
Role of Social Media in Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Social media platforms are the method to interact socially. Social media plays various roles in creating relationships with people. Social media is an emerging phenomenon in marketing of businesses. The blast of social media phenomenon is astonishing. It is helping businesses to create a bond with its consumers. Many businesses are trying to do their best to promote their brands on social media platforms. Companies are incorporating various types of social media marketing strategies in order to expand their business. They are able to create brand awareness. With the help of distinct social media marketing tools. Social media is helping businesses in developing a wide audience and loyal customers which in turn helps in the growth of the business.

Keywords: Social media, social media marketing tools, customer relationship, social media marketing, marketing strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world has changed dramatically since the rise of the Internet. Eventually the Internet overtook the power of controlling the human mind. However, anything that is shown on the internet has become the truth for today's generation. There are a number of different things available on the Internet for everyone to see, there are many other things that people can use for the purpose of Entertainment. And the most important part of that is "Social media". Social media is being increasingly embraced by this new generation. Nowadays, being active on social media and having access to social media has become the basic need of human beings. Not only the new generation is crazy about social media but also every person of every generation is shifting to social media as it is the best platform for entertainment as well as very informative at the same time. Creating social groups or communities has become easy with the help of social media. Anyone can be a part of that community and use this social platform for their own wellbeing.

Businesses and Companies however are using social media as a platform for marketing their products and services. As social media is used by every second person in the world; it's easier for them to convey their message to the public and get more and more people to buy their product or service. Social media helps marketers to understand the consumers purchasing behaviour and know about a suitable market for them. Social media marketing allows marketers to converse with their customers directly through any social media platform they're using. There are many such platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp and so on. Using these platforms, marketers are trying to build a direct relation between their customers and trying to provide them with assurance about their brand. Marketers not only try to keep a good relation between their regular customers but they also try to attract new customers by providing them the experience of their old and regular customers.

It is examined how social media has taken marketing to the level where marketers can easily influence their customer towards their brand and turn the customers minds into buying the same. The objective is to identify the role that social media is playing in marketing and how it influences consumer behaviour.

2. SECTOR OVERVIEW

When looking at social media as a mode of communication, it has evolved enormously from the earlier modes of communication. The evolution starts from the ancient method such as cave paintings, carrier pigeons to the effective way such as postal system, newspapers, radios, telephone, television etc. Now all these modes were not only meant for communicating to the family and friends but also about sharing the worldwide events. There was one discovery which is remarkable, useful till date and not lagging behind is the discovery of the internet. Discovery of the internet has laid the newer and convenient perspective for the communication amongst individuals and peers. Now-a-days every small activity revolves around the use of the internet starting from education to businesses. Email was the first way of online communication which is till date a formal way to communicate. With the development of mobile phones, text message facility was available for informal communication. Later a lot of social media sites were discovered and gained importance for different perspectives.

Social media is a networking term which is popularly known for applications that are mainly used for communication purposes. It acts as a platform for the world to be connected. Today, Instagram, Facebook,

WhatsApp are the most popular social media applications. All of these applications are collectively called social media networking sites.

It generally operates with the help of internet connectivity. One cannot use social media without having an active Internet connection. To engage on social media, users use different electronic items like a smartphone, computer, tablets, TV etc. There are many social media sites launching every year. People can have their account on these various social media applications, all they need to do is to fill in their authentic details for their identity verification and immediately their account gets created.

Social media applications are used by a wide audience to communicate with friends and family and to stay in touch with what's happening in the world. Social media not only allows people to hear what others say but also enables to respond. It connects people all across the world to interact with each other and share their opinion, views and thoughts. Along with that people also share their personal photos, videos, documents and their information through social media. Additionally, social media is being used as a medium to document memories; learn and explore about different things, advertise oneself and form friendships with people along with the growth of ideas from the creation of blogs, podcasts, videos, and gaming sites. Today, Ideas of people all across the world are being shared on these virtual networking platforms.

These social platforms not only help in improving an individual's sense of connectedness with real or online communities but also it can be an effective communication (or marketing) tool for corporations, entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations, influencers, advocacy groups, political parties, and governments. Therefore, it is adopted by businesses wanting to take advantage of a popular new communication method to reach out to their customers which is nothing but marketing. It has also been observed that there has been a rise in social movements using this, as a tool for communicating and reaching towards a larger audience for gaining broader perspective about different kinds of social awareness. Because it is known to connect an individual or group of people to new ties and social networks, and is found to increase entrepreneurship and innovation, especially for those individuals who lack conventional information channels due to their lower socioeconomic background.

It is believed that the power of social media is the ability to connect and share information with anyone on Earth or with many people simultaneously. Therefore, it is a platform with a wide range of utilities to choose from.

Although it has a lot of positive impact on human beings, it has been observed that there are negative impacts as well when it comes to the use of social media.

