

Content marketing and website users engagement: The impact of relevant content on the web on user engagement behaviors

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ABSTRACT

The marketing landscape is changing; we are switching from traditional methods to digitalized methods to attract consumers/users. The new trend of marketing tends to gain loyal consumers. Nowadays, content marketing is used to create this trusting consumer relationship. It consists in providing valuable information in the form of content, this content is in both sides giving information to the user and strengthening bonds with the brand offering the content.

This article is a study of Content Marketing linked to Website users' engagement. Its aim is to understand how the relevance of the content and the quality of a website can influence the users' engagement. A study of existing concepts and an exploratory research were developed in the article to find the relationship between content marketing and engagement behavior of Internet users.

The article tries to understand how consumers/users perceive the content online and based on which standards they choose to engage or not. The challenge today for the enterprises is not only creating content for the users, but creating a valuable and relevant content for their consumers.

Keywords: Engagement, Content Marketing, Relevance, Website, Quality

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, content marketing is the new online practice for marketers to attract customers. This emerging strategy is actually the traditional marketing, which is adapted to today's society [1]. Previously, the objective of marketing was reaching the target group to give them the desire to buy a product or service [2]. These old-fashioned marketing techniques have resulted a profusion of advertising that has saturated consumers and made it difficult for a company to differentiate itself from competitors in terms of communication strategy. In this new environment, content marketing presents itself as "all the marketing that's left"[3].

Whether it is a company operating online or offline, it is required to produce relevant content (image, video, article, etc.) in order to attract a new target, or even win back its old target. The relevance of the created content is mainly manifested in its usefulness for the receiver (informational, fun, etc.). This type of marketing attracts naturally or implicitly consumers. A long-term strategy aims to engage consumers [4], by offering them personalized content that aligns their needs with those of the company.

If several researches have dealt with the concepts of relevance, content marketing, and many others related to this field, they mainly focused on their definition in business domain without linking it to consumers and how they can behave toward it.

To overcome this gap, the aim of this article is to understand the influence of relevant content in a website on consumer engagement behavior. On an academic level, this study deepens the understanding of content

marketing and therefore, the concept of relevance. On the other hand, this study validates the relationship that consumer engagement can have with other marketing concepts, including the relevance and quality of the website. At a managerial level, this study makes it possible to demonstrate to marketers the influence that content marketing can have in order to increase consumer engagement behaviors. It confirms the importance of the relevance and quality of the content of a website when planning communication strategies.

2. Method

The working methodology used for this study includes two phases, namely:

The research phase:

- Documentary research relating to the thematic and problematic.

Literature review to identify and formulate the problem.

- Identification of concepts related to the research subject

The design phase:

- Imprinted with a measurement model based on work previously dealing with the same problem.
- Formulation of hypotheses.

The design of this study is causal. The purpose of this choice is to deepen the understanding of a subject by determining, from research hypotheses, the nature of the relationship between the causal variables and the expected result [5]. This study focuses on deepening the understanding of content marketing and its influence on consumer engagement behaviors. More specifically, it relates to the relevance and quality of the content of a website.

According to the deductive method, we drew on preexisting ideas from the following previous work:

- "The impact of electronic service quality on satisfaction and loyalty intentions: difference between buyers and visitors" by Grégory Bressolles [6]
- "Content marketing - the fundamental tool of digital marketing" by Loredana PATRUTIU BALTES [7]
- "Drivers of Brand Commitment: A CrossNational Investigation" by Eisingerich and Rubera, [8]
- "The concept of engagement" by S Gambetti and Graffigna [9].

2.1. Content Marketing concept

Content marketing is considered as a tool in the marketing strategy involving the creation and distribution of media content by a brand. The most recent definition given by Michael Brenner, is : "Content marketing consists in providing the content sought by your Internet users in all target locations. It is the effective combination of content created, managed and subscribed" [Content Marketing Institute, 2015]. But in 2008, the authors Pulizzi and Barrett proposed a first definition: "The creation and distribution of educational and / or compelling content in multiple formats to attract and / or retain customers". Then another definition was brought in 2011 by Pulizzi and Rose [10]: "A strategy focused on the creation of a valuable experience".

According to Baltes [7], the content marketing strategy is adapted to each business, but it must take into consideration the following elements: content marketing objectives, target analysis, type of content marketing used, promotion channels, marketing calendar content (frequency), as well as metrics for: measuring the impact of marketing content.

