



Role of marketing and social networks in improving business

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Abstract

Social media in the twenty-first century enables users to connect to social networking sites. Social media has developed into a vital instrument for group and interpersonal communication. People communicate their ideas, experiences, and other information on social media with their contacts or acquaintances. Information from social media may affect the decisions that consumers make. Social media marketers can engage with and reach a significantly bigger audience than traditional advertising strategies by utilising online social networks to advertise their websites, products, or services. Social networking simplifies building vibrant groups, managing successful marketing campaigns, and launching initiatives. This study aims to better understand how social media marketing strategies affect consumer involvement and purchase intentions. This article investigates the impact of social media marketing on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram on consumer decisions and business improvement.

Keywords: Social Advertising, Social Media Marketing, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube

Introduction

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp have sharply increased usage over the past ten years. (1) People use these channels to communicate and watch advertisements for popular brands' products. Social networking platforms have largely taken the place of face-to-face interactions. Instant messaging has made it feasible to communicate and share information. Because of this, companies consider social media platforms crucial

tools for dominating the online market. (2) Social media marketing, or SMM, is a strategy to promote products or events online. To encourage the development of online brand communities many businesses are actively researching the best strategies for employing community websites to establish enduring connections and open channels of communication with users. (3) Social media marketing effectively promotes consumer and brand communications, which helps to raise brand awareness. Despite its limited capacity to affect consumer intent, SMM is still regarded as a cutting-edge marketing tactic. However, much SMM research has concentrated on the advantages of user-generated content, content analysis, cutting-edge strategies, consumer behaviour, and their applicability to creating online brand communities. (5) New communication channels have been built, and significant changes in how people communicate have occurred as more tools and apps for the Internet have been developed. Businesses are beginning to realise that sharing brand information and customer experiences is a new marketing channel due to customers' increased reliance on social media brands and the prevalence of smartphones and the Internet.

The building of online communities is becoming increasingly successful. Social groupings provide continuity for their members even when absent (7). A virtual brand community is a group of consumers who purchase the same brand regularly. In addition to purchasing goods and services, customers desire to develop deep connections with other customers and specialists. Due to their involvement in online groups, consumers are becoming more aligned, which impacts the market. Therefore, businesses must consider what methods or components will motivate customers to engage in these communities (8). The nature of online communities is analogous to real-world communities, despite differences and parallels, in terms of offering shared experiences, encouraging social support, and accommodating members' desires to identify themselves (9).

Online communities are different from traditional groups in terms of language and technology because they are primarily computer-based. Using a brand's goods or services aids in developing the area it serves. Brand communities are unique social groups due to interactions between brand customers online (10). Brand communities have customs and rituals due to growing through social connections and a sense of belonging. Members of a group respect one another's acts and perspectives because they exchange knowledge and educate one another about a product. Once a customer joins a certain brand community, the brand transforms into a conduit and a common language that binds community members (11).

Most studies have focused on the benefits social networks offer for brands from the perspective of brand owners. According to the members, there are discussions about the advantages of belonging to a brand community to analyse how social communities affect their members (12). Because value influences consumer behavior, customers are likelier to stick with a company when they consistently receive value from it.

According to Alalwan et al. (13), a reputable service provider will increase brand recognition and foster client loyalty. The significance of social networking sites for their users is examined. Most people are drawn to social communities to learn about businesses and their products because websites can now be created more efficiently and user-friendly. By establishing social connections with clients, operators can better understand their behavior. However, a social community must be highly desired. It should be advantageous for potential customers to learn more about the troubled brand. Encouragement of customer participation will also improve a sense of community. Therefore, the level of satisfaction that a brand's social community members have with it affects community retention and membership decisions.

A brand-new area of contemporary technology, social media and social networks are particularly significant in their function in marketing. The marketing department's job is to understand these factors in its strategy and put them into practice in day-to-day operations. High-quality and timely information is of utmost importance. This essay examines some facets of this unavoidable subject. It illustrates how some of the most prosperous businesses in the world took advantage of social networking opportunities to advance their operations.

