

The Impact on Digital Marketing During Pandemic Outbreak COVID-19 on Business Development.

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Abstract:- Over the years, companies have been using traditional means of marketing by giving away brochures, distributing fliers or advertising in magazines. But we don't know how far this traditional means of marketing is going to be successful. We may be headed in the wrong direction, but there's no way to tell. Unlike traditional marketing, digital marketing has eased the way of doing business. Digital marketing is the act of promoting and selling products and services by leveraging Online Marketing tactics such as Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) and many more. Digital marketing lets you measure results. It allows us to make marketing decisions based on facts and figures, rather than taking it blindly. On the other hand, the pandemic outbreak has affected the business worldwide drastically. So the businesses are becoming more reliant on digital strategy. Companies are also now finding themselves in the position of losing millions through cancelled events and programs which they had scheduled for the year 2020. They can't claw back the hours of time and expense they had spent on preparations, but insurance and flexible cancellation policies will leave them with a marketing budget to reassign themselves with the upcoming marketing plan. Digital Marketing is likely to be the clear winner here, and companies – including ones that may never have a Facebook or LinkedIn page before – will need to move into social marketing, content marketing, email marketing, SEM, SEO and influencing campaigns to get their audience back. This Paper delves into Impact on Digital Marketing during pandemic outbreak Covid-19, using hypothesis and data collected from different tools. It further shows how organizations had adapted to a change and held themselves during this pandemic. The report focuses on the importance of Digital Marketing for organizations to engage with their customers again.

Keywords:- Digital Marketing, SEO, SEM, Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, Content Marketing.

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital Marketing is the way you can promote your brand and products through electronic media to represent them globally with the help of the internet. This type of marketing done through the Internet, social media tools, mobile phones and through electronic media like television and radio channels.

It is quite obvious that COVID-19 pandemic has drastically toppled our way of life. The same is true for all businesses as every business is struggling today for maintaining their existence in the market. Although things seem uncertain right now and are difficult to predict, it is important to make some effective adjustments in our digital marketing strategies to meet our customer's needs. There is a 90% drop seen in-person store visits within a month since the start of the virus pandemic. This has affected the businesses as well as advertisers as there is limited foot traffic, resulting in digital transformation for every business.

The question that arises from this is, how shall we respond? All we could do is to concentrate on our digital marketing strategy, to portray ourselves best in front of our customers. For that, we will have to make things digitally available and easily accessible to our customers while also making sure we are positioning ourselves for the highest level of success.

Digital marketing is the act of promoting and selling products and services by leveraging Online Marketing tactics such as Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing (SMM), Content marketing, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) etc.



Fig 1: Digital Marketing Circle

The different techniques which are essential for the Digital Marketing Process are:

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):**
SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization which simply means optimization of a website. It is a process which helps in increasing the visibility and quality of the traffic of a business website to increase brand awareness among the customers.
- **Search Engine Marketing (SEM):**
SEM is an abbreviation of Search Engine Marketing which is engaged in the promotion of the sites via paid advertising (Google AdWords, Bing, yahoo). So it is also called Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising. It involves the purchase of ad space which is visible in search results pages and websites. Search ads help in improving brand recognition, awareness and conversions.
- **Social Media Marketing(SMM):**
SMM is an abbreviation of Social Media Marketing. According to research around 70% of marketers lists increasing brand awareness as the number one goal for marketing on social media platforms. The top listed social media platforms for marketing are -Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram of which, Facebook is the most used social media platform for marketing.
- **Content Marketing:**
Content Marketing is a process of creating, publishing and distributing the personalized content like – blogs, video, articles, social updates etc to the targeted audience. According to research, content marketing can improve brand awareness and brand loyalty by 88%.
- **Email Marketing:**
Email Marketing is a type of direct marketing that utilizes electronic mail as a method for sending a commercial message to a group of people. It involves sending advertisement, business request, sales discount or event organization broadcast. The major objective for email marketing is to build loyalty, trust and brand awareness.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Changes in consumer behaviour expect firms to rethink their marketing strategies in the digital domain. The quick spreading of the COVID-19 illness over the globe has brought about millions being tainted and thousands capitulating to it. Economies have been brought to a stop and a worldwide downturn is impending as the world battles to deal with the remarkable effect of this quick-spreading pandemic.[1]

1. "Impact of E-commerce on marketing." By Suresh Reddy:

Marketing is one of the business functions most drastically influenced by emerging information technologies. Internet is furnishing organizations with new channels of correspondence and collaboration. It can create closer yet more practical associations with customers in sales, marketing and customer support. Organizations can use the web to provide continuous data, administration and backing. It likewise makes a positive connection with customers that can serve as the foundation for long term relationships and encourage repeat purchases.[2]