In the academic literature, content marketing is seen as a new subject, previous research focuses rather on the study of marketing contents disseminated online. In a marketing context of online information exchange, content has been studied according to the three forms it can take: user-generated content, paid business-generated content and content generated by businesses that are non-paying [11]. User generated content, is a more recent research topic that several authors have given interest to [12]. Research that relates to content generated by businesses for a fee refers to the industry of products and services sold online (eg online

newspapers) [13]. Content generated online by businesses without paying refers to content marketing, the purpose of which is to engage consumers [11].

According to Bauer [14], content marketing has brought a change in the business culture. In fact, because of its purpose, it encouraged marketers to review their marketing strategies and adjust their communication. Unlike marketing oriented towards organizational objectives, the objective of content marketing is oriented towards consumers [2]. In addition, content marketing leads the company to work in another type of industry, that of publishing, since marketers become publishers of content. Therefore, marketing teams must recruit experienced and qualified people for editing and creating content [15].

2.2. Relevance concept

Relevance is directly related to the content marketing [16]. It was one of the subjects that formed part of the MSI's research priorities for the years 2016 to 2018. Indeed, what differentiates content marketing from traditional marketing, in addition to different definition, are the words "value" and "relevant" to describe the content. Otherwise, content marketing must produce valuable content that is relevant to consumer research in order to meet their needs [11].

Several definitions have been proposed to explain the relevance. According to Celsi and Oison [17], relevance is the level that the consumer perceives as related to himself or contributing in one way or another to the achievement of his personal objectives and values. For their part, Andrews [18], give a definition similar to the previous one, referring to the importance of the message in terms of objectives and values for the receiver. The definition used in this study is that proposed by Varnali [19], since it relates to the relevance of advertising in communication : "the relevance of a message refers to the relevance of the content of the message in relation to the current cognitive and / or emotional needs of the target consumer ". Previous research has conceptualized relevance in three ways: subjective, objective and contextual [20]. In this study, the concept of relevance is based on subjectivity. As a result, subjectivity is closely linked to the concept of personal relevance, which by definition is "the degree to which the commercial's message is relevant to the viewer's present activities, interests, and needs". In their article, Eisingerich and Rubera [8], define personal relevance as "the perceived image of a brand that consumers use to establish self-connections".

Among the authors who have researched this concept, some have argued that the relevance of an advertisement can influence consumers' reactions to it [21], then, more recently, Varnali [19], studied the effects of the relevance of a publication on consumer attitudes. The results showed that the relevance of a publication is one of the most important factors in predicting the perceived value of content and in guiding consumer behavior regarding marketing communications [22]. In their research, Yeh & Al [23] argue that the effectiveness of the communication process depends on the relevance of the publication.

2.3. Engagement concept

The concept of engagement is broad, comprising different areas. It has been approached in several disciplines such as sociology with civic engagement, psychology with social engagement, political science with engagement of nations, education with engagement of students. Indeed, the conceptualization of engagement is done in two main phases. The first refers to the 17th century and includes concepts related to social science, management and business practices [24].

The second phase relates to the marketing literature [24]. Although marketing has been interested in the concept of engagement for several years, it is only recently that it has appeared in the literature [9]. In marketing, the concept of engagement is conceptualized as "who is committed to what" [25].

Most of the definitions treated since then have a multidimensional perspective that includes the following dimensions: cognitive (experience), emotional (feeling), conative (participation) and social (interaction and

sharing) [26]. Following multiple research on the concept of engagement, we offer “Table 1.” which summarizes the definitions according to the different authors.

Table 1. Definitions of engagement in marketing literature

Concept	Author	Definition
Costumer’s engagement	Patterson [27]	The level of physical, cognitive and emotional presence of the client in his relationship with a service organization
Consumer’s engagement	Vivek[28]	The intensity of an individual's participation and his connection with the organization's offers and the activities initiated by the client or the organization
Customer engagement behavior	Van Doorn[29]	Customer’s behavior towards a brand or a form, beyond the purchase, resulting from behavioral motivating factors.
Engagement toward the brand	Hollebeek[30]	Level of mindset of the client in relation to motivation, brand and context, characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional and behavioral activity in brand interactions.
Brand engagement in self concept	Sprott[31]	An individual difference representing the propensity of consumers to include important brands in their self-perception.
Online brand engagement	Mollen& Wilson [32]	The client's cognitive and emotional commitment to an active relationship with the brand, personified by the website or other digitalized entities, designed to communicate the value of the brand.