Research Methodology

An effort has been made to comprehend the idea and definition of social media and the emergence and growth of social media marketing in this study, primarily based on secondary sources. Investigating this underutilised social media platform is the goal of this study to highlight the many opportunities it presents to stakeholders such as management, marketers, and advertisers.

Significance of the Study

The academic community, advertisers, and consumers will all benefit from this study. The seasoned marketer will better understand the chances that social media has to offer

customers. Information from it will teach them about a useful method for reaching their target markets.

The study's main area of interest is how social media affects how marketers promote any product. The most important data regarding customer likes, preferences, interests, and behaviour may be acquired using social media. One of the most effective and affordable digital marketing techniques for raising brand awareness is social media. Brand recognition will considerably enhance if a social media strategy is implemented. Through reviews of the goods or services they have purchased, people can use social media to influence future purchases. Because of technological improvements, consumers may now research and critically evaluate products.

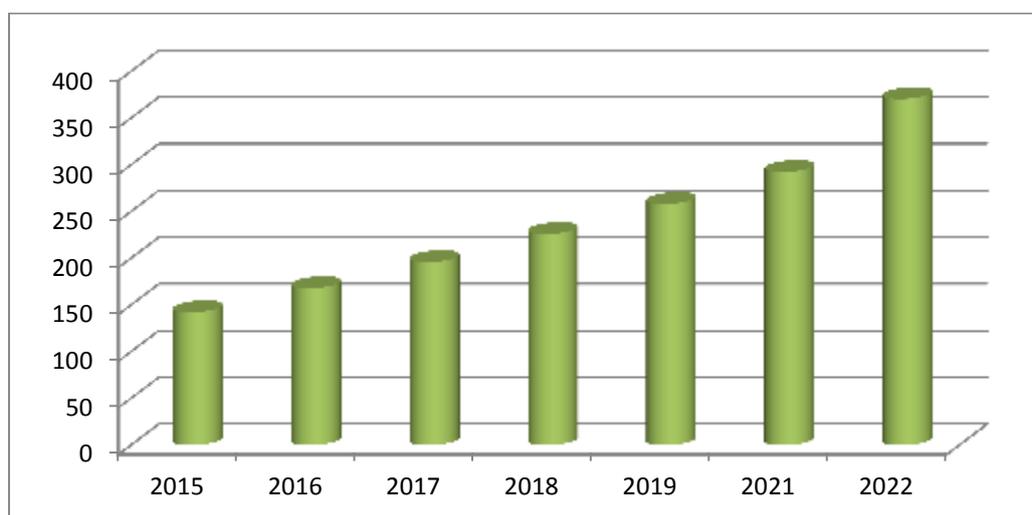


Fig. 1 Numbers of social network users in India from 2015-2022

India is the second-largest overseas market after China. All significant public locations, including train stations, now have free Wi-Fi networks thanks to a recent installation by Google Corporation. Indians now converse differently online because to social media. By 2022, there will be 370.77 million users, based on the data that is now available and the graphical representation of social media users in India that was previously indicated. One of the main reasons for these changes is the government's initiatives to create a "Digital India" (Fig. 1). Young males use social media in the second-highest proportion (37%) after the most notable college students (27%), who actively participate in nation-building activities, according to the researcher's analysis of the demographics of Indian users (Fig. 2).

