**Social Media and Online Content Analysis: Nike**

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**Introduction**

In today’s digital marketplace, social media has become one of the most important communication tools for Fortune 500 companies. A company’s ability to remain connected with its audience online often reflects its broader brand strategy and reputation. Nike, a global leader in athletic apparel and footwear, provides a strong case study for examining how large corporations manage their online presence. By applying Kolin’s (2022) guidelines from Section 4.5b, “Staying Connected on Social Media Sites,” we can see how Nike follows or in some cases ignores principles of professional and effective social media engagement.

**Nike’s Social Media Presence**

Nike maintains an active presence across multiple platforms, including Instagram, Twitter (X), Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. With over 300 million followers across these channels, Nike uses social media not only to promote products but also to build a community around sports, fitness, and lifestyle.

According to Kolin’s (2022) guidelines, one of the most important rules for companies is to engage with audiences consistently and professionally. Nike follows this principle effectively by posting visually compelling content almost daily, often tied to motivational messages and social causes. Posts frequently include athletes, inspirational quotes, and stories that resonate with its brand slogan, “Just Do It.” Another guideline is to stay authentic and transparent. Nike has shown this by openly supporting social justice movements, such as campaigns highlighting athlete activism. While this aligns with Nike’s brand identity, it also demonstrates the risks of taking strong public stances. Some consumers view these campaigns as too political, showing that Nike intentionally chooses authenticity and alignment with values over universal approval.

Nike also follows the guideline of consistency across platforms. The company ensures that its brand message, tone, and visuals align whether viewed on Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube. This strengthens brand recognition and trust.

**Guidelines Ignored or Minimally Followed**

Despite its strengths, Nike occasionally ignores the guideline of direct audience interaction. While Nike posts regularly, the company often does not respond to individual customer comments or questions on its main social accounts. Instead, it directs consumers to customer service links. This shows a clear choice to prioritize brand storytelling over customer service engagement on social channels.

Additionally, Kolin (2022) emphasizes avoiding negative or controversial posts. Nike has sometimes deliberately ignored this rule. By supporting polarizing figures like Colin Kaepernick in advertising campaigns, Nike has sparked both praise and backlash. However, this strategy reflects a calculated risk: Nike’s philosophy appears to be that aligning with causes central to its brand identity is more important than avoiding controversy altogether.

**Conclusion**

Nike demonstrates how Fortune 500 companies can use social media strategically by following most of Kolin’s (2022) guidelines on staying connected professional content, consistent messaging, and authentic branding. At the same time, Nike chooses to ignore some guidelines, such as avoiding controversy or engaging in extensive direct interaction. This selective approach reflects a deliberate philosophy: Nike leverages social media not only as a marketing tool but also as a platform to shape culture and reinforce its values.

**References**

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