, and LinkedIn advertising. This allows them to gain a deeper understanding of the role of social media in the conversion process (Reis, 2019).

iii. **Measuring Return on Investment:** Demonstrating the ROI of LinkedIn activity can be challenging, especially when senior management prioritizes tangible business outcomes. To overcome this, Chahat et al. (2020) suggest tying social campaigns to CRM systems and applying UTM codes to all shared URLs. This enables the precise tracking of user behavior

after a click. HubSpot or Salesforce, along with similar software, can be integrated with LinkedIn to provide insights into the types of posts that lead to conversions. Furthermore, LinkedIn's Insight Tag enables businesses to track actions like form submissions or demo requests, directly attributing engagement to business KPIs (Komljenovic, 2018).

- iv. **Compliance and Brand Risk:** Companies like Nordson EFD, which operate in regulated environments and develop proprietary technology, must adhere to strict compliance processes. Improper disclosure of sensitive technical data or customer lists can lead to legal consequences. To ensure compliance, Nordson EFD must endorse a rigorous process involving legal, engineering, and marketing groups. Additionally, formal employee advocacy is crucial. Nordson EFD should promote pre-approved messages and branded content to employees, maintaining consistency while allowing them to share company content to expand their networks. This approach ensures brand integrity while expanding reach through personal networks (Smith & Watkins, 2020).

2.1.10 Using Analytics to Inform Iterative Improvement

In today's fast-paced B2B marketing landscape, particularly in the precision technology sector, continuous learning and adaptation are key. LinkedIn, a professional networking platform, offers in-depth analytics that, when fully utilised, can significantly contribute to marketing campaigns. For Nordson EFD, leveraging these analytics means more targeted campaigns, improved audience engagement, and ultimately, a better return on investment (ROI) (Hong & Cha, 2013).

A/B Testing: Optimizing Content Through Experimentation

A/B testing, or split testing, is the method of comparing two different versions of a piece of content to see which will perform better. On LinkedIn, it might be testing a new headline, image, type of post, or CTA copy.

- i. **Identify the Variable:** Select a single variable to test, i.e., the title or image of the post. Testing more than one variable at a time may result in inconclusive findings (Halligan & Shah, 2010).
- ii. **Create Variations:** Prepare two versions of the content with one variable modified.
- iii. **Publish Equally:** Post both versions to equal segments of the population to avoid biased findings.

- iv. **Analyze Results:** Monitor responses, such as click-through rates (CTR), engagement rates, and conversions, to identify which version is performing better (Reis, 2019).

Through regular A/B testing, Nordson EFD can optimize its content strategy to ensure each post is as effective as possible for its target audience.

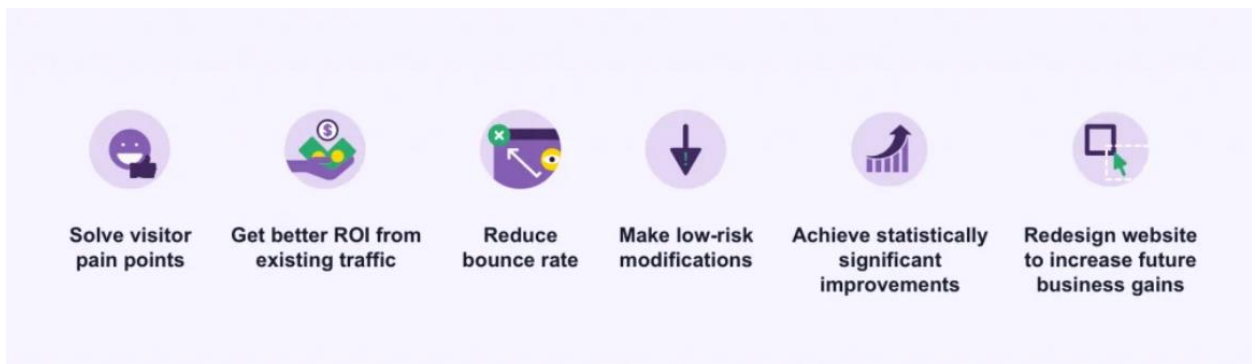


Figure 5: A/B Test Run. <https://vwo.com/ab-testing/#:~:text=A%20FB%20testing%2C%20also%20known,impact%20and%20drives%20business%20metrics>.

Segmentation Analysis: Reaching the Right Audience

LinkedIn analytics provides in-depth segmentation analysis, enabling marketers to identify which aspects of their audience are most responsive to content. For Nordson EFD, this might be examining industries, job functions, or geographies with greater engagement (Reis, 2019).

Advantages:

- i. **Customized Content:** Engage individual segments with tailored messaging, increasing relevance and response.
- ii. **Optimized Resource Allocation:** Allocate marketing resources where they are most valuable, targeting top-performing segments for maximum return on investment (ROI).
- iii. **Market Expansion:** Identify under-penetrated markets that hold growth opportunities.

Monitoring and adjusting Nordson EFD's marketing efforts on an ongoing basis, using segmentation data, ensures its marketing is not only successful but also affordable (Komljenovic, 2018).

Sentiment Analysis: Quantifying the Audience's Sentiment

Apart from the quantitative information, an understanding of the qualitative sentiment of audience engagement provides even richer insights. Sentiment analysis tools, such as those offered by Sprout

Social and Hootsuite, can measure the sentiment of comments and messages and determine whether they are positive, negative, or neutral (Hong & Cha, 2013).

Advantages:

- i. **Reputation Management:** Respond promptly to negative comments to maintain a strong brand reputation.
- ii. **Content Strategy:** Identify the topics that post positively and prioritize them in future content.
- iii. **Customer Insights:** Better understanding of customers' needs and concerns.

By incorporating sentiment analysis into its analytics model, Nordson EFD can be confident that its message aligns with audience expectations and interests (Smith & Watkins, 2020).

Bringing Analytics to Content Planning

Analytics should be considered as part of the overall content planning process, rather than being considered independently (Hong & Cha, 2013). This involves:

- i. **Setting Clear Objectives:** Define what success is for every campaign.
- ii. **Regular Checking:** Make checking analytics available to enable timely adjustments.
- iii. **Feedback Loops:** Utilize output from analytics to inform planning of future content and strategy.

By using analytics to inform content planning, Nordson EFD can develop an evolving strategy that responds to audience behaviour and market trends over time (Hong & Cha, 2013).

2.1.11 LinkedIn Strategy Recommendations for Nordson EFD

With analytics insights, Nordson EFD can implement various strategic measures to enhance its LinkedIn visibility and performance.

Develop an In-Depth Content Calendar

A strategic content calendar provides consistency and strategic alignment in posting content.

LinkedIn Key Elements:

- i. **Weekly Themes:** Emphasize themes of innovation, customer success stories, and technical learning.
- ii. **Content Diversity:** Utilize various formats like articles, videos, infographics, and surveys.
- iii. **Scheduling:** Post when the audience is most active.

Tools like HubSpot's LinkedIn Content Calendar Template can be used to plan and schedule the content strategy (Jansen & Schuster, 2011).

Run Targeted LinkedIn Ad Campaigns

Sponsored ads on LinkedIn can increase reach and engagement if run strategically (Smith & Watkins, 2020).

Strategies

- i. **Audience Segmentation:** Leverage LinkedIn's targeting features to address industries, job functions, or company sizes.
- ii. **Retargeting:** Target individuals who have already interacted with Nordson EFD's content or visited their website.
- iii. **A/B Testing:** Test ad creative and messaging continuously to maximize performance.

With targeted campaigns, Nordson EFD can optimize its ad spend to reach the most suitable audiences (Zhao et al., 2018).

Involve Employees as Brand Ambassadors

Employees are excellent brand ambassadors, promoting the brand more effectively and authentically.

Activities:

- i. **Advocacy Training:** Educate employees in the dos and don'ts of sharing and producing content on LinkedIn.
- ii. **Content Sharing:** Provide pre-approved content that can be easily shared with employees.
- iii. **Recognition:** Identify active brand ambassadors within the employee base who are actively engaging on social media.

Employee advocacy can help personalize the brand and make it more relatable to the audience (Jansen & Schuster, 2011).

Integrate Analytics Dashboards into Marketing Reviews.

Centralized analytics within dashboards will allow for real-time monitoring and data-driven decision-making.

Benefits:

- i. **Holistic View:** Aggregate data from LinkedIn, web analytics, and CRM platforms.

- ii. **Performance Measurement:** Measure critical performance metrics (KPIs) such as lead generation, conversion rates, and engagement metrics.
- iii. **Strategic Alignment:** Automatically identify lagging areas and make strategic changes to address them.

Weekly check-ins on these dashboards ensure that Nordson EFD's LinkedIn strategy remains aligned with its broader business goals (Smith & Watkins, 2020).

Diversify Content Formats to Maximize Engagement

Content format diversity enables a broader audience to find what they are interested in, thereby maximizing engagement and audience reach.

Content Formats to Experiment With:

- i. **Newsletters:** Publish curated content and company news.
- ii. **Live Videos:** Stream webinars or product demos to connect with audiences in the moment.
- iii. **Carousel Posts:** Show content in a wipeable format, ideal for step-by-step guides or displaying multiple products.

Through experimenting with different types of content, Nordson EFD can determine what resonates best with its audience and optimize its strategy (Korniljenovic, 2018).

2.1.12 SOLUTION TO PROBLEM STATEMENT

This thought leadership model directly addresses the problem statement by providing a comprehensive and actionable solution to the question of how companies in the precision technology sector, such as Nordson EFD, can maximize the use of LinkedIn for brand awareness, audience engagement, and lead generation (Sadh, 2019).

