

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON THE BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF INDIAN CONSUMERS: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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Abstract

The use of social media for consumer engagement and connection is quickly becoming the new big thing. Every day, millions of consumer contacts occur on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc., in addition to a sizable number of online groups and customer support forums. Social media became prevalent and is still doing so now. It is also swiftly gaining popularity in the corporate world. Social media is being used more often by both existing and potential consumers to discuss the goods and services they now own or want to purchase. Leading businesses have realized the value of capturing these messages. Social media are brand-new, cutting-edge technologies that have amassed millions of users all over the world. They provide businesses with a variety of options and chances to create communication and marketing plans that will give them a competitive edge over their rivals.

Customers engage with companies or brands on social media to receive discounts or coupons, read reviews as part of the shopping process, and learn more about the products before making a purchase decision. The goal of the study is to assess the evolving marketing trend of utilizing social media as a tool to advertise goods and services. A survey was created for this research study and sent to 100 respondents to examine their attitudes and perceptions about social media.

Keywords: - Social Media, Consumers, Competitive Edge, Marketing, Shopping Process.

I. INTRODUCTION

The technique of increasing website traffic or attention using Social Media platforms is known as social media marketing. The main focus of social media marketing initiatives is typically on attempts to provide content that grabs readers' interest and entices them to share it with their social networks. Because it looks to come from a reliable source other than the brand or company itself, a corporate message travels from user to user and probably resonates. Because word-of-mouth is the primary driving force behind this type of promotion, earned media rather than sponsored media is the end outcome. Anybody with internet connection may now quickly access social media platforms. Organizations that communicate more regularly promote brand recognition and frequently provide better customer service. Additionally, social media offers businesses a very low-cost platform to run marketing initiatives. Social networking websites enable people to

communicate and form relationships. People can engage with items or businesses when they join those sites. Users' prior interactions on social networking sites give that connection a feeling of personalization. Individual followers can "retweet" or "repost" remarks made by the product being advertised on social networking sites and blogs. Repeating the message allows it to be seen by all of the user's connections, therefore reaching a larger audience. Social media sites are utilized by social media marketing to increase online presence and to market goods and services. Social media platforms are helpful for establishing both personal and professional networks as well as for transferring information. Social media marketing gives businesses a method to communicate with their clients.

A. Social Networking Site History

In 1995, classmates.com was created to assist users in connecting with and communicating with former classmates. The website currently has 40 million users. Users of this website are only allowed to connect with those who attend the same college; connections with other users are not permitted. The first social networking website that allowed its users to communicate with other users, Six degrees.com, launched in 1997. Online communities like Theglobe.com, GeoCities, and Tripod.com, which were launched in 1994, 1995, and 1996 respectively, marked the beginning of social networking. This community focuses on user connection through chat and aids social media users in sharing personal information and ideas via websites by offering free website hosting. By providing connections to every member by email, Classmates.com has a novel strategy. User profiles were a feature of social networking sites in the 1990s, allowing users to create a list of friends and look for other users who share their interests.

B. The Development of Social Media

Social media's primary goal is to facilitate communication since people have always interacted even before communication technologies became popular. Although there have always been discussions, the speed at which connections were made changed throughout time, giving rise to social media platforms. These conversations typically developed by word-of-mouth. Everywhere people have begun using digital technology for networking, socializing, information collecting, and information dissemination, social media has become a part of life, thinking, culture, and business.

Since the 1970s, social media has existed in some shape or fashion. While the communication premise hasn't changed much from the beginning, the style and feel have. Although there is more connection and time for conversation now thanks to technology, social media still allows for mass broadcasting. The initial version of the bulletin board system was essentially a copy of the ones seen in schools, community centres, and supermarkets.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bikhchandani and others (1998) They explore whether consumers will purchase a product and if they will recommend it to others. It justifies the consumers' attempts to exhibit astonishing degrees of inclusion in a variety of situations they encounter while making brand purchases and recommending them to others.

Manju Ahuja and others (2003) The focus of their paper, which was on investigating the factors specifically influencing the purchasing and reading habits of consumers during online purchases, was on the customers using business-to-purchaser websites. The best elements that influence customers' purchase behaviour are social media.

The usefulness of social mediations that are appropriate for purposes of social advertising was surveyed in research by **Brian Cugelman, MA (2010)**. The analysis is presented through a model that integrates social transformation and mental norms that were used to organize interventions for changing online behaviour. The analysis made use of meta-insightful techniques to assess the impact of these intercessions, which are concentrated on purposeful actions.

According to Sisira Neti's (2011) study, web-based media promotion in India. It looked at web-based media tactics and how they function and matter for the growth and benefit of marketers. The important research findings that went into this blog have a significant impact on the growth and marking of companies.

Nekatibeb Tesfaye (May 2012), Given the benefits of long-term commitment among businesses and customers, as well as the opportunity for everyone to communicate profitably and effectively in a way unmatched by other media, studied social media might very well be regarded as the specialised tool of the modern day.