Several authors have focused their research on differentiating engagement from other concepts studied in the marketing literature [33]. Those most often associated with engagement are participation or involvement. Moreover, in the literature, these terms are today replaced by the concept of engagement [24]. In addition, other concepts related to engagement are interactivity, motivation, experience and loyalty. Table 2 summarizes the main definitions of the concepts associated with consumer engagement [34].

Table 2. Definition of concepts associated with consumer engagement

Concept	Author	Definition
Participation	Bolton & Saxena-Iyer[35]	The degree of consumer interest in producing and delivering a service.
Interaction	Bijmolt[36]	A varied participation (online and offline) that a consumer with a brand or other consumers of the same brand can have.
	Vivek[28]	Sharing and exchanging ideas and feelings about the experience with a brand
Motivation	Zaichhowsky[37]	A level of individual interest and personal relevance to an object / decision, in terms of its value and its objectives
Experience	Brakus[38]	A subjective and internal answer from the consumer, and also a behavioral response following the brand's stimuli (design, packaging, identity, communication, etc.)
	Calder & Malthouse[39]	All of consumers' beliefs about how a branded media can suit their lives.
Loyalty	Sashi[40]	The result of a calculating dedication to a product, brand or business.

According to the authors Van Doorn [29], the concept of engagement is linked to antecedents and consequences which make it possible to define the phenomenon studied. They thus proposed a categorization of antecedents and consequences based on three points of interest: the consumer, the company and the customer.

Among the consumer engagement history Doorn mentioned satisfaction, brand dedication, trust, confidence and brand attachment; they are considered as the attitude factors that have the most influence on engagement. Company history is the most impacting brand factors such as reputation and brand equity. The background related to the context is social, political, economic, technological and legal.

The same authors detailed the consequences of the engagement, and we learn that the consequences related to the consumer are the same as the antecedents (satisfaction, trust, dedication ...) and added loyalty. However, it should be noted that these factors are antecedents in the context where the client is already a consumer [30]. Among the consequences that affect the business, the best-known factors are financial. There is also reputation and competitiveness. Then, as far as the context is concerned, these are all the other consequences, which do not relate either to the consumer or to the company, such as those affecting the product, in particular the development of new products.

2.4. Quality of the website concept

Research on traditional quality of service, for over twenty years, has made it possible to understand better this concept (dimensions, background, consequences, etc.). On the other hand, the study of the quality of service delivered by websites is an emerging field in the marketing literature on services. While traditional quality of service is defined as "a global judgment, or attitude, as to the superiority of service", electronic quality of service represents "the degree by which + a site The Web facilitates efficient and effective shopping, purchasing and delivery of products or services" [41]. It is of a rather transactional quality, it includes elements of pre and post service experience evaluation. Even though the products or services purchased online are the same, the online and offline shopping environments represent different shopping experiences.

One of the most important, and probably the most obvious, difference between traditional service quality and electronic service quality is the replacement of interpersonal interaction with human-machine interaction coupled with the absence of human contact. The meeting between a client and a company can now be seen as a dynamic and interactive relationship at the center of which technology is located [42]. Given the essential role of the evaluation of service delivery by consumers, the identification of the determining dimensions of perceptions of quality of service in this context is essential. Parasuraman and Grewal [43] point to the existence of specific dimensions for assessing the perceived quality of service interactions mediated by technology. Based on a review of the literature on this theme, it is possible to identify the main dimensions of this construct [44].

2.5. Components of the website quality

2.5.1. Information

The quality and quantity of the information presented on the site are frequently mentioned as important reasons for online shopping but have never been directly examined in quality assessments of traditional services. The absence of physical contact with the service provider during the online purchase reinforces the need for clarity and precision of information. This dimension measures the user's perceptions regarding the quality and quantity of commercial or technical information on products and services, the service provider or the sales contract.

Internet users acclaim the quality of information. It could be defined as the degree to which the website provides information on the characteristics and price of products / services in a precise and exhaustive manner by offering the possibility of making comparisons.