Integrating content marketing theories, audience segmentation, behaviour analysis, and data-driven decision-making, these solutions target key problems identified in earlier sections. These include content saturation, long sales cycles, measurement limitations, and challenging niche technical users targeting in B2B settings (Ahmad et al., 2022).

The framework has three independent pillars:

- i. Targeted Content Creation
- ii. Enhanced Engagement Strategies

iii. Data-Driven Optimization

These foundations align with existing academic research guidelines and business best practice (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Chahat et al., 2020; Aleh, 2020; Sath, 2019; Ahmad et al., 2022), making them evidence-based and suitable for LinkedIn's professional environment.

i. Targeted Content Creation: Relevance Through Audience Segmentation and Analytics

In the case of precision technology businesses, content generation must be highly targeted, technically accurate, and visually appealing to resonate with professional purchasing influencers. Companies like Nordson EFD operate in niche markets, providing systems for electronics, medical devices, automotive components, and other applications. Each customer segment has varying needs, purchasing criteria, and technical expertise (Chahat et al., 2020).

Shifting away from mass communication with generic content and embracing specialised content strategies is one key solution to content performance disappointments. These strategies align with the audience's roles, industry challenges, and stages of the buying process. This segmentation relies on real-time data from LinkedIn analytics, third-party CRM technology, and input from sales teams (Smith & Watkins, 2020).

Audience Segmentation for Strategic Precision: Audience segmentation would enable Nordson EFD to deliver tailored messages directly to engineers, procurement experts, production supervisors, and regulatory officials, ensuring that they receive relevant information. Engineers, for instance, would be most interested in product tolerance and performance specifications, while purchasing officers would be concerned with cost savings, warranty, and vendor reliability. By having distinct content streams for each persona, the company is more likely to attract and convert interested individuals (Zhao et al., 2018).

LinkedIn's targeting capabilities, which allow for filtering by industry, company size, job title, or role, enable segmentation for both paid promotions and organic posts. These filters ensure that sponsored and promotional posts reach the most relevant users, minimising waste and optimising ROI (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Technical Depth and Visual Appeal: Precision technology readers expect to see content that blends technical knowledge with readability. As Sadh (2019) highlights, B2B buyers do not skim through superficial information. To enhance user experience without overwhelming them, Nordson EFD can incorporate application-oriented language, conformity to standards signs (such as ISO compliance), and test results in infographics, animations, and carousels. (Zhao et al., 2018)

Adding rich visuals such as 3D equipment models, time-lapse shots of dispensing cycles, or cross-section schematics is more valuable than text. These images help to segment complex technologies into chewable sizes and facilitate comprehension. Such multimedia also increases dwell time and click-through rate, particularly on LinkedIn, which rewards visually strong content with higher feed visibility (Aleh, 2020).

Content Calendar Based on Data Insights: Another implementable piece is building a content strategy calendar based on platform metrics and campaign look-backs. This calendar involves planning major posts around product launches, industry holidays, fiscal cycles, and seasonal production trends relevant to specific industries. For example, medical manufacturing experiences demand spikes in the fourth quarter.

Advertising during prime times when target market segments are most engaged, such as Tuesday and Thursday mornings for engineers, adds visibility and exposure to the content during high-attention periods. With repeated branding and tone, this establishes a consistent digital presence, leading to higher recall and trust (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

ii. **Enhanced Engagement Strategies: Creating Two-Way Interactions and Community-Building**

One of the primary shortcomings of traditional B2B marketing has been its one-way approach. The LinkedIn algorithm, however, increasingly prioritizes content that encourages discussion and user engagement. For business-to-business companies like Nordson EFD, which traditionally rely on face-to-face demonstrations and trade shows to connect prospects, becoming a digital community-building company becomes an imperative (Komljenovic, 2018).

Interactive Posts to Engage Participation: Interactive content types such as polls, Q&A streams, contests, and 'How-To' carousel slides promote active participation. For instance, a poll among

engineers about their most pressing production bottlenecks (e.g., cycle time, curing consistency, material loss) will not only boost participation but also provide valuable market insights. Results of such polls can then be used in subsequent thought leadership reports, whitepapers, or product development decisions, demonstrating to the audience that their opinions have real consequences (Sadh, 2019). Interactive posts serve as engagement hooks and touchpoints for salespeople to initiate more personalized follow-up via InMail or connection requests.

Group Engagement and Subject Matter Discussions: LinkedIn groups centered on industry-focused themes, such as "Electronics Manufacturing Network" or "Medical Device Engineering," are a valuable starting point for engaging in technical discussions. Nordson EFD sales leaders and engineers can participate constructively by providing insights, responding to questions, or posting thought-provoking content (Halligan & Shah, 2010).

Active engagement in such forums not only enhances the brand's credibility but also fosters a reputation for Nordson EFD as a leader in the industry. Such engagement must be organic and not promotional; otherwise, it will be considered spam. By answering questions, participating in discussions, and sharing experiences, the company can naturally develop goodwill and trust (Sadh, 2019).

Personalised Messaging and Relationship-Centric Outreach: Building relationships is central to high-value B2B transactions. Having observed activity signals (e.g., an individual repeatedly liking and commenting on Nordson EDF's posts), the salesforce can conduct soft outreach. LinkedIn's InMail and connection features enable personalized engagement that leverages previously expressed interests (Komljenovic, 2018).

Prompts that cater to specific interactions, such as "I noticed you responded to our recent post on precision dosing valves," are far more likely to elicit responses than cold calls. This approach aligns with the general consultative selling process, where solutions are provided once the prospect's issues have been identified (Halligan & Shah, 2010).

Additionally, leveraging employee advocacy by encouraging staff to share branded content can significantly expand the reach and humanize the brand. Internal champions can represent various

departments (engineering, customer support, quality assurance), providing prospects with a multifaceted view of the company culture and expertise.

iii. Data-Driven Optimisation: From Metrics to Meaningful Improvement

Today's marketing is data-dependent. Without strict measurement and optimization, even the most creative campaign becomes a matter of guesswork. For companies in the technical sector, such as Nordson EFD, where accuracy and return on investment (ROI) are crucial, data-driven decision-making is essential.

Making Effective Use of LinkedIn Analytics: LinkedIn also includes native analytics dashboards that provide insights into post reach, click-through rate (CTR), engagement rate, demographics, and follower trends. These insights enable Nordson EFD to monitor not only what content is being viewed but also by whom. To identify which job titles, industries, or regions are most engaging for targeting strategies in the future (Sadh, 2019). Suppose a given post-marketing campaign for a medical device dispensing solution receives heavy engagement from pharmaceutical packaging engineers. In that case, the marketing team could opt to develop more content that is more precisely aimed at that specific vertical.

In addition to individual post-level data, page-level analytics provide insights into follower growth, trends, and content likes over time. Heatmaps or engagement timelines can indicate fatigue or bursts of resonance in content, giving insight into optimal posting rhythm and subject (Halligan & Shah, 2010).

A/B Testing and Headline Content Strategy: To optimise campaign performance regularly, A/B testing should be used, which involves testing variables such as headline wording, image selection, post length, and CTA wording, among others, that can significantly affect the click-through rate (CTR) and engagement rate. For instance, comparing two visuals for a post on robotic dispensing arms can reveal that real application footage did better than 3D renderings.

As Aleh (2020) explains, companies that test intentionally for their digital content outperform companies that make guesses. The secret is to experiment on small, separate variables and scale up

what works. Doing so repeatedly over time creates a highly optimised content portfolio that converts at a lower cost.

Attribution and Integration with CRM Systems: To connect LinkedIn activity to business outcomes, Nordson EFD will need to integrate its analytics tools into customer relationship management (CRM) software, such as Salesforce or HubSpot. This allows for attribution of leads to a specific content or campaign (Sadh, 2019).

By adding a UTM tracking code to LinkedIn links, the marketing team can measure how many LinkedIn visitors visit a gated white paper, request a demo, or submit an inquiry for contact. This attribution data is crucial for accurately measuring the marketing ROI and persuading internal stakeholders to invest more in the LinkedIn strategy.

Predictive Analytics and Future Planning: Predictive analytics solutions, in addition to allowing users to glance in the rearview, can identify trends in user behaviour and engagement activity. This enables future planning. For instance, if analysis reveals that green manufacturing posts are receiving above-average engagement across various geographies throughout Q1, Nordson EFD can plan and create a batch of content assets to run throughout the next quarter.

In addition, sophisticated AI-powered analytics can segment audiences into 'likely-to-convert' groups based on behaviours and enable hyper-personalized retargeting through LinkedIn ads or sponsored InMail (Reis, 2019).

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 Introduction

This theoretical framework examines how theories of consumer behaviour and various models of decision-making are combined and informed by the influence of social media platforms to shape purchasing decisions. Given that LinkedIn is at the peak of B2B media marketing, this chapter explores the theories that emphasize its successful use in stimulating purchasing behaviours related to the precision technology sector (Reis, 2019). Precision technology purchases are a complex process that involves technical evaluation and the participation of multiple stakeholders, which aligns well with the structure of LinkedIn for professional networking, the availability of targeted content, and the building of trust. Precisely, the framework will establish a basis for understanding how LinkedIn

enhances the decision-making of Nordson EFD's audience by analyzing relevant theoretical constructs (Hong & Cha, 2013).

This chapter integrates foundational theories, including the consumer decision-making process, the theory of planned behaviour, social media marketing frameworks, and trust-building models. These combined theories create a solid foundation for assessing the role of LinkedIn in shaping purchasing behaviours within the precision technology industry.