2. "On-Line Banner Advertising." in Indian Journal of Marketing, by Sumanjeet:

Online banner advertising has extraordinary potential as advertising or promoting medium. It is easy to use, create and place. It offers organizations focusing on accomplished, innovative, affluent males/females or students with incredible potential for progress as their sections are exceptionally spoken to.[2]

3. "Web advertising's future as an e-Marketing strategy", by Jaffrey Graham:

Mr Graham has published his article entitled Morgan Stanley Dean Witter distributed an equity research report breaking down the Internet showcasing and advertising industry. The report considers research from many organizations and computes the expense and adequacy of promoting across different media. Branding over the Internet works. For existing brands, the Internet is more successful in driving review than TV, magazines, and papers and any event as great in creating item interest.[3]

4. "Digital marketing" by Garder:

According to Garder's survey (2013), the main concern in digital marketing investment is to improve business encounters through social advertising, content creation and the board and management and mobile marketing. Key findings also revealed that companies' marketing success relies mostly on their website, social marketing, and digital advertising, which are all parts of digital marketing. Besides, savings made by using digital marketing can be reinvested elsewhere. Normally, companies spend 10 per cent of their revenue on marketing and 2.4 per cent on digital marketing, which will increase to 9 per cent in the future.[4]

5. “Content Marketing” by Brogan(2008) and Ferguson (2009):

It urges content marketing is not any other thing, but that is “ a marketing technique of creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience -to drive profitable customer activity”. Moving by that idea Pulizzi explains content marketing as the art of understanding exactly what our clients need to know, and delivering it to them in a very applicable and convincing manner to grow our business.[5]

6. Content marketing communication strategies Pulizzi (2008):

It highlights a good content marketing strategy is ways in which to understand problems and concerns of customers and offering the best solutions and to transferring trusted knowledge. Marketing communication strategies are very significant these days. Optimized informative content can connect with customers and empowering them to interact with. Therefore, effective and efficient content marketing strategies influence the customer’s positive interaction with the product and service even it will increase investment of returns.[6]

7. “The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on marketing philosophy” by Hongwei He and Lloyd Harris

This Pandemic has impacted the marketing chain disastrously and it might get worse and may affect the approach of any organization towards their marketing strategy. By the time this pandemic ends, we will have long-lasting profound economic, social, political, and cultural impacts. As per the author examining the plenty of manners by which Covid-19 has changed our controls and works on, marketing is an interesting study. Whatever the most proper key direction, the post-COVID-19 marketplace is irretrievably different. A critical feature of this is the dramatically expanded move to online communications and change. There is a hope that there will be a long-standing resurgence in the social marketing concept and more mindful business directions.[7]

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Hypothesis:*

H0: Digital marketing does not help the company to generate more profit and has an upward growth.

H1: Digital marketing helps the company to generate more profit and have upward growth.

H0: Social Media marketing presence does not influence the customers.

H2: Social Media marketing presence positively influences the customers to trust the company or the brand.

H0: Digital marketing has no significant impact on customers.

H3: Digital marketing improves the relationship with customers.

The research design exercised is Descriptive Research Design.

- Problem is clearly defined as the impact on digital marketing during the pandemic outbreak.
- The hypothesis is framed.
- The information needed is clearly defined through a structured questionnaire.
- It is a Cross-Sectional Descriptive Research as the sample size is large, around 70-80 and it is the information collected from the group of respondents only once.
- The type of study is Quantitative Research.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING

An analysis of the data received from more than fifty respondents is made in the report. The respondents were given a questionnaire with the help of email and WhatsApp. The respondents were encouraged to give their honest and unbiased responses. The questionnaire contains various questions related to digital marketing and its impact on their business during and before COVID-19.

Based on the respondents' answers to these questions, the collected data has been analyzed using tools such as bar graphs, pie charts and MS Excel. Having analyzed the data, interpretations have been made about the answers to each question by the respondents. Analysis has been made purely based on information collected through questionnaires. No other data or information is taken into consideration for the analysis.

Test 1

H0: Digital marketing does not help the company to generate more profit and has an upward growth.

H1: Digital marketing helps the company to generate more profit and have upward growth.