Certain studies [45], insist on the clarity and the precision of the information concerning the offer, concepts all the more important since no salesman is likely to help them in their approach. According to these authors, this dimension appears to have three facets: semantic (understanding is easy), syntactic (the classification of information is logical) and graphic (the graphic interface allows a pleasant reading).

The information relating to the offer influences the satisfaction that the internet user derives from his buying or consulting experience [46]. Literature tends to decompose the dimension into two facets: the richness and updating of information as well as its clarity and precision. The richness and updating of the offer can be defined as the capacity of a site to provide products / services and varied, enriching, exhaustive and updated information [47]. Customers consult a site to learn about products or services, to consume or order them. They want to have the widest possible offer and regularly updated [45]. Furthermore, the information relating to the offer must be clear and precise so that internet users can easily understand it [48].

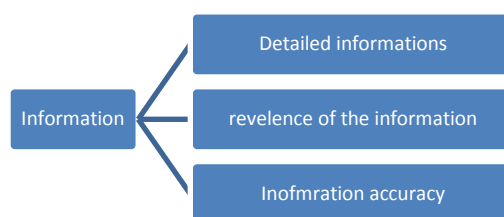


Figure 1. Components of the information of a website

2.5.2. Ease of use of a website

Cited in many studies, ease of use seems to be a very important factor for Internet users. This term can be defined as the ability of the interface to be efficient and easy to use. The ease of navigation depends on several elements: the degree of abstraction of the labels [49], respect for the customers' navigation logic, the provision of tools navigation aid, the technical capacities of the site (time to download pages for example which can have a negative impact on the evaluation of the site), but also the time necessary for the user to access a product / service or information given on the site [50]. The quality of navigation refers to the sobriety of the content of the website, the absence of confusion in the sections and the offer of navigation aid.

Transactions using the Internet seem complex and can intimidate many consumers; the ease of use of a website is an important element of the quality of electronic service [50]. Ease of use has long been called usability in the context of the Internet [51]. Usability refers, in the physical world, to store layout, design, and ease of navigation within the store [52]. On a website, it translates into the way the user perceives and interacts with the site: is it easy to navigate?.

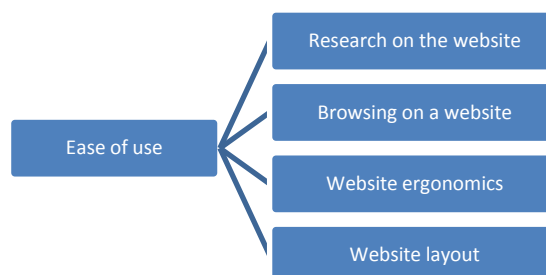


Figure 2. Components of the ease of use of a website

2.5.3. Design

The design of a site refers to the richness of representation of the media environment, induced by its formal characteristics [53]; in other words, its graphics, its colors, the use of images, icons, animations, videos, windows embedded in the screen, etc.

The aesthetic experience is linked to the visual and / or sound appearance of the site. The Web allows the use of graphics, animations, sounds, which make the service experience more pleasant. Academic research has paid particular attention to the store sales atmosphere. Kotler describes the use of atmospheric elements in the buying environment to produce an emotional effect to increase the likelihood of selling. Music [45], colors [54] are all elements of atmospheres that can be used for this purpose on websites. This notion of site aesthetics has been cited many times in studies. We will define this term as the ability of the interface to generate pleasure and fun. Szymanski and Hise, 2000 demonstrate that a pleasant online experience has an influence on perceived quality. This hedonic dimension influences perceptions of quality through the quality of ergonomics and design.

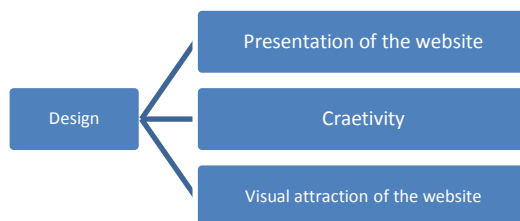


Figure 3. Components of the design of a website

2.5.4. Security of the website

Confidentiality of personal data and security: The question of the security of online payments is one of the major obstacles to the development of electronic commerce [55]. Merchant websites must therefore try to offer suitable devices on their sites in order to reduce the perceived risks of this mode of purchase and thus contribute to building a climate of trust in order to improve the perceived quality of the shopping experience online. Sites that implement personal data confidentiality and secure payment methods help reassure the Internet user and influence the perceived quality of the online shopping experience.