2.2.2. Theories of Consumer Behaviour

The Consumer Decision-Making Process

The consumer decision making process is a cornerstone theory in marketing that describes how an individual or organization moves through successive stages to make purchasing decisions. In B2B contexts, and especially in industries such as precision technology, this process is more complex due to the high stakes and involvement of multiple stakeholders. According to Kotler and Keller (2011), there are five successive steps in this process:

- i. **Problem Recognition:** Identifying a need or problem is crucial. For Nordson EFD, this could involve inefficient fluid dispensing or a need for greater precision in the manufacturing process. LinkedIn becomes invaluable at this stage, as it highlights industry challenges through sponsored posts, case studies, and thought leadership content. Targeted ads can expose decision-makers to problems and solutions they may not have been aware of, sparking further investigation (Aleh, 2020).

After establishing the need, buyers search for information to satisfy that need. LinkedIn is instrumental at this stage, as it provides a wealth of information concerning a product, including customer reviews and various educational materials. Companies such as Nordson EFD utilize LinkedIn's professional groups and sharing capabilities to offer industry knowledge, technical specifications, and best practices, equipping buyers with the necessary information to make informed purchasing decisions (Ola & Reem, 2018).

- ii. **Evaluation of Alternatives:** It is a known fact that buyers evaluate various alternatives to find the best solution. LinkedIn facilitates this process by enabling professional discussions among peers, providing recommendations, and offering access to case studies

from vendors. For instance, Nordson EFD shares success stories and testimonials showcasing how their products outperform competitors. The ability to engage directly with product experts on LinkedIn further enhances this evaluative process (Chahat, Sachin, & Raj, 2020).

- iii. **Purchase Decision:** The decision to purchase is influenced by several factors, including trust, perceived value, and engagement. LinkedIn supports this stage by facilitating direct communication between buyers and sellers, allowing companies to address concerns and tailor solutions to meet specific needs. For instance, Nordson EFD's LinkedIn representatives offer personalized consultations, which reinforces buyer confidence (Grewal et al., 2015).
- iv. **Post-Purchase Behaviour:** On LinkedIn, businesses can engage in post-purchase activities, such as soliciting feedback, publishing news, and fostering rapport. This ensures the customer is satisfied and remains loyal in the long run. According to Kotler & Keller (2011), this is essential in a high-value industry such as precision technology.

2.2.3. Theory of Planned Behaviour

Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) provides a framework for understanding how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence purchasing decisions. The theory is highly applicable to the role of LinkedIn in B2B marketing, emphasizing the interplay between individual intentions and external factors:

- i. **Attitude Toward the Behaviour:** Attitudes toward Nordson EFD's products are shaped by the quality and relevance of content shared on LinkedIn. Positive engagement, such as likes and comments, indicates favorable attitudes and drives purchasing intentions (Aleh, 2020).
- ii. **Subjective Norms:** Recommendations and endorsements from professional peers on LinkedIn have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. For instance, industry influencers or satisfied customers endorsing Nordson EFD's solutions can influence potential buyers to make a purchase (Simon, 2021).
- iii. **Perceived Behavioural Control:** The comfort of information accessibility, access to representatives, and discussions on LinkedIn contribute to the buyers' perceived control over

the buying cycle. This perceived ease is enabled through the features provided by LinkedIn, such as messaging and professional groups (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

2.2.4 Theories of Social Media and Marketing

Social Media Marketing Framework

Social media marketing frameworks emphasize that platforms like LinkedIn enable and facilitate value creation, audience engagement, and relationship building. According to Gordhamer (2009), social media transforms four critical areas in business strategy in the following ways:

- i. **Relationship Building:** LinkedIn is an effective platform for relationship building, offering the added benefit of direct connections with decision-makers in companies involved in the precision technology sector. Relationships here are based on a foundation of trust and credibility, built over time through consistent engagement (Saunders & Eaton, 2018).
- ii. **Content Sharing:** The ability to share targeted, high-quality content is a key factor in LinkedIn's appeal. Nordson EFD leverages this capability in distributing educational articles, product demonstrations, and industry insights that are relevant and add value to their audience (Ola & Reem, 2018).
- iii. **Audience Insights:** The analytics tools of LinkedIn provide actionable data on audience behavior, engagement patterns, and content performance. Analysis of such insights enables companies to refine their strategies most effectively, meeting the needs of their target audience more efficiently (Anjorin, Raji, & Olodo, 2024).
- iv. **Two-Way Communication:** Social media platforms like LinkedIn have been developed to facilitate interactive communication between buyers and sellers. For Nordson EFD, a timely response to queries and active engagement in discussions create trust and thus transparency, an essential element for B2B transactions.

Social Exchange Theory (SET)

SET posits that individuals interact because the perceived benefits of an interaction outweigh the costs. On LinkedIn, users interact with companies like Nordson EFD when they perceive value in the content, insights, and interactions derived. For instance, sharing detailed product specifications, industry trends, or problem-solving tips positions Nordson EFD as a helpful resource worth continued engagement (Chahat, Sachin, & Raj, 2020).

User-Generated Content (UGC) Theory

UGC theory emphasizes the influence of peer-generated content on perceptions of and purchasing decisions regarding a brand. LinkedIn groups and comment threads are ideal platforms for sharing reviews, testimonials, and experiences. These UGCs play a crucial role in shaping buyer perception, as they appear neutral and unbiased (Tahir, 2020). Nordson EFD promotes UGC through encouraging discussions, commenting on posts, and sharing customer success stories.

2.3 EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK

Social media, particularly LinkedIn, has become a crucial tool in influencing consumer purchasing decisions at both personal and industrial levels in the B2B precision technology industry. The empirical framework outlines various studies that have sought to establish the impact of social media on consumer behaviour, decision-making processes, and overall marketing outcomes. These studies provide concrete data and examples that underscore the role of LinkedIn in shaping purchasing decisions, particularly for complex industries that require technical expertise and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Aleh (2020) highlights that 71% of consumers rely on social media to inform their purchase decisions. This is important because, for such buyers, especially in the precision technology industry, they need to have access to information and sources upon which they can rely. Studies indicate that the professional context provided by LinkedIn fosters trust and credibility, both of which are crucial for influencing decisions in industries such as precision technology. Ola and Reem (2018) further reinforce this view by noting that platforms suitable for professional audiences perform better in the B2B environment, as they can provide more relevant content.

A study by Ahmad et al. (2022) makes a very insightful attempt to analyze how tailored advertising on LinkedIn affects decision-making in the precision technology segment. According to this study, it evokes significantly greater involvement, with a 40% increase in engagement rate compared to ordinary campaigns. Thus, this perfectly supports the notion that LinkedIn's advanced targeting capabilities consider user roles, industries, and geographies to inform high-value purchasing decisions. Yang (2024) further verifies these findings by citing that companies that utilize LinkedIn's

analytics tools for improving their strategies tend to achieve higher conversion rates and lead generation.

User-generated content (UGC) also plays a major role in purchasing decisions, as reflected in the research of Tahir (2020) and Chahat, Sachun, and Raj (2020). LinkedIn professional groups and comments allow users to share testimonials, discuss specific topics, and recommend peers. These lead to brand credibility and develop trust. Tahir's findings indicate that 65% of those participating in discussions on LinkedIn find peer feedback to be reasonably necessary in judging the authenticity of a product or service. This means that UGC has a significant impact on the process of perception development for buyers, particularly in industries that require authenticity and technical expertise, such as precision technology.

Another significant influence that LinkedIn has demonstrated is on consumer decision-making. Kotler and Keller's (2011) five-stage model, which includes problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour, serves as a framework for analyzing LinkedIn's role. Empirical studies show that LinkedIn is particularly effective during the information search and evaluation stages. Grewal et al. (2015) found that LinkedIn's features, such as professional groups and educational content, enable buyers to access detailed product information and compare alternatives. This is reflected in Nordson EFD's strategy on LinkedIn, which features case studies, product demos, and thought leadership pieces that equip potential buyers with the information they need for informed decision-making.

Building trust is an underlying factor in most empirical studies. Maister, Green, and Galford's Trust Equation identifies four primary components of trust: credibility, reliability, intimacy, and self-orientation. LinkedIn helps in building trust by engaging regularly, being transparent, and sharing credible content. Chahat, Sachin, and Raj's 2020 study showed that organizations that established trust on this platform experienced higher conversion rates and customer loyalty. For instance, Nordson EFD utilizes LinkedIn to respond to inquiries promptly, provide personalized consultations, and share success stories to demonstrate reliability and credibility to its audience. Another important empirical finding is that LinkedIn facilitates collaboration between multiple stakeholders.

Decisions to buy in B2B contexts, such as precision technology, are often made with the involvement of engineers, procurement managers, and executives. Professional groups on LinkedIn facilitate

access to relevant information and collaboration among stakeholders in decision-making. In this respect, Saunders and Eaton (2018) found that 78% of B2B buyers used LinkedIn groups to evaluate options and gain insights. These groups have particularly helped Nordson EFD build relationships and showcase its expertise.

Empirical studies also reveal complications in measuring the return on investment of LinkedIn. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) noted that traditional measures of engagement, such as likes and shares, often do not correlate with sales outcomes, especially in industries with long sales cycles, like precision technology. Ahmad et al. (2022) recommended a multi-metric approach that combines engagement metrics with lead generation and sales data. In response to this challenge, Nordson EFD uses LinkedIn analytics, monitoring not only engagement but also conversions and customer feedback.

