

# **Building Brands Digitally: A Literature Review on the Role of Social Networking Sites in Shaping the Brand Identity of Food Startups**

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**Abstract:** The rapid expansion of social networking sites (SNSs) has significantly transformed contemporary branding practices, particularly for startups operating in highly competitive markets. This paper presents a literature-based review examining the role of social networking sites in shaping the brand identity of food startups. Drawing on existing theories and prior empirical studies, the review synthesizes how SNS activities such as digital content creation, visual branding, consumer engagement, influencer marketing, and electronic word-of-mouth contribute to brand awareness, brand image, and consumer perception. The study adopts a conceptual approach based solely on secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and published research related to digital branding and social media marketing. The review highlights that social networking sites serve as strategic platforms that enable food startups to communicate brand values, build emotional connections with consumers, and develop a distinct brand identity without relying heavily on traditional marketing channels. By integrating insights from branding and social media literature, this paper contributes to a clearer understanding of the mechanisms through which SNSs influence brand identity formation. The study offers conceptual insights that can guide future empirical research and assist startup founders and marketers in designing effective digital branding strategies.

**Keywords:** Social Networking Sites, Digital Branding, Brand Identity, Food Startups

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