The term security sometimes covers the notion of security of transactions in the financial sense, but also security over personal data and the protection of personal information (respect for private life). Hoffman and Novak [56] note that users who refuse to provide personal information would be willing to do so if the site explained how it is used.

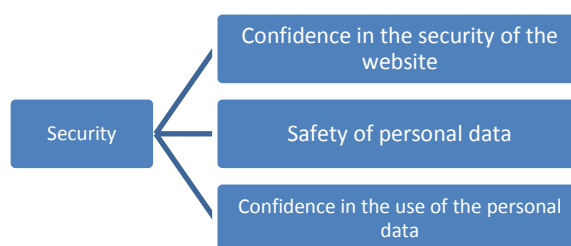


Figure 4. Components of the security of a website

2.5.5. Reliability

Reliability is the dominant dimension in assessments of traditional service quality. It is also an element which seems to be important in evaluating the quality of electronic service [57]. In a traditional context, reliability is defined as "the ability, for the service provider, to offer the promised service in an exact, precise and trustworthy manner" [58].

This translates on the Web by respecting delivery times, the accuracy of the order, the precision in the presentation of products ... Reliability is linked to the ability of the online seller to keep his promises and fulfill the terms of exchange (deliver the ordered product, offer the desired service, respect delivery times, etc.).

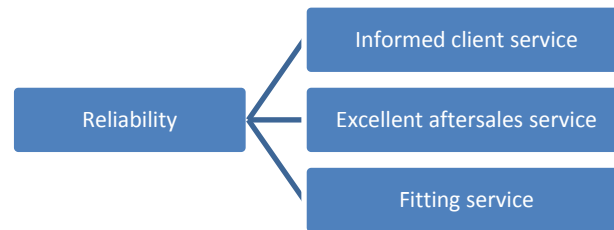


Figure 5. Components of the reliability of a website

3. Results and discussion

The purpose of our work is to study, within an explanatory model, the influence of the relevance and the quality of the website on the engagement of Internet users. The previous research allowed us to detect impact links between the different variables :

3.1. The link between the perceived quality of the website and satisfaction:

Satisfaction was generally represented as the result of the comparison between the expected quality and the perceived quality. However, several marketing researchers have questioned this conception by presenting satisfaction as a direct result of quality. In this context, research by Taylor [59] stipulates that perceived quality represents a better determinant of overall satisfaction than a comparison of expected quality and perceived quality.

3.2. The link between the perceived quality of the website and trust:

The review of the literature on the different antecedents of trust does not explicitly mention the quality of service as a antecedent. However, most of the trust histories mentioned in the literature have been identified as specific dimensions of the concept of quality. Thus, it seems appropriate to consider the quality of the website as a determining factor in the creation of a relationship of trust between the company and its consumer.

3.3. The link between the quality of the website and the engagement of Internet users

The link between the two concepts was explained by the fact that the quality of the experience depends on the continuity of the relationship. In this sense, Morgan and Hunt [60] argue that the accumulation of experiences and positive interactions strengthens the commitment of partners. Past experience with the brand is assimilated to the past relationship with a classic partner. And it is on its quality that the continuity of the relationship depends [61]

3.4. The link between trust and engagement of Internet users

Trust would be a fundamental precursor of consumer engagement, defined as the implicit or explicit intention to maintain a lasting relationship with the brand. Other works consider that trust is a one-dimensional concept, corresponding only to a belief; the intention of behavior, corresponding to the commitment of partners is a result of confidence.

3.5. The link between user's satisfaction and engagement

Satisfaction and trust, two concepts strongly linked to commitment. However, as mentioned earlier, these concepts can also be a history of engagement in a situation where clients are already consumers [30].

Some authors deepen in particular the relationship between satisfaction, loyalty and commitment in the relationships that customers have with service companies and the brand [62], by considering the latter as the

main consequence of trusting the brand. In our context, satisfaction is seen as a history of engagement through the measurement of previous satisfactory experiences.

3.6. The link between the relevance of the content and the engagement of Internet users

According to Ducoffe and Curlo [22], the relevance of the content has been identified as one of the most important factors in order to anticipate behaviors arising from marketing communication. Relevance does not just make the content interesting, it reduces the intrusive effect of it. According to Ashley and Tuten[63], good content leads the audience to be engaged.