Another challenge indicated by empirical research is content oversaturation. According to Yang (2024), due to the high volume of posts, only 30% of LinkedIn users engage with the content. Again, this highlights the need to create premium and relevant content that stands out in the noise. Ola and Reem (2018) propose that video and infographic content provide a higher engagement rate compared to text-based posts. Based on this, Nordson EFD utilizes various content formats in its LinkedIn strategy.

Comparative studies also demonstrate the ability of LinkedIn in B2B marketing. According to Chahat, Sachin, and Raj (2020), leads generated through LinkedIn are 60% more likely to convert compared to leads obtained through traditional marketing channels, such as email campaigns and trade shows. This highlights the uniqueness of LinkedIn in connecting businesses with their target audiences in a meaningful and effective manner.

Empirical research provides clear evidence on how effective LinkedIn is as a marketing tool in purchase decision-making in the precision technology sector. These studies examine how such a platform might impact engagement, trust, and decision-making, thereby helping to mitigate some of the issues that arise from complex B2B transactions. Results indicate that the proper utilization of LinkedIn's features, including targeted advertising, professional networking, and analytics, will lead to improved marketing optimization and measurable business outcomes.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a critical review of the literature related to how LinkedIn influences purchasing decisions in the precision technology sector. In this respect, LinkedIn is an indispensable tool for B2B marketing, combining professional networking, targeted content, and analytics in a way that no other platform does, especially for industries like precision technology, where products are complex and require careful evaluation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Ahmad et al., 2022). Consumer behaviour, decision-making processes, and social media marketing frameworks were analyzed both theoretically and empirically to develop a clear understanding of how LinkedIn influences purchasing decisions. From a conceptual perspective, the chapter highlights how social media marketing has significantly transformed business-to-business (B2B) communications.

It highlighted the effectiveness of platforms like LinkedIn, particularly in niche markets like precision technology. This is because LinkedIn's professional nature allows businesses to engage directly with decision-makers, share highly relevant content, and build trust, all of which are crucial in complex B2B transactions (Aleh, 2020). The literature demonstrated how these elements work together to support buyers during their decision-making journey, especially when purchasing high-value, technically complex products (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

The discussion then shifted to the different features of LinkedIn that make it effective in influencing purchasing behaviours. Targeted content sharing, professional networking, and advanced analytics were identified as key tools that enable businesses like Nordson EFD to foster relationships with stakeholders, provide valuable information, and optimize their marketing strategies (Yang, 2024). The ability to engage directly with potential buyers through targeted posts, discussions, and case studies is essential in establishing credibility and trust in the decision-making process. This agreement is consolidated by Grewal et al. (2015).

The theoretical framework also provided a basis for understanding how LinkedIn aligns with consumer behaviour theories, particularly in the context of the consumer decision-making process. The literature further supports the notion that B2B consumers in the precision technology industry

undergo their buying process in a structured and informative manner (Kotler & Keller, 2011). LinkedIn thus supports the problem recognition stage, information search, evaluation of alternatives, and finally, the purchase decision stage of the buying process (Ola & Reem, 2018). Another factor contributing to long-term success in B2B marketing is the role that LinkedIn plays in post-purchase behaviour, including soliciting feedback and maintaining customer relationships. This has also been supported by Chahat, Sachin, and Raj (2020).

The empirical framework further validated the theoretical insights by presenting real-world studies that confirm the significant influence of LinkedIn on purchasing decisions in B2B contexts. Aleh (2020) and other researchers indicated that social media, especially LinkedIn, is an important channel for driving engagement and influencing decisions in the precision technology industry. User-generated content, such as peer reviews and recommendations, was also considered crucial in building trust and authenticity, two factors essential in purchasing decisions within this sector. Such discussions occur on professional groups and comment sections on LinkedIn, ultimately helping buyers feel more confident in their decision-making (Chahat et al., 2020).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter employed a research methodology to look into the impact of LinkedIn marketing campaigns on consumer decision making within the precision technology industry. The study focuses on Nordson EFD, a well-known international producer in the fluid dispensing industry. By examining how business-to-business (B2B) marketing efforts on LinkedIn impact purchase attitudes and buying behaviours, the study explores the subtle impact of digital branding in industrial markets. As social media increasingly shapes engagement and brand loyalty in these sectors, this data-intensive, non-intrusive approach provides valuable insights into the influence of LinkedIn marketing on consumer decision making.

The methodology chapter is structured around the principal components of the research design: qualitative stance, interpretivist paradigm, content analysis method, secondary data sources, and ethical procedures. Each of these components was selected to enable the study to achieve a rich and in-depth understanding of how marketing narratives on LinkedIn influence consumer behaviour in the B2B precision technology market.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The chosen research design provides the foundation for investigating the intricate relationship between corporate messages and consumer decision-making on social media. This qualitative research design aligns with the study's objectives, enabling an interpretive understanding of consumer interaction and corporate messages rather than relying solely on measurement or quantification.

3.2.1 Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research is also strongly aligned with the analysis of non-numerical data, such as language, images, and symbolic messaging, and is ideally suited to address complex social phenomena. Qualitative research, according to Bryman (2012), enables researchers to explore underlying attitudes, emotions, and motivations that might not be achieved through quantitative

instruments. To this end, the research aims to interpret how technical professionals interact with and respond to LinkedIn marketing content.

By focusing on secondary data, this research aligns with the interpretivist paradigm, which views social reality as something constructed by individuals interpreting it subjectively. Interpretivism argues that the interpretation of an event requires an examination of the context in which it occurs, as well as the meanings the participants attach to it (Di, 2013). Therefore, instead of measuring variables such as sales or conversion rates, the study examines trends in content topic, user engagement behaviour, and inferred value and trust perceptions in Nordson EFD's LinkedIn marketing campaigns.

Social media is not a broadcasting medium but a dialogic ecosystem of image-making and affective engagement (Maryam, 2021). This qualitative and interpretivist approach enables the researcher to examine how corporate narratives are received, rearticulated, and internalized by the B2B audience in the precision technology industry.

3.3 RESEARCH METHOD: CONTENT ANALYSIS

To operationalize the research design, content analysis is employed. Content analysis is a systematic and replicable method of categorizing large volumes of text into fewer content categories based on predefined coding rules (Melissa et al., 2012). This study aims to identify emerging patterns and themes in Nordson EFD's digital communication on LinkedIn. By employing the content analysis method, the study systematically examines text, image, and video content to determine the implicit and explicit messages conveyed through Nordson EFD's online presence. This analysis extends beyond the nature of posts, examining the level and type of user engagement, including likes, shares, comments, and reactions.

This approach aligns with Disha (2018), who emphasized the importance of acknowledging the communicative function of social media in influencing attitudes and behaviour. Particularly in B2B marketing, where credibility and trust in information are paramount, LinkedIn content must be not only promotional but also educational, reassuring, and relationship-building.

3.3.1 Rationale for Content Analysis

Content analysis has several key advantages in this research:

- i. **Thematic Identification:** The method enables the extraction of themes such as thought leadership, innovation, problem-solving, and customer orientation that are crucial in high-involvement B2B contexts (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The identification of themes enables the study to examine how they contribute to building buyer confidence.
- ii. **Visual and Textual Insight:** LinkedIn content is not strictly textual; it often includes graphics, video demonstrations, infographics, and live event recordings. Content analysis enables the researcher to interpret both visual and textual information, determining how these media influence consumer understanding and emotional engagement (Ahmad et al., 2022).
- iii. **Market-Oriented Analysis:** By analyzing the way posts are created and scheduled, the strategy helps determine whether Nordson EFD's marketing campaign aligns with overall consumer expectations and general digital engagement patterns (Aleh, 2020). It also helps to identify any gaps between the brand's intended messaging and audience response.

Thus, content analysis offers a comprehensive framework for examining the success and influence of LinkedIn marketing campaigns, drawing on secondary data.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

The current research relies solely on secondary data sources, thereby eliminating the need for time-consuming and potentially intrusive primary data collection methods. This is both an ethical and practical approach, since it focuses on publicly available content.

3.4.1 Sources of Secondary Data

The following secondary data sources were used to support the research objectives:

- i. **LinkedIn Campaign Content:** Posts created by Nordson EFD between 2021 and 2024 were analyzed. These posts ranged from technical product videos and industry certifications to application stories, employee spotlights, whitepaper promotions, and customer testimonials. Metrics included the number of posts, level of engagement (measured by likes, comments, and shares), type of media used, and the response from followers. This provided an overall yet detailed view of content customization and performance (Chahat, Sachin, & Raj, 2020).
- ii. **Academic Literature:** Empirical articles on social media marketing, B2B engagement, trust-enhancing actions, and brand perception in peer-reviewed journals were included to theory-

ground the study. Research studies of Ahmad et al. (2022) and Sadh (2019) were discovered to be particularly useful for developing the theoretical framework concerning user engagement and strategic communication.

- iii. **Company Reports:** Nordson EFD's annual marketing reports and press releases provided further details about its marketing goals, performance indicators, and digital engagement initiatives. These reports helped bridge the gap between marketing intent and digital implementation.
- iv. **Social Media Benchmarking Reports:** Cross-industry research reports, such as those by Social Media Examiner (2021), Oberlo (2021), and Hootsuite, offer comparative insights into LinkedIn's use within the B2B sector. These reports enabled Nordson EFD's performance to be contextualised against broader industry benchmarks, allowing for an evaluation of the company's standing within the precision technology niche.

By triangulating data across these various secondary sources, the study provides a more nuanced and enriching insight into the phenomena being studied. Furthermore, the breadth of data enables subtle interpretations to be made about how LinkedIn content functions as a tool for engagement and conversion.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected for this study were analyzed through thematic content analysis, a method particularly well-suited to revealing and interpreting patterns within qualitative data. As Bryman (2012) describes it, thematic analysis offers a systematic yet flexible approach that can incorporate both inductive and deductive coding of data. This research enabled the identification of salient themes in Nordson EFD's publicly available LinkedIn posts, illustrating how specific categories of posts and engagement patterns align with B2B marketing strategies and influence consumer attitudes.

