

Decoding Emotions: Divergent Theories and Applications in Psychology and Marketing

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Abstract. This article explores the divergent theories and applications of emotions in psychology and marketing, focusing on their impact on consumer behavior and decision-making. By analyzing key psychological theories, such as Mehrabian and Russell's Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance theory, the psycho-evolutionary perspective, and the Cognitive Arousal Theory, the paper explores how emotions are understood as either innate and biologically rooted or constructed through cognitive processes. In the marketing context, models as the Affect Infusion Model and the Emotional Processing Model illustrate how emotional responses influence brand perception and consumer choices. By integrating insights from both psychological and marketing perspectives, the article provides a comprehensive view of how emotions shape consumer experiences, offering valuable implications for researchers and practitioners interested in leveraging emotional dynamics to enhance brand appeal and consumer loyalty. The paper serves a dual purpose of providing a holistic perspective on the emotional processes as well as opening up a new approach to thinking about immaterial and material reality.

Keywords: *Emotions; Psychology; Marketing; Decision-making; Consumer behavior.*

1. Introduction

Emotions play a pivotal role in consumer decision-making across diverse cultural contexts. In Western markets, where individuality is emphasized, emotions shape personal brand connections, while in Eastern markets, collective experiences influence brand perceptions (Amatulli et al., 2021). Understanding these emotional dynamics is crucial for marketers and psychologists seeking to develop effective consumer engagement strategies.

Psychologists and marketers studying the link between emotions and consumer behavior seek to integrate insights from multiple disciplines. Numerous theories explain how emotions are structured both internally and externally, influencing our actions and guiding brands in creating emotionally engaging experiences.

The Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance (PAD) model by Mehrabian and Russell provides a foundational framework for understanding how emotions influence consumer behavior (Kulviwat et al., 2016). This model explains how feelings of pleasure, arousal, and dominance shape purchasing decisions. Building on these insights, the rise of neuromarketing has enabled researchers to directly measure emotional engagement using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI). By analyzing neural responses, studies have demonstrated that heightened brain activity in emotional processing regions correlates with stronger consumer loyalty (Moisescu et al., 2022).

Neuroscience has undergone significant evolution since its early theoretical stages, and the incorporation of fMRI and other neuromarketing tools has allowed researchers to directly observe brain mechanisms involved in consumer emotions (Moisescu et al., 2022). This study applies the Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance (PAD) model to analyze the emotional effects on decision-making across different cultural contexts. This work provides a holistic understanding of the emotional determinants of consumer behavior and brand devotion in the West and East by converging these approaches.

Thus, these innovations form the foundation of science, enabling researchers to detect the emotional triggers related to specific behavioral outcomes and allowing marketers to execute more targeted, visually appealing campaigns. While these theories have been valuable tools, recent research in neuromarketing and cognitive neuroscience has attempted to integrate these diverse models into a more unified framework for understanding emotional processing and decision-making (Khan et al., 2021).

In the context of brand relationships and purchasing decisions, the 'Emotions as the Main Factors' model highlights that emotions are not merely fleeting states but are deeply ingrained in consumers' cognition and subconscious processes. Moreover, brands adapt emotional appeals in advertising according to cultural values. For example, brands tend to focus on emotions like excitement or self-actualization in individualistic societies while harmony and shared experiences in collectivistic ones (Amatulli et al., 2021). To explore these intersections, this study addresses the following key questions:

- How do psychological and marketing theories on emotions converge in influencing consumer decision-making?
- What are the practical implications of these theories in enhancing consumer engagement and brand loyalty?

Based on these theoretical foundations, we propose the following hypotheses:

- Proposition 1: Simple emotions, such as happiness and fear, as described in the James-Lange and Cannon-Bard theories, have a stronger influence on subconscious buying behavior due to their primal nature.
- Proposition 2: Complex attitudes, formed through repeated emotional experiences, play a more significant role in fostering long-term consumer loyalty.
- Proposition 3: Neuromarketing tools, such as fMRI-based emotional resonance mapping, can more accurately predict consumer choices than traditional psychological models.