The purpose of this exploratory study was to find an obvious relationship between content marketing and internet users' engagement behaviors, by introducing different components including the relevance of the content and the perceived quality of the website.

The conceptual framework in Figure 6. graphically takes up the main concepts of this study, in particular the perceived quality of the website, relevance and engagement (commitment). It is separated by the two main concepts of this study: trust and satisfaction. The first is to see if the relevance of the content influences engagement. Second, it is a question of seeing if the perceived quality of the website influences the confidence and satisfaction of Internet users, then if these last two concepts in turn influence the engagement of Internet users. They show how the relevance of the content and the quality of a website can impact the engagement of Internet users through other antecedent variables of the concept of engagement such as trust and satisfaction.

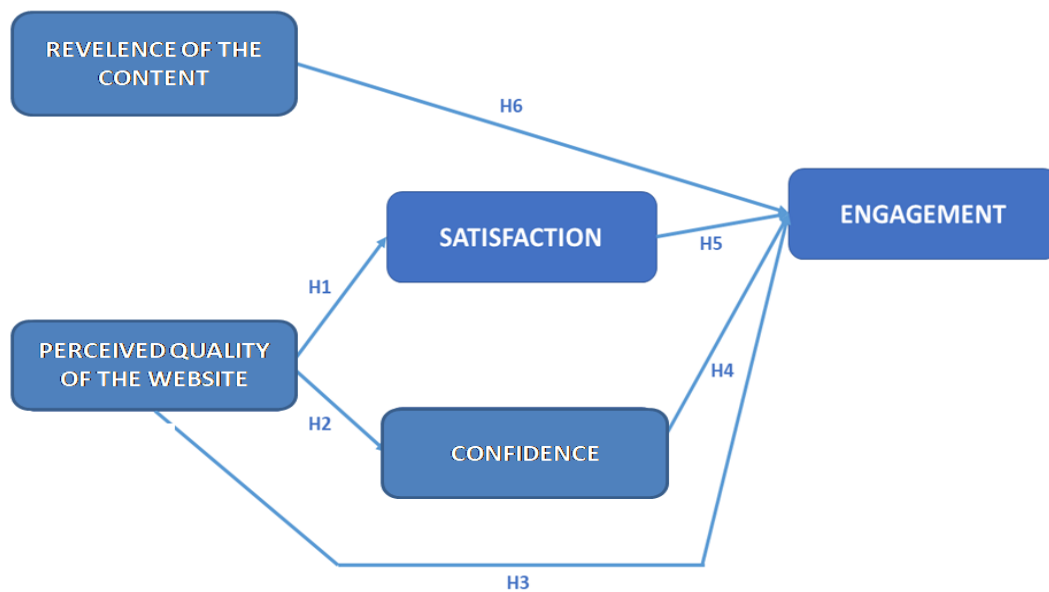


Figure 6. Framework adopted

Table 3. Concepts measures

Concept	Measures
Engagement	Participation
	Word of mouth
	Intention to revisit a website
Relevance of the content	Quality of the content
	Value of the content
Quality of a website	Information on a website
	Security of a website
	Design of a website

Concept	Measures
Satisfaction of a website	Ease of use of a website
	Cognitive satisfaction Emotional satisfaction
Confidence of a website	Granted credibility Perceived benevolence

The article below identifies the research hypotheses that we will test during an experimental study. The research hypotheses state the relationships between the variables. They were formed from information gathered from empirical research. In this way, the satisfaction and trust components - antecedents of engagement - play a mediating role between the components of perceived quality (explanatory variables) and engagement (variables to be explained).

4. Conclusion

This article has shown the importance of content and that content on digital channels is very promising. We were able to see the different concepts related to content marketing and those related to the behavioral component of engagement. The research allowed us to understand the subject in its entirety. It opens up perspectives for a study which will make it possible to detect the causal relationship between relevance and quality of the website with the engagement behavior of Internet users. In the first phase, we were also able to implement a model exposing this causal relationship through a double mediation of the confidence and satisfaction variables.

The objective of this article is to develop the methodology that has been chosen in order to meet the research hypotheses. To begin, the research design was presented. Then, it will be a question of explaining the structure of the questionnaire, of justifying the choice of scales and of emphasizing the contribution of the pretest. Finally, the sampling method will be explained while indicating the data collection.

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