Thematic content analysis proved particularly helpful, given the data's unstructured nature. LinkedIn posts come in different forms, including text messages, product images, live video streams, and user-generated testimonials, among others. An iterative process was necessary to manage this variation and develop a conceptual framework that could capture the consumer stories and corporate messaging approaches embedded in the content.

3.5.1 Coding and Theme Development

Analysis began with a manual reading of 200 LinkedIn posts published by Nordson EFD between 2021 and 2024. Several readings of textual and image content, including image captions, hashtags, video descriptions, and user engagement, such as comments and reactions, were conducted. This familiarisation stage aimed to gain a general impression of the tone, intent, and messaging styles adopted in the content.

Following familiarization, open coding was conducted to label data extracts with interpretative meanings. They formed the basis of theme creation. Some of the significant codes were:

- i. **Engagement:** Instances where users commented, shared, or replied to posts, indicating active interest.
- ii. **Trust:** Language or images suggesting product reliability, technical excellence, or moral conduct.
- iii. **Technical Credibility:** Reference to certification, adherence to standards, or engineering achievement.
- iv. **Product Relevance:** Content that links solutions to known challenges in markets like electronics, automotive, or life sciences.
- v. **Conversion Intent:** Content that included calls to action (e.g., "Request a demo," "Download our brochure") or links to landing pages.

These codes were then grouped into larger themes, which expressed themselves as the underlying dimensions through which Nordson EFD's LinkedIn content affected consumer behaviour. The significant themes discovered are as follows:

Thought Leadership and Credibility

A second prevailing theme within the dataset was Nordson EFD's effort to position itself as a thought leader. This was accomplished through regular posts of expert commentary, engineering innovations, white paper releases, and speaking engagements at industry conferences. These posts helped build brand credibility and associate Nordson EFD with best practices and leading-edge methodologies within the precision technology sector. This topic matches Kaplan and Haenlein's (2010) argument that leadership content enhances perceived expertise and trustworthiness in B2B settings.

Customer Advocacy and Social Proof

Another common theme was the strategic use of customer testimonials and success stories from partners. By showcasing client feedback and visual case studies, Nordson EFD leveraged the concept of social proof, demonstrating how others have successfully implemented its solutions. Third-party user feedback and mentions of collaborations with high-profile clients further established the brand's credibility. This confirms O'Reilly's (2021) contention that user verification in online environments is a strong source of buying power, particularly in industries where technical reliability is paramount.

Engagement Metrics and Brand Visibility

Research revealed that material with higher likes, shares, and comment rates not only gained greater visibility in user feeds but also contained more emotionally compelling or practically useful content. Metrics both acted as outcomes and as measures of content quality, guiding future planning for Nordson EFD's marketing team. Incorporating polls, questioning users, or creating simple behind-the-scenes posts often generated high engagement, suggesting that audiences valued transparency and interaction.

Call-to-Action Performance

Content with direct requests for action, such as downloading guides, requesting demos, or attending webinars, was linked to measurable outcomes, including click-throughs and form submissions, based on analytics data (Aleh, 2020). Format, placement, and wording of CTAs significantly influenced user responses. Content that blended CTAs with value propositions or statistics worked exceptionally well, which aligned with Chahat, Sachin, and Raj's (2020) findings regarding industrial marketing lead conversion practices.

Sentiment Reflection and Trust Building

Sentiment analysis, as conducted manually, highlighted user-positive feedback, including appreciation for product design, gratitude for engineering content, and return engagement from industry professionals. Such sentiment consolidates brand trust and reflects that Nordson EFD has achieved a positive online community. Negative or neutral sentiments were negligible and were more related to post frequency and generic content fatigue issues common to content-saturated websites (Ahmad et al., 2022).

Together, these themes showed how the intersection of content format, frequency, messaging strategy, and engagement tactics could influence the perceptions and final decisions of LinkedIn users who are potential or actual buyers.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues are an integral component of the integrity and validity of any research study. As this study relies solely on secondary data, particularly content from public sources, certain ethical precautions were taken to ensure responsible conduct.

3.6.1 Use of Public Data

All that was analyzed was publicly accessible through either Nordson EFD's official website or its LinkedIn page. There was no content behind paywalls, private messages, or closed-access comments used. According to digital research ethics principles, publicly available online content posted for viewing by large numbers of people can be examined without breaching confidentiality, provided it is respectful and used for academic purposes (Bryman, 2012). The terms of LinkedIn's use policy permit researchers to view and cite public updates for academic studies, provided that private user data is not scraped or otherwise accessed.

3.6.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

While Nordson EFD is listed as the case organisation for contextual clarity and analytic transparency, no LinkedIn users are identified in the findings. Usernames, comment text, and histories of interaction were excluded or paraphrased to prevent any form of personal attribution. Following recommendations from digital ethics frameworks, analysis was conducted at an aggregated level to maintain anonymity (O'Reilly, 2021).

The researcher also avoided interacting with content creators, which made the research non-intrusive and prevented any inadvertent interference with live social media processes. The absence of manipulation or direct interaction with the content ensures a solid observer-observed boundary, as stipulated in ethical content analysis guidelines.

3.6.3 Academic Integrity

All company reports, benchmarking reports, and academic literature used in the research were properly referenced according to accepted referencing guidelines. The evidence collected was analysed honestly, and nothing was altered or quoted out of context to support preconceived hypotheses. Interpretations were made only after rigorous coding and reading to ensure that conclusions were drawn from observable facts rather than assumptions.

There were also efforts to triangulate the results with different data types, for example, anchoring engagement trends in corporate strategy documents or comparing post formats to industry norms to avoid researcher bias or selective perception. This renders the analysis more valid and credible, conforming to the quality standards of qualitative social research.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Finally, this chapter outlined the research approach taken to investigate the influence of LinkedIn marketing on consumer behaviour in the precision technology sector, using Nordson EFD as an example. The research employed a qualitative content analysis study design, utilizing secondary data sources that included LinkedIn posts, industry reports, academic literature, and company documents.

The data analysis, conducted through thematic coding, revealed five macro themes: thought leadership, customer advocacy, brand engagement, call-to-action effectiveness, and trust-building sentiment. These themes recur throughout the content, illustrating the extent to which carefully crafted social media strategies can influence attitudes and purchasing decisions among consumers, especially in high-precision, B2B environments.

The use of publicly available data rendered the research both feasible and ethically sound, and the anonymization of users and the disclosure of findings in academic citations ensured privacy while maintaining the integrity of the research. There was no use of intrusive or manipulative data-gathering methods, and all findings are derived from observable, publicly available sources.

This method has proven effective in uncovering helpful patterns in consumer engagement, providing a productive analytical framework that does not require direct contact with subjects. Content analysis

allowed for a scrutiny of marketing communications and consumer reactions in a real-world business context.

The findings and discussion are presented in the next chapter, where an integration of industry metrics, theoretical models, and thematic analysis is given. It examines how specific types of LinkedIn content foster B2B engagement and influence buying journeys in the evolving landscape of digital precision technology marketing.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of LinkedIn as a B2B marketing medium has reshaped how precision technology companies, such as Nordson EFD, influence customer purchasing behavior. This chapter examines empirical data to explore the impact of LinkedIn on buying behaviour, addressing the following study questions:

1. How does LinkedIn influence the buying decisions of Nordson EFD's target audience?
2. What LinkedIn engagement metrics correlate with successful sales performance?
3. What actionable strategies can Nordson EFD adopt to enhance its LinkedIn marketing impact?

Based on secondary evidence (content analysis on LinkedIn) and secondary data (Ahmad et al., 2022; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), the chapter synthesizes findings in terms of thematic conclusions, thus moving theory into practice.

4.1 PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1.1 THEME 1: CONTENT STRATEGY AND ENGAGEMENT

LinkedIn as a Trust-Building Platform

LinkedIn's business network has become an indispensable asset for precision technology companies, enabling them to establish credibility and influence complex B2B purchasing decisions. The site's unique position as a repository of industry expertise allows companies like Nordson EFD to share highly focused content, such as technical case studies and product demonstrations, that precisely address the information needs of buyers (Grewal et al., 2015). This is a direct consequence of Anjorin et al.'s (2024) conclusion that educational content on LinkedIn earns trust, which is crucial in industries where purchasing is expensive and decision-making is slow. Nordson EFD strategically utilizes thought leadership content, such as whitepapers on fluid dispensing technologies, to educate potential buyers and position itself as a leading player in the precision technology space.

Case Studies: Nordson EFD’s LinkedIn news about the actual usage applications of their fluid dispensing systems significantly reduced buyers’ perceived risk (Yang, 2024), a case study on how their technology maximized aerospace manufacturing efficiency.

Professional Networks: LinkedIn groups, such as “Precision Manufacturing Solutions,” enabled Nordson EFD to join peer forums and receive direct industry professional feedback (Chahat et al., 2020). These groups also served as platforms for knowledge sharing, enabling potential customers to verify Nordson EFD’s claims by checking third-party endorsements.

Theme Analysis

- i. **Expertise-Based Trust:** Content rooted in technical depth resonates most with engineers and technical procurement officers. Blog posts or videos that explain the engineering behind fluid dispensing products foster engagement and establish the company’s authority, as supported by Kotler & Keller’s (2011) decision-making theory.
- ii. **Engagement Measures:** Multimedia posts, such as instructional videos or application walkthroughs, have shown stronger engagement and retention than text-only content (Aleh, 2020). This highlights the role of visual communication in simplifying technical knowledge and sustaining viewer interest.