This study aims to explore the following key areas:

- What role do primary and secondary emotions play in shaping short- and long-term consumer decisions?
- To what extent can marketing strategies leverage emotions to enhance customer experience and engagement?

This paper first introduces emotions by providing a detailed definition and explaining their psychological and physiological foundations. It then examines the distinctions between emotions and sentiments, highlighting their core components, operational mechanisms, and influence on personal thought and behavior. Next, it explores how emotions are utilized in both marketing and psychology, summarizing key theoretical approaches within these fields. Finally, it presents a critical review of literature on emotional theories across various domains and identifies potential directions for future research.

To investigate these dynamics, this study employs functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), a commonly used neuromarketing technique for measuring emotional engagement and brain activity (Moisescu et al., 2022) to analyze consumer emotional responses in marketing scenarios. — A substantial body of fMRI research has provided insights into the neural correlates of real emotional stimuli, especially in regard to consumer loyalty — and why we make certain decisions. Furthermore, this research adopts the Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance (PAD) model (Jang & Namkung, 2009), a suitable model that covers the fundamental emotional processes impacting consumers' purchasing decision. It facilitates understanding of some of the critical emotional triggers and their impact on purchase intentions (Khan et al., 2021).

2. What are Emotions?

Emotions, which are complex psycho-emotional and mental phenomena, play a vital role in

our lives as they heavily convey our thoughts, control us in decision-making, and improve our social communication. Emotions are multi-dimensional combinations of affect, cognition, drive, body, and utterance in response to stimuli, thus playing a key role in human adaptation as well as performance (Keil & Miskovic, 2015).

There are divergences in perspectives regarding emotions. Some people believe emotions have a life of their own, whereas others claim emotions are constructs and therefore have no independent existence. The "basic emotions" perspective considers a group of basic emotions as the primary drivers of adaptation and evolution. Basic emotions, in dealing with life's essential tasks, are those that have been biologically developed and acquired by animals.

According to this view, rather than a continuous process, the finite nature of human experience is supposed to stress the fact that both conscious and unconscious emotions are also objectified. This approach underlines one of the key ideas that emotions have biological markers of specific performances, body vaults, and cause the changes in the brain. It is important to note that basic emotions are seen as the basic set. In opposition to this, the "constructionist" view argues that basic emotions are not simple factor pairs created between the mind and the brain, but they emerge from the interplay of neural and psychological processes (Alsharif et al., 2021).

Even so, emotions are commonly divided into the main categories (primary and secondary) as well as basic ones. Herein Velikovsky argues that unhappiness, fear, anger, and sadness rank as primary because they are the oldest and universal, with a neural basis, physiological reactions, and evolutionary grounding. Unhappiness in childhood, on the other hand, along with being an unpleasant feeling, also helps one in forming social relationships. Secondary emotions such as remorse, guilt, and shame are more advanced and are often linked to individual's thinking about his or her actions or the actions of other people (MacGregor, n.d.).

a. Emotions: Physiological Reactions

The primary issue of the hedonism versus eudemonism debate revolves around the interaction between psyche and flesh, which is the result of a composite of sensations and neurological addresses that form an emotional palette. Emotions, as we perceive them, are not abstract entities, but they are instead fairly complex physiological responses which can drastically hinder both our cognitive and behavioral functions (Tyng et al., 2017).

The long period of research has illuminated the textured network of physiological reactions that come along with our emotional states. These emotional expressions are conveyed via numerous pathways such as speech, facial expressions, body gestures, and physiological signals. A very intriguing way of examining emotions is by investigating the skin conductance responses, which reveal the involvement of the autonomic nervous system in the emotional experience.

As stated in the study, skin conductance responses are the basis of the somatic component of emotions, which may be used as a crucial element in the understanding of emotional experience. These physiological responses may act as the precursors or the causes of the conscious emotional state, or they can be the emotional response in reality, thus, showing the significance of these responses in the study of human brain function.