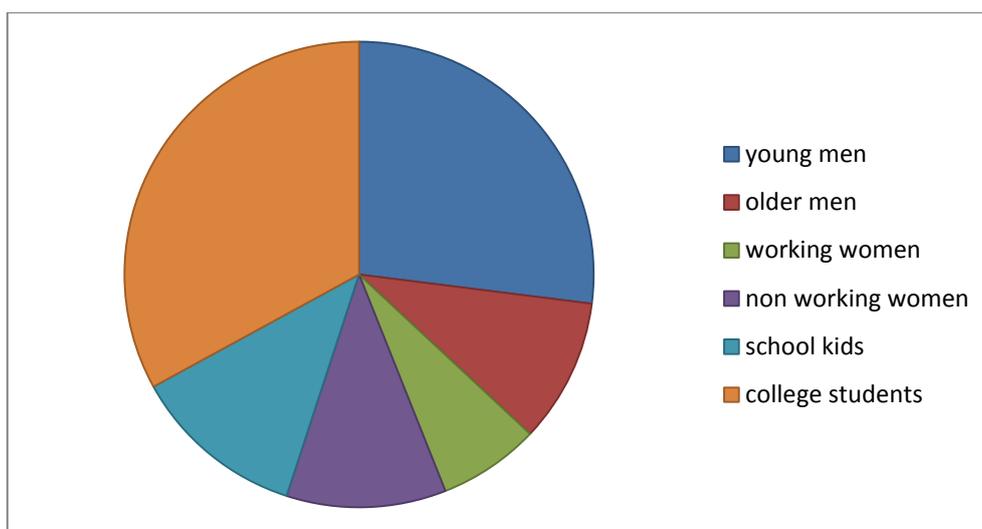


Fig.2 Social media users across demographic

Defining Social Media

Social networking sites have developed into a tool that allows businesses to broaden their marketing campaigns to a bigger audience in today's technologically savvy world. Social media marketing is described by the article's author, Chi (14), as "the connection between brands and consumers, while also providing a personal channel and currency for user-centered networking and social interaction." Social media use has drastically changed communication techniques and instruments (15).

The benefits that social media marketing gives businesses are still not entirely evident, despite extensive theoretical and experimental research (16). The problem is less with the technology itself than with what people do with it, as users produce and consume information rather than retrieve it (17). In Web 2.0, collaboration, engagement, and interoperability have replaced information retrieval (17). Kaplan and Haenlein (16) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build upon the theoretical and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content." According to Sinclair and Vogus, who cite O'Reilly's 2005 definition, "social media" refers to software tools that enable users to create and disseminate user-generated content. (18) To be classified as a social network website, a website must contain user profiles, content, a method for users to communicate with one another and leave remarks on one another's webpages, and the ability for users to join virtual groups based on shared interests, such as politics or fashion. Frequently, social networking sites and social media platforms are used interchangeably.

Social media users can communicate by creating personal information profiles and granting access to these accounts (16). Thus, social media are distinct from conventional online communication channels. Social networking occurs in the context of social media, which has altered how customers discover products and make purchases.

Researchers use the Consumer Sentiment towards Marketing Index to predict how consumers respond to social media marketing. CSM's definition (19) must address how typical consumers view marketing and the market. How an individual perceives the market significantly impacts their desire to engage in consumer activities (19). To be successful, social media marketing campaigns must target tech-savvy consumers. Consumer technology readiness is defined as "people's propensity to adopt and utilise new technologies to achieve personal and professional goals" (19). When marketing on social networks, retailers should consider the level of technological proficiency of their target audience; otherwise, their efforts will be futile. This is because their intended audience may not use social media, is unfamiliar with it, or has a negative opinion of it. A technology suitability assessment will determine if interactive marketing is suitable for a retailer's target market. The Innovation Adoption Process (IAP) is another method for collecting data on consumer adoption of novel technologies. A person advances through the innovation-decision process, according to the IAP. The process consists of five steps: understanding the innovation, developing an opinion, deciding whether to accept or reject it, implementing the concept, and evaluating the results (16). IAP-savvy marketing professionals can establish effective social media marketing strategies. Today, social media offers much more than just a way to keep in contact with family and friends. Customers can now use it to learn more about their preferred companies and their products. These websites serve as a new channel for marketers and business owners to communicate with consumers and conduct business. Online social networks, efficient search engines, and peer-to-peer communication tools have all enhanced the ability of marketers to engage customers through novel points of contact (20). "Shopper marketing" has forged a new line of communication between businesses and consumers. The phrase "shopper marketing" refers to a marketing strategy that targets consumers and involves "the planning and execution of all marketing activities that influence a shopper along, and beyond, the entire path of purchase, from the point at which the motivation to shop first emerges through purchase, consumption, repurchase, and recommendation" (20). Retailers who use consumer marketing must consider perceived fit, the degree of similarity between a new product

category and the currently available items linked to the brand. If users believe the services offered by social networking sites are beneficial and useful, they are more likely to use their purchase options on those sites (21). Social networking site users represent various demographics; therefore, giving clients options may aid in business growth. Due to the variety of users of social networks, it is feasible to reach most target clients (21). According to Shankar et al. (2011), shopper marketing can be used to improve products, communicate messages accurately, gain support, and serve as a link to in-store activities. This exemplifies the value of social media in a retailer's marketing strategy.(20)