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	1.68	0
Variance	0.956734694	0
Observations	50	2
Hypothesized Mean Difference	1	
df	49	
t Stat	4.915844689	
P(T<=t) one-tail	5.16E-06	
t Critical one-tail	1.676550893	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1.03183E-05	
t Critical two-tail	2.009575237	

Table 1: Hypothesis Testing 1

Results		
Options	%	Count
Yes	66.00	33
No	2.00	1
Sometimes	30.00	15
Never	2.00	1

Fig 2: Result for test 1

The above result was obtained by performing t-test in Excel on the data gathered through a questionnaire. Since, $\alpha = 0.05$

And, as we can interpret from the above results, P-value is less than 0.05. So we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

Test 2

H0: Social Media marketing presence influences customers.
 H2: Social Media marketing presence positively influences the customers to trust the company or the brand

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	1.74	0
Variance	1.012653061	0
Observations	50	2
Hypothesized Mean Difference	1	
df	49	
t Stat	5.199796914	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.94266E-06	
t Critical one-tail	1.676550893	
P(T<=t) two-tail	3.89E-06	
t Critical two-tail	2.009575237	

Table 1: Hypothesis Testing 2

Results		
Options	%	Count
Yes	64.00	32
No	0.00	0
Sometimes	34.00	17
Never	2.00	1

Fig 3: Result for test 2

The above result was obtained by performing t-test in Excel on the data gathered through a questionnaire. Since, $\alpha = 0.05$

And, as we can interpret from the above results, P-value is less than 0.05. So we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

Test 3

H0: Digital marketing has no significant impact on customers.
 H3: Digital marketing improves the relationship with customers.

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances		
	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	1.6	0
Variance	0.7755102	0
Observations	50	2
Hypothesized Mean Difference	1	
df	49	
t Stat	4.81773041	
P(T<=t) one-tail	7.2057E-06	
t Critical one-tail	1.67655089	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1.4411E-05	
t Critical two-tail	2.00957524	

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing 3

Results		
Options	%	Count
Yes	66.00	33
No	8.00	4
Sometimes	26.00	13
Never	0.00	0

Fig 4: Result for test 3

The above result was obtained by performing t-test in Excel on the data gathered through a questionnaire.

Since, $\alpha = 0.05$

And, as we can interpret from the above results, P-value is less than 0.05. So we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

V. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The empirical evidence derived from analysing the data is presented in the following analysis of findings.

- This entire analysis helped me to gain a thorough knowledge of changing pattern and adapting the power of human at utmost.
- My findings conclude that most of the company adapted work from home and thus the entire business climbed the digital phase. Around 74% of the respondents switched to worked from home and around 18% of the employees were given a choice, that they can work from home or they can work from the office.
- Around 92% of respondents think that, that the use of the digital platform has improved the relationship with their customers in a very drastic manner. It had helped the business to grow and helped to maintain a relationship with their customers.
- It was found that it is important for a company to have a social media presence. It creates trust and loyalty for their customers, where customers engage with the products and it also helps them to understand the product better.
- According to the analysis the most used social media platform for generating leads is LinkedIn. The other platforms are WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Quora.
- The most used platform for conducting business meetings is Zoom followed by Google Meet, Cisco Webex, Skype respectively.
- A large number of respondents i.e. around 62% of respondents state that the organizations churn during pandemic remained unchanged whereas 26% of respondents stated that the organization has stopped working with several other clients during the pandemic.
- As the companies switched to digital marketing, 46% says that there's an increase in traffic volume of online project/ work of an organization whereas 26% of respondents say, the traffic volume of online project or work is dropped during a pandemic outbreak.
- By analysing different measures/ actions taken by an organization to retain customers, 36% of respondents stated that there were no measures taken by the organization to retain the customers whereas 34% of respondents state that their organization provided discounts on services to retain their customers.
- According to the responses, 33 respondents out of total 50, completely agree that digital marketing helps a company to generate profit and have an upward growth.

VI. CONCLUSION

The following conclusions are made for each of the problem statements in the research.

- *Digital marketing helps the company to generate more profit and have upward growth.*

According to the survey, it is clear that COVID 19 has hampered the growth of every sector of the economy, but the organisations that have adopted digital technology are still retained in the market as compared to others. Considering hypothesis, data collection and data analysis it

can be concluded that digital marketing has helped the companies to generate more profits and have an upward growth.

- *Social Media marketing presence positively influences the customers to trust the company or the brand.*

Social Media is a platform which helps in increasing brand awareness. It helps in generating more and more leads for the company. As per the survey it was found that LinkedIn is a platform which is used to generate most leads. The other top listed social media platforms for marketing is WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Quora.

- *Digital marketing improves the relationship with customers.*

Digital Marketing has proven to be effectively impactful on customers. It has helped businesses to engage with the customers and know the preferences of the targeted audience.

- ✓ It encourages customers to stick around.
- ✓ It optimises the customer's brand experience.
- ✓ And, most importantly, it builds trust.

Thus, we see, even when the economy is on the decline and people are firm believers of social distancing, dependence on digital is increasing, companies need to be omnipresent by leaning on digital footprints of their consumers, companies can optimize to show up in the moments that matter the most to their users.

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