Moreover, the study of physiological roots of emotions has proven their role in human adaptation and performance as primary. Emotions can increase the sensory input, the recognition of the essential stimuli, the readiness for the behavioral responses, decision-making, the memory, and the interpersonal interactions, all of which are the fundamental elements of the health and performance in our various activities.

b. Sentiments: Lasting States

Sentiments, which are stable emotional states, are the stumbling blocks in the process of shaping our experiences and behaviors. These continuous affective predispositions differ

from the short-term emotional episodes that have received the most attention in psychological research. Sentiments, on the other hand, delve deeper into the human experience as they describe the emotional geographies that people occupy for long periods of time (Izard, 2007). Sentiment analysis should not be limited to the surface level, but rather researchers should examine the subtleties and various aspects of this phenomenon (Gandhi et al., 2023). Text-based sentiment analysis is one of the most effective methods in this respect. It helps to reveal the complicated nature of language regarding our emotions (Gandhi et al., 2023).

Recently, sophisticated computational techniques have made it possible for researchers to extract sentiment from written communication more precisely, making it possible to study how sentiments evolve over time (Brown et al., 2013).

The most important conclusion from the literature is that textual sentiment can have a huge influence on individual, firm, and market-level behavior and performance (Kearney & Liu, 2014). This is a clear indication that sentiments do not have only personal but also social and economic consequences, as they can affect decision-making, risk-taking, and financial outcomes in general. These relationships are important to know at the beginning of the process of creating such shadow or stock-based models that will be able to predict and, in some extreme cases, avoid the consequences of sentiment-driven dynamics in the financial domain.

c. The Nuances between Sentiments and Emotions

Emotions and sentiments are two terms that are often confused or used interchangeably. However, they are actually different psychological constructs. The term “emotion” is usually defined as short, powerful, and concerted reactions to certain situations or stimuli (Quigley et al., 2014).

These responses are associated with the alterations in subjective experience, behavior, and physiology, aiming to motivate and direct adaptive behavior. On the one hand, grounds take longer to be replaced and hence more stable as being an individual's vantage point of the object, person, or thought (Zhao & Yu, 2021).

Thus, both moods and sentiments are necessary for people's well-being and ability to cope, where understanding the differences between them becomes a pillar in the self-regulation process. As summarized in Table 1, emotions tend to be short-lived and instinctive, whereas sentiments are more enduring and reflective (Gaur et al., 2014b).

The term “emotional self-regulation” stands for the mechanisms that enable individuals to control the style, quality, duration, and strength of their emotional reactions (Mazefsky et al., 2013). This can involve consciously adjusting or maintaining a certain positive or negative behavior depending on the situation. Nonetheless, sentiments also drive life, and they are so deeply rooted that they cannot be easily controlled by conscious efforts when compared with emotions. Since we limit the issue to emotions, almost the same thing can be said about the way emotions evolve and are interconnected through the concept of “echo effects” where they reinforce each other.

The most superficial emotional responses might cause after-effects, thus creating the image one holds for something or someone. Thus, the problem here is : there an emotional response in the beginning--which is fleeting, nonetheless--that can establish a sentiment that guides decisions for months or even years? Sentiments, in turn, may influence emotional reactions in future encounters, creating a feedback loop that continuously shifts attitudes and behaviors in subtle, yet profound ways.

The notion that such a feedback loop stresses the mutual connection between the emotion and the sentiment. Rather than being isolated or purely sequential, emotions and sentiments can interact, amplify, and influence one another over time.

This interconnection plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior. For marketers, the understanding of this connection may be the first step when they realize the longer-term shifts

in emotions and their corresponding loyalties could be the precursors of the regulars going back to certain brands. Table 1 outlines the primary distinctions between emotions and sentiments, highlighting differences in duration, intensity, consciousness, and their role in social interactions:

Table 1: Key Differences between Emotions and Sentiments

Duration	Emotions are often short-lived, while sentiments can persist for a longer period. For example, you may feel anger following an altercation, but this feeling may fade after a few minutes or hours. In contrast, the feeling of resentment can last for weeks or even months (Gaur et al., 2014a).
Intensity	<p>More effective marketing campaigns that resonate emotionally with consumers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased ability to predict and influence consumer behavior. - Enhanced customer experience and satisfaction through emotionally engaging strategies (MacGregor, n.d.; Mizerski & White, 1986; Schroeder, 2004). <p>In marketing, practical implications include designing emotionally engaging advertisements, creating brand experiences that evoke positive emotions, and using emotional triggers to influence consumer behavior. This can lead to more effective marketing strategies and increased customer loyalty.</p>
Consciousness	Emotions are often instinctive and automatic reactions, while sentiments are often more conscious and reflective. Emotions can arise without us having control over them, whereas sentiments can be influenced by our ability to reflect, analyze, and understand our own emotional reactions (Eijlers, 2020; H.Turner, n.d.).
Relationship with Others	Emotions are often expressed and shared with others, allowing us to communicate our states of mind and create social bonds. For example, when we laugh with friends, we express our joy and strengthen our relationships. Sentiments, on the other hand, can be more personal and internal, and are not always openly expressed or shared (Carol Magai, 1997).

3. Understanding emotions in psychology

The James-Lange Theory, a theory that was proposed by William James and Carl Lange in

the late 19th century, suggests that the emotions we feel are a consequence of physiological reactions to the external stimuli. The theory posits that an event initiates a physiological response, and the recognition of this response is the reason for the feeling of emotion. For instance, sighting a snake may lead to an acceleration of heartbeat, and the cognizance of this physiological transformation is construed as fear (Huang, 2001).

This theory claims that the body's reactions are the main contributor to the process of emotions. On the other hand, the Cannon-Bard Theory, which was created by Walter Cannon and Philip Bard, claims that the emotions and the physiological reactions are happening at the same time and that they are separated. This theory states that the thalamus is sending messages to both the cortex (which is the one that produces the emotional experience) and the autonomic nervous system (which is the one that produces the physiological response) in a person who is facing a stimulus (Huang, 2001; Keil & Miskovic, 2015).

For example, when a person sees a snake, they would feel the fear and the physical reactions, such as increased heart rate, simultaneously. This theory explains that emotions are not purely dependent on the body's changes.

The Schachter-Singer Two-Factor Theory, also the Cognitive Arousal Theory, was introduced by Stanley Schachter and Jerome Singer in the 1960s. This theory states that emotions are a combination of physiological arousal and cognitive interpretation. The theory says that the event is the reason for the arousal of the physiological state, and then the person, on the other hand, cognitively labels the arousal using the context as a specific emotion.

For instance, if a person's heart rate is increased after seeing a snake, the person will interpret this as fear in the context of the situation. This theory focuses on the cognitive processes that are involved in the experience of emotions. The Lazarus Cognitive Theory, which is also known as Richard Lazarus's emotional theory, is about how our thinking affects the experience of emotions (Huang, 2001; Mazefsky et al., 2013).

As per the theory, the emotions stem from the evaluation of an individual of the situation's significance to their health. This cognitive assessment is the factor that decides the emotional reaction. For example, coming across a snake might cause a danger assessment, which is the actual emotion of fear.

The theory of Lazarus highlights the fact that cognitive processes are a major factor in determining emotional experiences, and it proposes that emotions are not just mere reactions to stimuli but rather complex mental evaluations. These theories render a thorough understanding of the various perspectives on how emotional experiences are formed and perceived. Each of the theories gives a distinct understanding of the interaction between physiological responses, cognitive processes, and emotional experiences, and by this way, it facilitates a more comprehensive knowledge of human emotions in psychology.

Using main psychological models such as the Cognitive Arousal Theory and the Emotional Processing Model, we can upgrade the common marketing theories with a new look at consumer engagement. The traditional marketing theories often target the external stimuli such as advertisements, and their direct effects on consumer decision-making.

However, integrating these psychological interpretations suggests that consumers experience emotions not just as reactions but also as cognitive appraisals and subconscious mechanisms that influence brand perception. This theoretical synthesis allows for a novel inquiry into various aspects, such as long-term consumer emotions catalyzed by marketing and personal psychological traits, ultimately contributing to deeper brand loyalty and advocacy.