Social media roughly falls under following categories:

Modes	Examples
Audio sharing	Podcast
Blogs	Huffington Post
Business networks	LinkedIn, Indeed
Business mails	Microsoft business mail, Gmail
Encyclopaedia (online)	Wikipedia
Forums	Quora
Microblogs	Twitter
Photo sharing	Flickr
Products/services review	Amazon, Flipkart
Social bookmarking	Pinterest
Social networks	Facebook, Instagram
Video sharing	YouTube

3. ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MARKETING

Earlier social media was used mainly by individuals to basically communicate with each other but today it's used in many more ways other than just communication. The role of social media in marketing is very important than what people think. Social media is an extremely flexible platform where both businesses and customers are able to know about the needs of each other. Businesses nowadays are enjoying the full benefit of social media. With creating and developing websites, businesses are using social media to expand their brand, to connect with the audience. It is important for marketers to know that social media marketing will lead to more and more success. It helps the marketers to give a voice to communicate with potential consumers as

well. Traditional methods of marketing like printing in brochures or in newspapers or any other modes are less preferred as it reaches a lesser audience and also is not cost-effective. But now-a-days, starting from small businesses to the biggest companies from the entire world are using social media to spread a word about their brand, products as well as services.

There are no restrictions as to who can enjoy the benefit of social media. It's something any kind of brand can leverage. The brand doesn't have to fit in to a certain category to be on social media. The right way to promote a brand is what helps engage more audience. Social media marketing is an important tool which if used rightly does wonders for the brand.

In addition, social media provides relevant statistical information about their target market, such as their likes and dislikes, demographics, etc. which they otherwise would have to collect through extremely expensive market research companies. Social media plays primary role in digital marketing because of its extensive reach and the fact that it is very unlikely for a business to grow without the assistance of social media.

Creating brand awareness is a key step in promoting any product. Social media helps businesses to create their own identity or space in the market where everybody can review it. Businesses can showcase their products and services online by creating various campaigns or strategies. There are various social media tools for marketing research, communication, sales promotions/discounts, informal employee-learning/organizational development, relationship development/loyalty programs, as well as e-Commerce. Brand awareness and credibility will be developed and sales will increase when the product or business is talked about on social media. Collaborating with influential people with a large social media following that can lead these followers to follow the brand is an important way to grow brand's word-of-mouth on social media. Social media is a good source of information of industry trends for a business to embrace changes to get a higher level of recognition and association to avail the product and services.

It is safe to say that the main role of social media marketing is to drive online traffic. The term online traffic refers to the visitors landing on the home web page through various digital platforms. It is considered to be the biggest contributor to increase the branch website tracking to stop in getting the right target audience and provide more reach. Reach refers to the number of people who can see the content. Getting reach is the most important thing especially if it's a start-up. After Google's regular search, social media is the second most likely source of digital traffic and is considered as one of the best sources of traffic for websites. Research and patience are important components in this process. Social media plays an important role in marketing, the purpose being to find the right target group through social media.

Social media has a wide range of audience from different age groups and different areas. Everyone cannot be included in targeted audience. A targeted audience is a set of people who are most likely to purchase the product. Social media provides different rules to keep a track on the targeted audience like gaining valuable information about their customers which will help to make smarter business decisions.

Any business or brand has the advantage of interacting with its customers, so they can quickly respond and have direct conversations with them. Businesses can know who is interested in their business because they've chosen to follow that business's account. The business or the brand can also take feedback from their customers and deal with their concerns and problems, helping businesses to perform better.

Communicating through social media also helps businesses to create brand loyalty. One of the main objectives of businesses is generally building loyal customers. Loyal customers help the business to maintain its profits. Regular contact and interaction with the help of social media with customers helps to create a brand loyalty which is the positive and genuine image of the brand. As channels for direct communication with the company, these platforms are seen as ways of serving consumers.

Constant interaction also helps in creating consumer's trust which is one of the main parts of business. Different factors of social media marketing can help businesses to create that consumer trust which in turn helps the brand to grow. Interaction not only includes communicating with consumers but also following the trends in the social market, carrying out new campaigns according to festivities round about the corner, creating different contest alerts, reaching out for the promotions etc. Promotions may include pay-per-click advertising, influencer outreach, PR, email marketing, newsletters, display advertising, affiliate marketing, etc.

A strong content promotion strategy will include a multi-channel approach. Digital marketing is not an either-or choice. However, digital platforms work best when its used in conjunction with one another. When creating

a strategy, it is also important how many of the resources a brand is willing to consider if it wants to reach a specific goal.

In today's market landscape, as there are many brands trying to gain reach for the audience, the quality and transparency of content as well as the product/ service is also very important as there may be possibility that the brand reaches wider audience but if the product/service is not genuine it is not going to last for a longer period.

All of this effort puts brand in a specific algorithm which gets picked up making the brand fetch the larger audience apart from its existing customers.

4. CONCLUSION

- The use of social media is increasing day by day and marketers are taking proper advantage of it by marketing their brands on social media and making an impact on their targeted consumers.
- Many marketers have embraced social media as a platform for communication and for research of customers.
- Marketing on social media improves brand awareness and reputation and can improve the business to consumer relations.
- Due to the ever-increasing popularity of social networks, small as well as growing companies must use several different social media platforms to market their products.
- Overall, it is concluded that social media has a great impact on marketing.

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