Social Media as a Tool for Marketing

Marketers must engage with various stakeholders through social media marketing, including current and potential customers, current and potential employees, journalists, and bloggers. It is now easier and less expensive than ever for marketers to access both high- and low-quality information thanks to the Internet as a medium and the World Wide Web as an emerging technology (22). Surveys, observations, and experimental research are a few examples of traditional marketing research methods. Their marketing research capabilities have been increased through email, in-person and telephone interviews, and electronic networks. It is simple to spot changes in the market and consumer expectations from customer service inquiries, blog comments, and remarks on social networking websites because data from numerous sources is synced (23). The benefits of mobile and internet-based technologies include reduced costs, faster response times, a larger potential audience, decreased respondent error, flexibility in inquiry, sounds, and graphics, and more consumer freedom in responding to inquiries. Opensource Intelligence's information processing methodology is an essential data-gathering tool. In terms of consumer, competitor, and brand experiences, open source, data mining, and data warehousing technologies, among others, assist marketers in gathering, analysing, compiling, and storing enormous volumes of data on their markets (24). One of the most crucial aspects of technology for consumers is its interactivity. With the spread of the Internet as a platform for business and technology, marketing and advertising are developing (25). Technology and marketing strategy are inextricably linked because consumers use interactive and integrated technologies on their mobile and internet-enabled devices to communicate with shops and brands. This is because adopting these technologies leads to an emphasis on the user experience. Because it is possible to use product and service

catalogues and coupons, customers communicate with merchants through websites and social media platforms and shop for goods. (26) This is crucial for younger customers and businesses that cater to young people. Because young people use social networks more frequently than older people, employing contemporary marketing strategies has an even greater impact on companies that cater to this demographic. These days, an increasing number of people use technology and have an impact on reorganising business operations, which causes an enterprise to change in society.

The technique of using websites and social media platforms to promote a product or service is known as social media marketing. It employs data analytics methods to monitor the efficacy and engagement of marketing and advertising initiatives. Because social media may be utilised as a marketing tool passively or actively, it's a great way to bypass expensive market research. The finest element of using social media platforms to reach consumers is that ads may be shown to a specific audience. Despite having more monthly users than sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Google+, mobile platforms for sharing visual media have the highest interaction rates, and the fastest growth and have completely changed how consumers engage with brand content. Compared to Twitter's monthly engagement rate of 0.03% and an average of 210 million users (27), Instagram has a monthly engagement rate of 1.46% and 130 million monthly active users. It is obvious why it is essential to incorporate promotional activities into social networks. There are many potential clients; therefore, picking the proper target group could significantly affect a business's future development and success. A company's marketing strategy may be significantly impacted by data gleaned through social media networks. The information is delivered rapidly, which is the finest aspect since, if properly evaluated, it may allow for plan modification before further damage is done.

Impact of influencers on social media

A typical marketing tactic is to use well-known influencers with high social standing to persuade others, such as celebrities in consumer markets or well-known businesspeople in business markets (28). Still, because social media is so widely used, this approach is now much more approachable and enticing. For instance, Virat Kohli has over 255.1 million Instagram followers who engage with her posts. It may be speculative to place a high value on only online exposures or amass likes for particular posts, even though academic research

suggests that doing so may not affect consumers' opinions or behavior. A bad WOM, however, may have a detrimental impact on customer choices, according to study, but a positive WOM has little to no impact on consumer preferences. Smaller firms have started to and will continue to profit from the popularity of what are known as Bmicro-influencers, signaling a new type of influencer. Although major corporations may use celebrities like Selena Gomez as influencers since they are so expensive, smaller brands have started to and will continue to do so. A few thousand to hundreds of thousands of people make up the followings of micro-influencers, who frequently focus on a more specific audience (29).