Priti S. et al. (2013) examined the possibility of establishing brand correspondence on long-distance interpersonal communication locations, demonstrating the influence of online reviews and ratings of products and brands on consumers' purchase behaviour.

Priyanka P. (2015) thought social media may be used to increase customer trust. Improvements in client upkeep are brought about by constant client care administrations. New social platforms and applications will flourish, enabling media to be far more persistently personalised and area-based.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

To better understand the significance of social media for online purchases, a study is now being conducted. This is a result of the proliferation of social networking sites, which give e-marketers a platform to promote their brands online in an effort to increase profits and grow their businesses while satisfying customers. Online marketing is impacted increasingly by social media methods. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend how social media marketing affects consumer online purchases. The study will use primary and secondary data sources to examine the relationship

between social media marketing and online shopping in order to understand how social media marketing affects consumer online purchases of FMCG-Personal Products in a few Indian cities.

The influence of social media marketing for online purchases of products in the categories of clothing, footwear, handbags, accessories, etc. has not been examined in research conducted thus far.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design was adopted for this investigation. Descriptive studies employ characteristics of a product's consumers and how those qualities change depending on demographic parameters like gender, age, and income to show the relationship and provide information about the results. Descriptive research was employed in the current study. Surveys, observations, and literature support were all part of it. The primary and secondary data used in this research report. This study article is based on 100 Samples that were gathered using the questionnaire approach from different places in India.

A. Objectives of the Study

The following are the study's primary goals:

- To research customer behaviour in relation to social media marketing.
- To determine the demographics of consumers who use internet marketing.
- To be familiar with the antecedents of social networking platforms.
- To list the popular online buying websites.

V. BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

The above graphic, which presents information from a Social Media Marketing Report, clearly illustrates the many benefits, which are as follows:

Increased Openness: The importance of social media marketing has grown recently. Both consumers and marketers use social networking sites extensively. The current openness has increased and is 92%.

Increased Traffic: As a result of the introduction of internet advertising, the clientele is steadily growing. The study claims that consumers and even marketers utilize informal communication sites to an extraordinary degree, and as a result of such sites, traffic has gradually increased, demonstrating the study that traffic increased by up to 80%.

Creates Loyal Fans: Brand Loyalty is one of the person-to-person communication destinations' other most important advantages. As an example, if a customer is pleased with a product, they won't ever go to another company to make the same purchase. This results in brand constancy.

Using the market knowledge: Locations for person-to-person communication provide information on the item and are easily accessible. That suggests its Qualities, Capabilities, Cost, and so forth. Customers won't need to travel anywhere because they can find all the information they need about an item on websites. The results suggest that 72% of respondents said that long-distance interpersonal contact settings provide useful promotion information.

Produced Leads: There are several methods for determining lead age. The majority of long-distance informal communication sites generate leads for goods and services. For instance, a blog serves as the focal point for customer loyalty. Face Book is very definitely another important source, thus it essentially produces leads.

Improved search rankings: The majority of customers are currently spending hours much more than just sitting in front of the TV. Additionally, they find the online search tools to be interesting as long-distance informal communication locations. Positions are assigned to products with the aid of human contact based on feedback provided by the customer online.

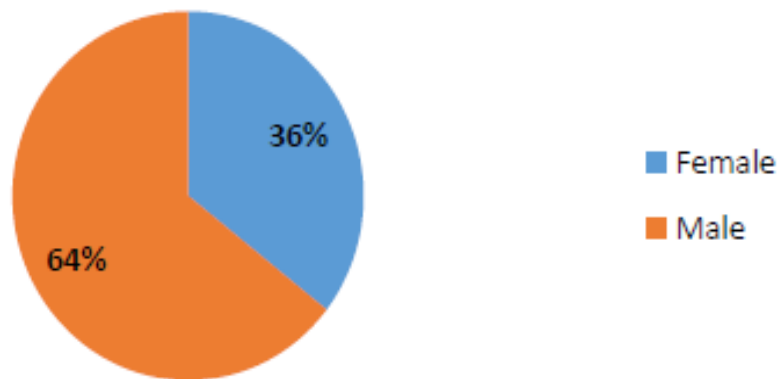
Growing commercial ties: Just as social media is presently replacing traditional trading methods of selling and purchasing, business practices are also changing.

Reduced Marketing Expenditure: The cost of the product's exchange strategy is extremely high. Finance managers require a sales representative, an office, and other essentials. But these days, long-distance communication platforms are simple to use, anybody can use them at any time, and even professionals in the financial sector may post notices on social media websites at a low cost.

Increased Sales: Each day, 600 sites are created in the existing environment, where 4600 photos are shared. There are 100,000 tweets sent. Nowadays, a variety of social media platforms are designed in such a way that customers may purchase the goods anytime. Almost definitely, compared to earlier times, internet revenue has increased in recent years.