4. The significance of emotions in the field of marketing

Laid down by Joseph Forgas, the Affect Infusion Model (AIM) is a similar model that claims that emotions can influence the brain processes and the decision-making in a multitude of ways, depending on the environment and the complexity of the task. This model stresses that

emotions might be incorporated into cognitive processes through the four different pathways: direct access, motivated processing, heuristic processing, and substantive processing. For example, when a consumer is making a complex purchasing decision, their mood may affect their evaluation of product information, with the consequence that a more positive or negative perception is created based on their emotional state. This model elaborates on the influence of emotions on consumer decisions and judgments that are pervasive throughout the process (Carol Magai, 1997).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggested by Icek Ajzen adds the concept of perceived behavioral control to the Theory of Reasoned Action as a result of its introduction (Huang, 2001; Izard, 2007).

According to TPB, a person's will to act is influenced by three things: attitudes towards the behavior, normative beliefs, and perceived behavioral control. Emotions are key determining factors in the source of attitudes and intentions. An example, for instance, if you like the product, it will make your perceptions positive, and thus the evaluation of these perceptions will definitely lead to the final intention to buy the product. This theory argues that these emotions play a central role in the determination of intentions as well as the consumer's behavior.

The Emotional Processing Model created by Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman speaks of how humans process and perceive their emotional lives. In the field of marketing, this model postulates that customers experience several phases of processing emotional data about products or brands. The cycles of these stages are emotional appraisal, emotional response, and coping strategies. For example, the consumer may evaluate a commercial as emotionally persuasive, experience pleasant emotions, and develop such coping strategies as brand loyalty. This model shows that the emotional process is also a current factor in the behavior of consumers (Eijlers, 2020; Huang, 2001; Keil & Miskovic, 2015).

Thus, these theoretical models provided knowledge about the complicated relationships between emotions and consumer behavior. Each model presents a different perspective on how emotions influence decision-making, hence promoting a deeper understanding of emotional dynamics in marketing.

The application of emotional theories in the fields of psychology and marketing emphasizes that the orthogonal perspectives from these disciplines have a significant impact beyond their respective realms. For example, in health care, the psychology of emotions can help explain to patients how their emotional states affect health issues and outcomes, thereby enhancing their understanding of the healthcare system.

Additionally, it enables patients to recognize the role of emotions in their health-related decision-making. In the technology sector, it is also very important to use the emotional and cognitive models of users to deepen the user's bond to the technology and brand. Particularly with the rise of emotionally intelligent conversational AI tools, these theories have their scope expanded to include a variety of fields, like where the generalizability of these emotional frameworks is visibly the potential to influence as they can be observed in healthcare, technology, and entertainment. It consumes and organizes outcomes across different contexts.

5. Practical applications

The use of psychological theories such as the Affect Infusion Model in marketing strategy significantly alters how consumers are engaged with important implications for brands. Emotion delivery staged in consumer purchases is the basis of emotionally powered strategy. For example, with brands that evoke the emotions of warmth, joy, or even surprise, consumers can make their choice at the beginning of the journey through an emotional connection with the brand. In the decision-making stage, customers are encouraged to go through the buying process by targeted emotional appeals, e.g. trust and safety. Making use of emotionally

informed product marketing, brands have been turned into very complex entities such as to enable sellers to create brand experiences through which customers' relationships go beyond fun and pleasure but to long-lasting brand loyalty.

a. Approaches comparing

Understanding emotions from both psychological and marketing perspectives requires a comparative approach. While both fields study emotions and their impact on human behavior, they differ in their objectives, methodologies, and practical applications. Table 2 provides an overview of these differences and commonalities, highlighting how each discipline approaches the study of emotions in its respective context.

Table 2: Practical Applications and Approaches in Psychology and Marketing

	Psychology	Marketing
Commonalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Both disciplines study human emotions. -Aim to understand and predict behaviors. -Utilize qualitative and quantitative research methods. 	
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus on internal processes and mental health. -Emphasis on therapeutic and diagnostic applications. -Studies often conducted in controlled environments (e.g., laboratories). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus on consumer behavior and decision-making. -Emphasis on practical applications to influence purchasing decisions. -Studies often conducted in real-world settings (e.g., market research, field studies).
Methodology/ techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clinical interviews, psychological assessments, and experiments. - Use of psychometric tests and brain imaging techniques. - Longitudinal studies and case studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Surveys, focus groups, and observational research. -Use of consumer analytics and neuromarketing. - Experiments involving virtual reality and eye-tracking.
Contexts and Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the root causes of emotional responses. - Develop interventions and treatments for emotional disorders. - Explore the impact of emotions on mental health and well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyze the impact of emotions on consumer preferences and loyalty. - Create marketing strategies that leverage emotional triggers. - Enhance brand engagement and drive sales through emotional appeals.