Discussion

It has long been recognised that marketing plays a big part in businesses. But because of the changing world, marketing is more significant and revered today than ever. This suggests marketers are more responsible than ever for spotting market cues and directing businesses toward better results. Businesses have increased their presence outside the physical space they operate, and modern technology has made it easier for customers to access all the information they need.(20) Contrary to traditional media, which is frequently too expensive for many firms, a social media plan does not require a huge budget. As social media platforms have expanded, consumer communities have developed, creating new channels for contact and the dissemination of knowledge about the products of well-known companies. Online brand communities, for instance, facilitate marketing-related communication between consumers and companies. Although there have been some early triumphs, little progress has been made in this study area. More research is needed to properly understand the long-term promotional benefits social media marketing offers stores. More in-depth research is also required to understand real-world applications and go beyond theoretical or projected results. This literature review identifies knowledge gaps in social media marketing and the need for additional research on the advantages of Internet advertising, particularly for small enterprises. One may assume that the research is focused on defining social media marketing and looking at the elements that influence customer behavior regarding social networking, given the enormous amount of multidisciplinary literature that has been analysed. A store must understand its components before employing social media as a marketing strategy. It may be difficult to comprehend social media without prior knowledge of Web 2.0, a new method for users to access the World Wide Web in which all operators routinely contribute and collaborate on content. (17) As a result, companies must plan for social media in their

operations. This is valid, particularly for companies trying to obtain a competitive edge. (6) This article examines the most recent data on how businesses could use social media into their marketing plans. Most of the study has been on defining social media by explaining new terminology and concepts that define its foundations and looking at the influence of a company's social media integration on customer behavior because social media is a relatively new phenomenon.

Customers generally have conflicting opinions about user stories. "I consider user reviews to be helpful. I wouldn't say they are the main driving force behind purchases. Still, it's another method to examine a product through someone else's eyes without necessarily believing everything you read. The account typically includes how it was utilised, what it was used for, and how it was installed (26). It might be someone else's positive viewpoint. The organisation needs a clear picture to identify a path for future growth because of this timely, accurate information is crucial. Social networking platforms and other technologies can collect various data, but analysis is required before the data can be used effectively. Marketing strategy can then be modified based on what clients want and need.(9) The largest error a business can make is to downplay the value of social networks since they offer a variety of opportunities, including promotion campaigns, showcasing new items, receiving customer feedback, learning more about consumers, and more.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, social media and marketing substantially impact social identity, which impacts decisions regarding purchases, engagement, continuing intention, and satisfaction. The study made the goals of using social media clear. According to the report, social media and marketing could assist with continuous corporate branding. As contrast to blog marketing and keyword advertising, which were linked with content, social media and marketing reach the target audiences by creating strong relationships within the online community to maximise the impact of the material offered. As a result, social media service providers must devise plans to boost social media and marketing impact. Forum moderators should promote increased forum activity to improve social media and marketing. Therefore, regular use of content creation "Apps" on social networks like Facebook, Instagram, twitter, YouTube, promotes more involvement from customers and businesses.

Recommendations

The study results suggest that one should adhere to the following recommendations: Social media enables businesses to quickly exchange information across all geographies. Additionally, as social media helps businesses to tailor their content for each market niche and expand their audience reach, it must be included in the communication strategy. A piece of content that goes viral can reach an infinite number of people without incurring further costs for the business. I also recommend posting job positions in e-commerce on several social media networks due to the increase in demand during this time. It is feasible to broadcast advertisements that are easy for everyone to access. I also implore them to do it in a manner and language that is very common and plain so that the public may easily access the transactions published by various firms. To convey information effectively and communicate with clients, it is suggested that businesses use Facebook and other social media platforms. We suggest firms use these social media sites to communicate system flaws to develop a loyal customer base.

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