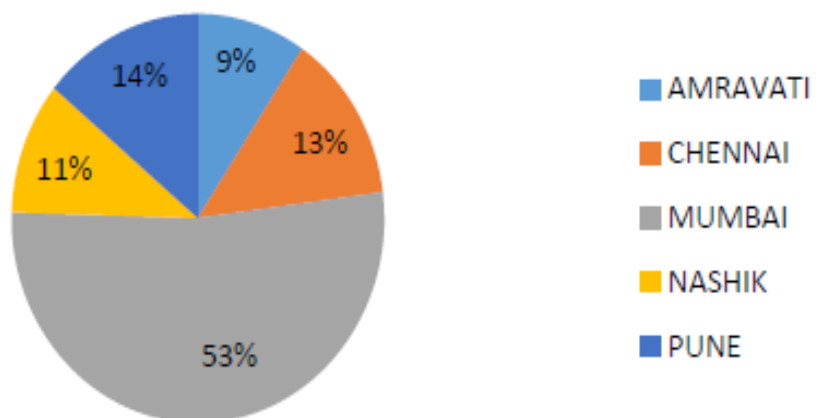
VI. ANALYSIS OF DATA & INTERPRETATION

Based on the primary data gathered from the questionnaire, the following information has been provided.



Source: Field data

Figure 1. Respondent classification by Gender



Source: Primary data

Figure 2. Respondent classification by geographic location

Table 1 Age group wise classification of Respondents

Age group	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
ABOVE 50 YRS	30.7	30.7	30.7
25 TO 35 YRS	34.5	34.5	65.2
BELOW 25 YRS	34.8	34.8	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data

Table 2 Shows earnings of the respondents per month

Income level	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Above 50,000	43.9	43.9	43.9
25,000 to 50,000	35.2	35.2	79.1
Below 25,000	20.9	20.9	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data

Table 3 Most preferred Online Social apps used by the respondents

Social Media Sites	Percentage (%)	Rank
Facebook	64.2	Rank 1
Twitter	41.1	Rank 2
LinkedIn	38.0	Rank 3
Ibibio	36.8	Rank 4
YouTube	33.5	Rank 5
Myspace	39.0	Rank 6
Pinterest	39.1	Rank 7
Instagram	37.4	Rank 8
Google+	39.3	Rank 9
Flickr	52.5	Rank 10

Source: Field data

Table 4 Recurrence of using the networking websites

Frequency of log on to Social Networking sites	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Alternate days	19.6	19.6	19.6
Everyday	62.7	62.7	82.3

Once a month	4.7	4.7	87.0
Once a week	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data

Table 5 Recurrence of purchasing via online websites

Frequency of online shopping	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Once in a month	43.4	43.4	43.4
Once in three months	25.2	25.2	68.6
Once in six months	17.3	17.3	85.9
Once in a year	14.1	14.1	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data

Table 6. Online shopping duration

Duration of online shopping	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than a year	40.5	40.5	40.5
One to three years	39.3	39.3	79.8
Three to five years	14.5	14.5	94.3
More than five years	5.8	5.8	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data

- A. Approximately 35.6% of responders are female, while 64.4% are men. As seen above, a pie diagram is used to convey this data.
- B. 13.5 percent of the responders are from Chennai City. 9.4% of respondents came from Amravati, 10.6% from Nashik, and 10.5% from Pune, according to the study 52.5% of respondents from the city of Mumbai were analyzed, making about 14% of the total sample.
- C. The above table shows the monthly family income of online respondents out of 815 total respondents. It shows that 20.9% of respondents' monthly family income is below Rs.25,000, while research reveals that 35.2% of respondents' monthly family income is between Rs.25000 and Rs.35,000, and 43.9% of respondents are studied. This is due to the rising levels of affluence in Indian society.
- D. It demonstrated that consumers today prefer brands that are not offered in local stores but were instead offered online with a variety of discounts. Customers found online shopping to be more alluring because they could receive their purchases immediately thanks to the availability of modern mobile applications.
- E. It was discovered that purchasing online offers easy access to product information, customer reviews, and ratings provided by dependable relatives and friends. People purchase online because of the generally pleasant quickness of internet transactions.
- F. It also showed that while choosing or doing online shopping for items, shoppers gave weight to three types of online buying attributes: highly important, slightly important, and not important.

VII. CONCLUSION

In today's cutthroat marketplace, online firms were vying to sell their goods online and make an impression on customers. Social networking sites aid in generating interest in the brand and helping to establish customer trust, both of which contribute to effective brand building. Because of their significance and existence, these sites are useful for ecommerce sectors' promotion.

Additionally, online businesses have direct access to their target market, particularly internet users, allowing them to maintain continual contact with them and better understand their interests and product preferences as well as improve their customer service, among other things. This aids in developing marketing strategy for the items. This gives them a big enough platform to get quick client feedback.

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