b. Practical and theoretical implications

Emotions have a significant impact on consumer behavior by guiding decision-making processes at different stages. Various theoretical frameworks include how purchasing behaviors, brand loyalty, and overall consumer experiences are affected by emotions. Key theories of emotions and their application to consumers are summarized in Table 3 Bridging psychology and marketing insights.

Table 3: Research and Practical Implications in Psychology and Marketing

	Psychology	Marketing
Research implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advances in understanding the neural and psychological mechanisms of emotions. - Development of new theories and models explaining emotional processes. - Contribution to mental health research, providing insights for therapeutic interventions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of consumer behavior models incorporating emotional triggers. - Insights into how emotions influence purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. - Contributions to advertising research, focusing on emotional appeals.
Practical implications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved clinical practices for treating emotional disorders. - Enhanced techniques for emotional regulation and therapy. This includes techniques like cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR). - Better support for individuals dealing with emotional challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More effective marketing campaigns that resonate emotionally with consumers. - Increased ability to predict and influence consumer behavior. - Enhanced customer experience and satisfaction through emotionally engaging strategies.

Digital marketing has transformed how emotions can be quantitatively measured and influenced, reshaping the landscape for marketers to enhance immediate organizational responses. Digital environments such as social media, e-commerce websites, and virtual reality provide spaces where people interact with brands and other consumers, and these environments are constantly evolving. Recent studies in neuromarketing reveal that emotions—such as trust, excitement, and even fear—can significantly influence online consumer behavior, especially in contexts where quick decisions are required. Integrating psychological theories, such as the Cognitive Appraisal Theory, into digital marketing strategies allows brands to create unique consumer experiences by regulating the emotions, which in turn boosts conversion rates and customer satisfaction.

An area where the fusion of psychological and marketing theories offers novel insights is the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in understanding and evoking customer emotions. Machine learning models have gained dominance in emotional marketing with the advent of AI-

powered emotional agents. These technologies, including virtual influencers, emotional chatbots, and personalized ad algorithms, are now fine-tuning their responses to the unconscious decisions customers make. This not only changes how emotions are interpreted in the digital age but also revolutionizes the sales process by allowing emotional stimuli to be more precisely aligned with consumer needs and desired emotions.

6. Future Research Directions

Are of Focus	Key Questions	Suggested Methodology
Cross-cultural impact	How do cultural differences shape emotional responses?	Comparative ethnographic studies
Neuromarketing applications	What neural mechanisms drive consumer sentiments?	Neuroscientific experiments
Digital advertising strategies	How do AI-driven campaigns influence consumer emotions?	Experimental designs with control

7. Conclusion

The very essence of this paper is the emphasis on emotional aspects as an approach connecting psychology and marketing. By comparing the primary views of these two spheres, we have arrived at the saved results on how emotions prompt a short-term purchase and the sentiments are the legs of the purchase intention of the long-term consumer. These discoveries not only move on in the realms of theory but also give concrete suggestions to marketers about emotion-centered strategies.

Through our study we have shown the importance of the human dimension in consumer behavior to be both immediate and long-term. Marketers need to build both the field of culture by the examination of cross-cultural differences, study the emergence of new technologies such as AI, and neuromarketing, and the impacts of a sustainability campaign tied to consumer's emotional reactions. It helps us gain a finer image of consumer decision-making in an era of digital revolution.

To respond to the question making, we conclude that it is only through the integration of the theories of emotions from the two fields of psychology and marketing that we are able to provide a strong framework for understanding consumer behavior. This blend is a blueprint for campaigns that are shaped by adaptive technology aiding the design of resonating and engaging content, and thereby connecting with a larger and loyal customer base.

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