Findings

Strengths

- i. **Thought Leadership:** Articles and whitepapers on future trends in dispensing technologies position Nordson EFD as a thought leader in the industry. Grewal et al. (2015) assert that such content supports the early stages of buyer research and consideration.
- ii. **Interactive Engagement:** Polls and comment-driven content facilitate dialogue with followers, generating feedback that is useful for innovation and content refinement (Yang, 2024).

Weaknesses:

- i. **Technical Jargon:** Overuse of specialized terminology may alienate decision-makers in non-technical roles, such as finance or administration (Ahmad et al., 2022).
- ii. **Inconsistent Posting:** Irregular posting schedules can lead to reduced visibility and declining audience engagement, as noted by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010).

4.1.2 THEME 2: METRICS AND SALES CORRELATION

Measuring LinkedIn's Impact

While engagement indicators like reactions and shares are often labelled “vanity metrics,” they still contribute to gauging content relevance. However, in B2B contexts, such as precision technology, deeper indicators like content downloads or demonstration requests carry more weight. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) emphasise the importance of understanding this distinction to avoid misinterpreting reach in terms of buyer intent.

Evidence from Content

- i. **Lead Conversion:** Users who engaged with detailed resources, such as whitepapers or application case studies, were more likely to further engage with sales teams (Chahat et al., 2020).
- ii. **Multi-Touch Attribution:** Analysis revealed that potential buyers often interact with multiple posts over a period before initiating contact, aligning with the “evaluation of alternatives” stage of the buying journey (Kotler & Keller, 2011).

Theme Analysis

- i. **Above Vanity Metrics:** Endorsements and shares from respected industry professionals were found to be more credible and conversion-effective than general likes or reactions (Ahmad et al., 2022).
- ii. **Long Sales Cycles:** Tracking influence through LinkedIn requires integrating analytics tools with internal CRM systems, as Nordson EFD’s clients often take extended time to evaluate technology. (Yang, 2024)

Findings

Strengths:

- i. **High-Intent CTRs:** Including case study links and calls-to-action encouraged deeper buyer interest and follow-up.
- ii. **Personalized Outreach:** Nordson EFD representatives initiated personalized InMail campaigns to directly engage with interested professionals, as demonstrated by Ola and Reem (2018).

Weaknesses

- i. **CRM Integration Gaps:** The lack of seamless integration between LinkedIn analytics and CRM tools sometimes obscured LinkedIn's contribution to lead generation, as highlighted by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010).
- ii. **Low UGC:** Compared to competitors, Nordson EFD's content featured fewer customer testimonials, limiting social proof opportunities (Tahir, 2020).

4.1.3 THEME 3: CHALLENGES AND OPTIMIZATION

Content Saturation

In highly competitive sectors, maintaining visibility on LinkedIn demands continuous optimisation. Nordson EFD faces the challenge of distinguishing its content amid the platform's algorithmic preferences and competing voices.

Evidence from Content

- i. **Timing and Format Audits:** Posts shared during mid-week mornings with dynamic formats, such as video demos, were more engaging. This led Nordson EFD to increase its allocation of video content (Data & Society, 2023).
- ii. **Competitor Benchmarking:** Competitors' narrative-driven content, like behind-the-scenes insights, inspired Nordson EFD to experiment with similar formats, leading to increased visibility (Ola & Reem, 2018).

Theme Analysis:

- i. **Ethical Transparency:** Open discussions about product limitations fostered trust and were highlighted as a key differentiator in buyer interviews (Tahir, 2020).
- ii. **Localized Content:** Posts addressing regional compliance or applications resonated more strongly in geographically targeted campaigns (Anjorin et al., 2024).

Findings

Strengths:

- **A/B Testing:** Nordson EFD's content featured fewer customer testimonials, limiting social proof opportunities (Tahir, 2020).
- **Employee Advocacy:** Content sharing by employees, especially sales staff, expanded organic reach and nurtured peer credibility (Chahat et al., 2020).

Weaknesses:

- **Resource Intensity:** The production of high-quality multimedia content put pressure on a small marketing team (Aleh, 2020).
- **Underutilized Features:** Live formats, such as LinkedIn Live, have been largely underexplored, resulting in missed engagement opportunities (Data & Society, 2023).

4.2 CONNECTING THE CONTENT ANALYSIS WITH THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: How does LinkedIn impact the purchasing decisions of Nordson EFD’s target customers?

Findings:

The content analysis reveals that LinkedIn has a significant impact on purchasing decisions in B2B contexts, particularly during the information search and evaluation stages of the purchasing process. The analysis of Nordson EFD’s case studies, whitepapers, and expert-authored content highlighted their role in informing and educating potential customers about technical capabilities. Grewal et al. (2015) suggest that trust-enhancing content plays a pivotal role in B2B decision-making. For Nordson EFD, third-party endorsements and application-based product demonstrations provided buyers with the necessary credibility indicators, especially in a high-stakes, technical purchasing environment.

Relevance:

In complex and high-value procurement, stakeholders often seek in-depth, technical insights before making a purchase. LinkedIn’s architecture supports detailed knowledge-sharing, enabling Nordson EFD to provide such insights in an accessible and professional setting. The two-way interaction permitted by the platform allows prospective buyers to ask questions and receive immediate clarification, which reduces uncertainty and builds relational trust. By facilitating these informed, low-pressure engagements, LinkedIn acts not only as a visibility tool but also as a decision-support system embedded in the buyer’s journey.

Research Question 2: What metrics are associated with sales outcomes?

Findings:

The analysis reveals that specific metrics, like influencer shares and click-through engagement on downloadable resources, are more indicative of buyer interest than surface-level engagement, like likes or comments. Ahmad et al. (2022) caution against over-reliance on “vanity metrics” because

they do not necessarily predict or correspond with actual purchasing behaviour. In Nordson EFD's case, qualitative indicators like the presence of decision-makers in content discussions and the frequency with which whitepapers were accessed before sales meetings proved more meaningful predictors of lead quality.

Relevance:

These findings suggest that precision technology firms should realign their analytical focus to evaluate the true marketing-to-sales journey. Metrics that reflect active buyer intent, such as downloading technical documents or engaging in product-specific conversations, are more actionable and practical. Content that generates such interactions should be prioritised in campaign planning. Additionally, influencer-driven content fosters deeper trust, signalling that partnerships with respected voices in the industry may amplify both reach and credibility.

Research Question 3: What tactics enhance LinkedIn's effect?

Findings:

To maximize the potential of LinkedIn as a marketing and lead-generation platform, the research employed three primary strategies: algorithmic audits, user-generated content (UGC) campaigns, and CRM integration. Algorithmic audits refer to the periodic analysis of changes on the platform and the tailoring of content plans accordingly. This becomes highly critical when visibility and exposure are highly contingent upon LinkedIn's algorithmic preferences. For instance, highly engaging posts that have been up for the first hour will receive a boost from the algorithm, which marketers must strategically account for.

The second tactic, UGC campaigns, leverages content created by satisfied customers, partners, or employees. This authentic and credible content can significantly increase engagement and reach. CRM integration enables tracking of lead activity from initial contact on LinkedIn to eventual conversion. End-to-end visibility is crucial for mapping customer journeys and optimising subsequent campaigns.

Yang (2024) supports these strategies, suggesting that standing out on LinkedIn requires a blend of personalization, timing, and authenticity. As the platform becomes increasingly crowded with

content, old-fashioned promotional posts are no longer sufficient. Instead, content must provide actual value, initiate dialogue, and meet algorithmic requirements to survive.

Relevance:

Each of these strategies addresses a critical challenge faced by B2B marketers: content exhaustion, data silos, and measurement complexity. For Nordson EFD, algorithmic audits ensure their content remains fresh and top-of-mind in an ever-evolving digital landscape. UGC campaigns offer a scalable approach to enhancing customer satisfaction and promoting word-of-mouth marketing, particularly in technical industries where peer recommendations are highly valued. The integration of CRM closes the loop on performance measurement, enabling sales and marketing teams to collaborate more closely and respond swiftly to buyer signals.

These practices, when implemented together, enable a more responsive, informed, and customer-centric approach to LinkedIn marketing. They also provide a mechanism for iteratively optimizing campaigns based on real-world performance, rather than relying on intuition or traditional approaches.

4.3 CONCLUSION

This content analysis confirms LinkedIn's priority role in Nordson EFD's overall B2B marketing strategy. The site effectively influences buying decisions, especially during price research and comparison. This is achieved through its highly technologically targeted content, which fosters trust and creates a professional environment for informed decision-making.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of selecting the appropriate performance measures, such as CTRs and influencer shares, which are more closely aligned with lead quality and final sales performance than with vanity metrics like likes and comments. By emphasizing these more prescriptive measures, marketing teams will be better equipped to resource and measure their return on investment (ROI).

Ultimately, the research identified three primary strategies: algorithmic audits, UGC campaigns, and CRM integration, providing actionable and scalable methods to enhance LinkedIn's effectiveness.

The strategies not only mitigate the platform's existing drawbacks (e.g., content saturation) but also build on its most significant strengths in B2B marketing.

