

PARADIGM SHIFT IN PROMOTIONAL AND MARKETING STRATEGIES OF VARIOUS BRANDS FROM TRADITIONAL TO NEW MEDIA

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Abstract:

Over the last decade, technology has progressed in every industry imaginable especially in the field of online/digital marketing; the main reason is the rise of mobile users from 100 million in 2004 to more than 800 million in 2020. Indian market has also witness a paradigm shift in field of e-commerce all thanks to emerging mobile internet technology. Keeping trace of behavior of users, brands and companies started targeting social media platforms which have mobile presence for promotion of their products. For example, Bengaluru based tech startup Ridaex which is among India's top selling smart android television have organically established their presence on platform like Facebook and twitter along with writing blogs to boost thought leadership. Therefore, like Ridaex, who is comparatively a new player in the market, other already established brands are now creating brand's identity on new media which is social media. Wikipedia defines social media as "technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. Apart from connecting with friends and family, social media is also widely used to read the latest news, connect with the latest trends and has evolved into an engaging medium. Hence social media channels cannot be ignored when it comes to marketing.

Objectives:

1. How brands are promoting themselves on social media?
2. What are the potential reasons for brands to establish their presence on social media?

Methods: Content Analysis and Mail Interviews

1. Introduction

Talking about the number of active users on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on is now an old topic of discussion as we all know that the number is huge which implies that these platforms contain a huge amount of data and information of the common man which is leveraged by social media marketers. As this information is publicly available, one can have access to this information and can easily use marketers to market their products by creating targeted content and ads based on the user's interest, behaviour, status, location and personal information. But it is important to understand that different brands have different marketing objectives for social media marketing. Some brands can use them to create awareness while some can use it to increase sales and revenues. *Lucy Godwin in her article said that having a strong online presence is a crucial component of your marketing strategy, no matter*

what size your business is or what industry it belongs to.

Brands which do not sell their products online also use social media channels for creating awareness and customer engagement. Brands like PepsiCo and Coca Cola, leverage social media when introducing new products, by running contests for customer engagement and sharing brand stories. At the same time, there are companies like e-commerce websites, which use social media for increasing sales by sharing links of their landing page on their social media handles or by announcing sale, discounts and offers. According to cloohawk, an intelligent social media assistant published in their blog that 94% users follow business for discounts and promotions.

Marketers and advertisers leverage social media for different purposes and at different levels. It is commonly seen that brands which manufacture beauty products collaborate with actresses and influencers, and directly target their followers. They do it while launching new product ranges or highlighting existing products. Majority of them do this on Instagram as users on Instagram are young and fashionable.

One more advantage of social media is its real time nature. Brands like telecom companies, airline companies leverage this feature by quickly resolving real time issues of consumers on social media. This helps companies to establish customer connections by responding quickly over social media and addressing customer complaints. This inculcates the feeling of delight among customers, therefore building a loyal customer base. At the same time, loyal customers can also talk about brands on social media which validates their good/bad experiences and helps others in making decisions.

2. Review of Literature

There are social media enthusiasts, social media marketers who strategize social media marketing plans, who are the real spectators and can provide insights on how brands are using social media platforms for marketing and promotions. According to Statista 2019, the most popular social media worldwide is Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and WeChat.

Blackshaw&Nazzaro (2004) had defined social media, as the new source of online information, where the information itself is – created, initiated, circulated and used by

consumers for the purpose of educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues. The tactics for communicating with consumers have changed with the emergence of social media; therefore, companies and businesses must know how to use social media in a way that is consistent with their business plans.

Brand communication in social media is defined as any piece of brand-related communication “distributed via social media that enables internet users to access, share, engage with, add to, and co-create” said Alhabash, Mundel, and Hussain (2017). According to Chi (2011), social media marketing is a connection between the brands and consumers, that offers a personal channel and currency for user centered networking and social interaction.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) said that the tools and approaches for communicating with customers have changed greatly with the emergence of social media; therefore, businesses must learn how to use social media in a way that is consistent with their business plan. Gordhamer (2009) has related social media marketing to relationship marketing where firms need to shift from “trying to sell” to “making connections” with the consumers. As stated earlier, brands are using social media marketing for building relations with the potential consumers which in turn increase repeated purchases and enhanced brand loyalty and advocacy.

Although social media marketing is a kind of topic which demonstrates new research and new insights every day, it is important to identify the correct mix of social media platforms where the target audience has active presence.

3. Methodology

1. **Content Analysis** – To study and analyze different brands on social media like facebook, twitter instagram etc. and identify their specific marketing objectives.
2. **Mail Interviews** -To connect with the digital marketers of the brands and understand their strategies for social media marketing. Also interview social media enthusiasts who closely observe brands marketing strategy on social media for insights.

4. Results

1. Almost all brands/companies have a social media presence which is now a part of their integrated marketing mix which includes advertising, PR and social media promotions.
2. Different brands have different marketing goals on social media.
3. Users find it easy to identify and connect with brands on social media as it has mobile presence and response time is quite fast here.

To target a broader audience which is more diverse and with different buying behavior, it's important for brands to stay in touch with their customers on a regular basis, which is only possible through social media. But it's important for brands to provide value propositions to customers either by offers, discounts or interesting content or addressing their queries. This will encourage consumers to stay connected with the brand as it is difficult to sustain consumers for a long time. So, once a value proposition is created, brands can start marketing activities to get user attention and push them to follow.

Brands can also connect their consumers with influencers, allowing them to chat, talk and involve in conversation, as they have a tremendous voice amongst their audience. This activity will create a lot of credibility. Thus, using social media, strategically for marketing purposes, will generate greater and instant ROI as compared to other traditional forms of media. But as a brand, it is important to identify the correct mix of social media channels where the brand's target audience is present and active. This can be done by understanding the target group present on a specific channel, identifying if they overlap with your target audience, and performing competitive research to understand how other companies from the same industry are performing on these channels. This will help to understand if a brand should create a presence on this channel.

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