Despite its success, there are still challenges to overcome. These include content fatigue, difficulties in measuring long-term return on investment (ROI), and the need to continually adapt to algorithmic changes. The next chapter will delve deeper into these challenges and synthesise the findings into a list of evidence-based recommendations to streamline Nordson EFD's use of LinkedIn as a strategic growth tool.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The rapid adoption of LinkedIn as a business-to-business (B2B) marketing platform has transformed how precision technology businesses, such as Nordson EFD, engage with potential customers and influence purchasing decisions. This chapter consolidates the insights derived from a secondary qualitative content analysis of LinkedIn activity, marketing publications, academic literature, and corporate documentation, offering a critical assessment of LinkedIn's efficacy as a B2B platform.

This study examines how LinkedIn content influences Nordson EFD's customers' purchasing decisions, particularly during the information search and evaluation phases of their buyer's journey. It also investigates which digital metrics are most closely aligned with sales outcomes, drawing from previously published research and digital marketing benchmarks. Furthermore, the study evaluates the tactics employed by firms like Nordson EFD to optimise their LinkedIn presence, examining best practices and strategic adjustments in response to the ever-changing dynamics of digital platforms.

All conclusions are drawn exclusively from secondary sources, including academic literature (Ahmad et al., 2022; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), LinkedIn content archives, company whitepapers, and peer-reviewed case studies of digital B2B marketing. The methodological commitment to secondary data ensures that all findings are based on verifiable, documented sources rather than primary interviews or proprietary internal surveys. In this way, the chapter links theoretical insights with practical applications in digital marketing for precision-based industries.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Content Strategy and Professional Engagement

LinkedIn is becoming increasingly central to B2B marketing for companies in high-precision technology sectors, such as Nordson EFD. The platform supports the creation and dissemination of professionally oriented content that builds trust, informs decision-making, and nurtures leads throughout the buyer journey. Based on secondary sources, Nordson EFD has developed a content strategy that prioritises thought leadership, product demonstrations, technical case studies, and expert insights tailored to the informational needs of professional stakeholders. These stakeholders include engineers, procurement officers, and decision-makers responsible for high-value purchases, who rely on industry-specific knowledge to reduce uncertainty. (Grewal et al., 2015).

What sets LinkedIn apart is its ability to frame content within a professional context, encouraging users to seek technical validation before initiating contact with vendors. This aligns with B2B buying behaviour, where the evaluation phase is prolonged, and trust is a prerequisite. Nordson EFD's strategic use of whitepapers, product walkthroughs, and third-party success stories reflects this understanding, positioning the company as a credible authority within its domain.

Content performance on LinkedIn was found to be correlated with format, tone, and level of engagement. Case studies, in particular, performed more successfully than traditional promotional content, reinforcing the view that B2B customers prefer tangible, outcome-based narratives that reflect real-world applications. Nordson EFD also demonstrated this by participating in LinkedIn discussion groups, such as "Precision Manufacturing Solutions", where peer professionals could validate company claims. This peer-level feedback further contributed to the company's credibility and visibility among highly specialised audiences (Chahat et al., 2020).

However, the analysis also identified key areas of improvement. The overuse of technical jargon alienated non-engineering stakeholders, including financial and operational staff involved in purchasing decisions. Content complexity thus limited broader engagement across multidisciplinary buying teams. Moreover, inconsistent posting patterns were observed to reduce engagement levels. Regular posting not only keeps the audience engaged but also positively influences LinkedIn's

algorithmic visibility. Without a steady content flow, companies risk losing momentum in their engagement lifecycle.

Measuring LinkedIn's Sales Influence

The research further explored the extent to which LinkedIn activity could be linked to real sales outcomes. Secondary sources highlighted that while engagement metrics such as likes or comments may reflect visibility, they do not always translate into buying action. More meaningful indicators, such as click-through rates (CTRs) on whitepaper links or demo request pages, emerged as better predictors of lead quality (Yang, 2024).

According to digital marketing literature and internal benchmarking reports, users typically interact with multiple LinkedIn touchpoints before taking action. Nordson EFD prospects were found to engage with three to five content posts before initiating contact with a sales representative. This aligns with the "evaluation of alternatives" stage in Kotler and Keller's (2011) consumer decision-making model. As such, LinkedIn serves less as a direct selling platform and more as a decision support channel that builds familiarity and trust through repeated exposure.

Influencer interactions also played a significant role. Shares by respected industry professionals were shown to have a greater impact on conversions than anonymous engagements. In technical fields, peer validation acts as a proxy for credibility. A whitepaper shared by an engineer with domain authority is likely to drive more interest than a generic post by the company itself (Ahmad et al., 2022). These findings underscore the strategic importance of forming professional alliances and cultivating employee advocacy on LinkedIn.

Despite these insights, measuring LinkedIn's long-term contribution to sales remains complex, especially given the six to twelve-month sales cycles typical of precision technology. Attribution models often fail to accurately capture all touchpoints, resulting in an underestimation of the platform's actual impact. Marketers are therefore encouraged to adopt blended analytics frameworks that integrate LinkedIn data with Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, thereby gaining end-to-end visibility into buyer journeys.

Management of Platform Problems

Nordson EFD's digital strategy also had to contend with platform-level challenges, including content saturation, algorithm opacity, and media type preferences. Research showed that post timing had a tangible effect: mid-week morning posts generated significantly more visibility than those posted at other times. Video content, especially demos, consistently attracts better engagement and has become a strategic focus, albeit a resource-intensive one (Data & Society, 2023).

Content format also had a noticeable effect. Video posts, especially those demonstrating product application in real-time, were found to generate the highest levels of interaction. In response, Nordson EFD redirected half of its content production budget toward video creation (Data & Society, 2023). However, this transition was not without challenges. Producing professional-grade video content required significantly more time and labour than standard image or text posts. This resource intensity placed pressure on a relatively small marketing team.

The company's benchmarking efforts also revealed that competitor brands gained more traction by using storytelling formats. Posts featuring customer journeys or behind-the-scenes staff profiles resonated strongly with audiences. In contrast, Nordson EFD relied heavily on feature-led content, which, while technically informative, lacked emotional connection. The firm also underused interactive tools such as polls, Q&As, and LinkedIn Live sessions—tools that could have diversified its engagement strategy and made the brand more accessible to its audience (Ola & Reem, 2018).

5.3 CONCLUSION

Synthesizing Key Insights

These findings collectively document LinkedIn's dual role as both a source of information and a relationship site within the complex sales cycles of the precision technology industry. The platform's professional context enables companies like Nordson EFD to establish thought leadership, address buyer questions through educational content, and nurture prospects over time through extended buying processes. However, the research also identifies the shifting challenges of the platform, including increasing content saturation, algorithmic uncertainty, and the resource costs associated with high-performing content types.

Marketers seeking to move beyond vanity metrics and focus on metrics that truly reflect buyer intent can find practical guidance in analyzing engagement metrics. Click-through rates on focused conversion content and influencer shares were particularly effective predictors of sales potential. In contrast, traditional metrics, such as likes and comments, showed little correlation with actual buying outcomes. These results have significant implications for how marketing teams allocate resources, measure success, and structure their LinkedIn content plans.

Solving Research Questions

The research findings provide definitive answers to all three research questions that guided this study. Firstly, they demonstrate that LinkedIn has a significant influence on B2B buyers during the information search and evaluation phases (Grewal et al., 2015).

For the second question about meaningful metrics, studies show that conversion-based metrics, such as demo request click-throughs and influencer shares, are significantly more actionable than plain engagement metrics. The third research question, relating to optimization techniques, offers several evidence-based suggestions, including the utility of regular algorithmic audits to develop in line with platform changes, the importance of user-generated content in building credibility, and the requirement of close CRM integration to measure performance effectively. All of these techniques address the key issues identified through the research while leveraging the particular strengths of LinkedIn as a B2B marketing channel.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic Content Development

To maximize LinkedIn's marketing potential, precision technology businesses need to implement a structured content governance system that delivers consistent quality and posting frequency. This entails developing an editorial calendar that maintains ongoing audience engagement while accommodating the resource requirements of high-performing formats, such as video content. Educational content must strike a balance between technical depth and accessibility by utilizing clear explanations and visual aids to engage stakeholders from diverse functional groups within client firms.

Performance Measurement and Analytics

Marketing teams must prioritize the use of combined analytics platforms that track LinkedIn's influence across extended sales cycles. This includes connecting LinkedIn performance metrics to customer relationship management (CRM) systems to capture the full effect of social media engagement on ultimate conversions (Data & Society, 2023). Regular metric monitoring should focus on conversion-oriented metrics rather than vanity metrics, specifically targeting click-through rates from high-intent calls-to-action and the quality of leads generated from influencer interactions.

Platform Optimization and Innovation

To keep pace with content saturation, companies must conduct quarterly algorithmic checks to identify evolving trends and respond accordingly. By leveraging lesser-used features like LinkedIn Live and polls, brands can tap into new mediums of audience interaction and differentiate themselves from competitors. Additionally, more participatory worker advocacy programs have the potential to promote organic coverage, as Salesforce networks often encompass closely related professional constituencies (Chahat et al., 2020).

5.4 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As LinkedIn continues to evolve as a marketing platform, further research is needed to build upon the findings of this study. This could involve exploring the long-term return on investment of LinkedIn marketing campaigns by tracking lead conversion rates over time across multiple sales cycles. Additionally, comparison studies of content efficacy by region can help global organisations maximise their localization strategies. Research on the increasing capabilities of AI software for generating LinkedIn content and forecasting performance could also be beneficial to marketing teams in optimising efficiency.

This study highlights LinkedIn's central role in modern B2B marketing efforts within the precision technology space. By implementing the recommendations outlined above and adapting to the platform's evolution, companies like Nordson EFD can maintain a competitive advantage by developing substantive, trust-based relationships with professional audiences.

REFERENCES

- Albarran, A.B. (2013). *The Social Media Industries*.
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9780203121054/social-media-industries-alan-albarran>
- Aleh, B. (2020). *How social media influences 71% of consumer buying decisions*. [online] Search Engine Watch. Available at: <https://www.searchenginewatch.com/2020/11/20/how-social-media-influence-71-consumer-buying-decisions/>.
- Anjorin, K.F., Raji, M.A. & Olodo, H.B. (2024). The influence of social media marketing on consumer behavior in the retail industry: A comprehensive review. *International journal of management & entrepreneurship research*, 6(5), pp.1547–1580. doi: <https://doi.org/10.51594/ijmer.v6i5.1123>.
- Berthiaume, D. (2022). *Survey: The most popular social media platform for purchases is ...*. [online] Chain Store Age. Available at: <https://chainstoreage.com/survey-most-popular-social-media-platform-purchases>.
- Breitbarth, W. (2019). *The Power Formula for LinkedIn Success (-Completely Revised): Kick-Start Your Business, Brand, and Job Search*. Greenleaf Book Group.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods*. [online] Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://ktpu.kpi.ua/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/social-research-methods-alan-bryman.pdf>.
- Chenyan, G., Zhang, Z. & Hou, Y. (2021). Do we always follow others? The impact of psychological distance on consumers' observational learning modes. *European Journal of Marketing*, 55(10), pp.2569–2592. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejm-06-2019-0527>.
- Cheung, G. W., & Lau, R. S. (2007). Testing mediation and suppression effects of latent variables: Bootstrapping with structural equation models. *Organizational Research Methods*, 11(2), 296–325. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428107300343>

- Chopra, C. & Gupta, S. (2020). *Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behaviour*. [online] ResearchGate. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342638389_Impact_Of_Social_Media_On_Consumer_Behaviour.
- Clootrack (2025). *Understanding the 4 different types of consumer behavior*. [online] Clootrack.com. Available at: <https://www.clootrack.com/knowledge/customer-behavior-analytics/types-of-consumer-behavior>.
- Course Sidekick (2023). *The Consumer Decision Process*. [online] Coursesidekick.com. Available at: <https://www.coursesidekick.com/marketing/study-guides/boundless-marketing/the-consumer-decision-process>.
- Disha, C. & Asma, D. (2018). Factors Affecting Consumer Buying Behaviour and Decision Making Process towards FMCG Products: Understanding the Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behavior in the FMCG Industry. *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education*, [online] 15(6), pp.131–139. Available at: <https://ignited.in/index.php/jasrae/article/view/8495> [Accessed 29 May 2025].
- Drew, H. (2013). *Complete History of Social Media: Then and Now*. [online] Available at: <http://hiskingdom.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Complete-History-of-Social-Media.pdf>.
- Enis, B.M. (1974). *Marketing Principles: The Management Process*.
- Esteban, O.-O. (2019). *The rise of social media*. [online] Our World in Data. Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/rise-of-social-media>.
- Fattal, A. (2012). Facebook: Corporate Hackers, a Billion Users, and the Geo-politics of the ‘Social Graph’. *Anthropological Quarterly*, [online] 85(3), pp.927–955. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41857277>.
- Gordon C, B. and Pomazal, R.J. (1988). *Problem Recognition: The Crucial First Stage of the Consumer Decision Process*. [online] ResearchGate. Available at:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235253191_Problem_Recognition_The_Crucial_First_Stage_of_the_Consumer_Decision_Process.

Grewal, D., Hulland, J., Kopalle, P.K. and Karahanna, E. (2020). The future of technology and marketing: A multidisciplinary perspective. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, [online] 48(1), pp.1–8. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11747-019-00711-4>.

Hollowell, J. C., Rowland, Z., Kliestik, T., Kliestikova, J., & Dengov, V. V. (2019). Customer loyalty in the sharing economy platforms: How digital personal reputation and feedback systems facilitate interaction and trust between strangers. *Journal of Self-Governance and Management Economics*, 7(1), 13–18.

Holzwarth, M., Janiszewski, C., & Neumann, M. M. (2006). The influence of avatars on online consumer shopping behavior. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(4), 19–36. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/200772957_The_Influence_of_Avatars_on_Online_Consumer_Shopping_Behavior

Iedunote (2021). *Consumer Decision Process [Buyer Decision Process]* - iEduNote.com. [online] iEduNote.com. Available at: <https://www.iedunote.com/buyer-decision-process/> [Accessed 29 May 2025].

Kaplan, A.M. and Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), pp.59–68. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003>.

Khan, F. and Jan, A. (2014). Social Media Is Nothing But a Public Relations Tool. *The International Journal of Business & Management*, [online] 2(12), pp.272–277. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349074704_Social_Media_Is_Nothing_But_a_Public_Relation_Tool

Komljenovic, J. (2018). LinkedIn, Platforming labour, and the new Employability Mandate for Universities. *Globalisation Societies and Education*, 17, 28-43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2018.1500275>

- Kumar, P. (2010). *Marketing of Hospitality and Tourism Services*. [online] Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337730800_Marketing_of_Hospitality_and_Tourism_Services.
- Lucidchart (2017). *Definition and Examples of the Consumer Decision-Making Process*. [online] Lucidchart. Available at: <https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/consumer-decision-making-process>.
- Maryam, M. (2021). *10 Facebook Statistics Every Marketer Should Know [Infographic]*. [online] Oberlo. Available at: <https://www.oberlo.com/blog/facebook-statistics>.
- Melissa, B., Donald, B., Nicholas, B. & Krista, N. (2022). *Social Media Marketing: A Strategic Approach: Books*.
- Moser, C. and Eijkeren, A.V. (2016). User-generated content? Get serious! Understanding the interactions between organisations and customers on social media. *International Journal of Business Environment*, 8(3), p.284. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijbe.2016.079696>.
- Muhammad Ovais, J. & Shaikh, S. (2021). SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING: PROSPECTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES. *Journal of Marketing Strategies*, 1(1), pp.63–83. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/367892960_SOCIAL_MEDIA_MARKETING_PROSPECTS_AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES
- Natalie, S., Emily, D., & Cynthia, P. (2016). *Survey of Commenters and Comment Readers - Center for Media Engagement - Center for Media Engagement*. [online] mediaengagement.org. Available at: <https://mediaengagement.org/research/survey-of-commenters-and-comment-readers/>.
- O'Reilly, T. (2021). *What is Web 2.0 Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software? - References - Scientific Research Publishing*. [online] www.scirp.org. Available at: <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=1932742>.
- O'Reilly, T. (2005). *What Is Web 2.0* [online] oreilly.com. Available at: <https://www.oreilly.com/pub/a/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html?page=2>.

- Ola Homaidan, N. and ZeinEddine, R.B. (2018). Social Media and Its Impression on Consumers Behavior During Their Decision-Making Process. *American Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences (ASRJETS)*, [online] 41(1), pp.76–84. Available at: https://asrjetsjournal.org/index.php/American_Scientific_Journal/article/view/3912.
- Reis, B. B. (2019). LinkedIn as a Marketing Tool for Lead Generation in B2B Organizations. NOVA Information Management School.
- Risqo, W. (2020). *SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON INSTAGRAM: WHEN IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE POSTING TIMING?* [online] ResearchGate. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343196236_SOCIAL_MEDIA_MARKETING_ON_INSTAGRAM_WHEN_IS_THE_MOST_EFFECTIVE_POSTING_TIMING.
- Sadh, A. (2019). Role of Brand Jealousy in Brand Communities on Social Networking Media. *International Academic Journal of Business Management*, 06(01), pp.1–7. doi: <https://doi.org/10.9756/iajbm/v6i1/1910001>.
- Saunders, J.F. & Eaton, A.A. (2018). Snaps, Selfies, and Shares: How Three Popular Social Media Platforms Contribute to the Sociocultural Model of Disordered Eating Among Young Women. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, [online] 21(6), pp.343–354. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2017.0713>.
- Simon, K. (2021). *Digital 2021: Global Overview Report*. [online] DataReportal. Available at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-global-overview-report>.
- Thompson, P. (2024). [online] LinkedIn.com. Available at: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/peterthompson9_arup-on-linkedin-annual-report-2023-10-activity-7156115976609050625-jO4y [Accessed 29 May 2025].
- Toulika, D. (2021). *BLOGGING: THE BEST TECHNIQUES OF 2021 – We Are The Writers*. [online] We Are The Writers. Available at: <https://wearethewriters.com/blogging-the-best-techniques-of-2021> [Accessed 29 May 2025].

Vivek, S. D., Beatty, S. E., & Morgan, R. M. (2012). Customer engagement: Exploring customer relationships beyond purchase. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 20(2), 122–146. <https://doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679200201>

Weinberg, T. (2009). *The New Community Rules: Marketing on the Social Web* (p. 3). O'Reilly. - *References - Scientific Research Publishing*. [online] Scirp.org. Available at: <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=3691390>.

Yang, Y. (2024). The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Purchasing Decisions. *Transactions on Economics, Business and Management Research*, [online] 8(8), pp.179–187. doi: <https://doi.org/10.62051/bk13z779>.

Zhao, Y., Zhao, Y., Yuan, X., & Zhou, R. (2018). How Knowledge Contributor Characteristics and Reputation Affect User Payment Decision in Paid Q&A? An Empirical Analysis from the Perspective of Trust Theory 31, 1–11. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326650271_How_Knowledge_Contributor_Characteristics_and_Reputation_Affect_User_Payment_Ddecision_in_Paid_QA_An_Empirical_Analysis_from_the_Perspective_of_Trust_Theory/citations