Impact of Digital Revolution on Indian Marketing

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Abstract:
The lucrative Indian market is fostering rapidly. Penetration of Internet access and upsurge of handheld devices users persuade Indian marketers to look beyond the traditional marketing techniques. The pace of transformation continues to be rapid by utilizing existing digital channels available for social purposes. The frequency of people spending time on-line, the digital tools and sites play an ever-growing role in the transformation of marketing strategies. Smart marketers strive to be on top of the scale of change and ensure their marketing strategies and touch point where the consumer is spending their time. This research note gives a sense of the scale of revolution in marketing strategies we've seen so far and implies the scale of what is emerging.

Keywords: *Marketing, E-Marketing,Digital Revolution.*

1.INTRODUCTION

E-Marketing is often referred to as 'Digital Marketing', 'Online Marketing', 'Internet Marketing' or 'web marketing' involves the use of interactive, virtual spaces for the sake of promoting and trading goods and services. In fact, new synchronous, internet-based communication expertise had contributed to the restructuration of major economic sectors including marketing. The term digital marketing has gained popularity over the period of time. In the USA the word 'online marketing' is still prevalent. In European countries, digital marketing is referred to as web marketing. In the UK and worldwide, however, digital marketing has become the most common term, especially after the year 2013. In India "e" word is more familiar pertaining to internet, thus, 'E-Marketing' is gaining more popularity in contrast to other countries. E-Marketing is a wide term under which the marketing of all products or services are done using modern means of communication and digital technologies, widely carried out through the Internet, including Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), display advertising, and any other digital medium.

Online marketing's development since the 1990s and 2000s has transformed the way to promote brands and businesses by utilizing innovative technologies for marketing. As marketers are utilizing digital platforms into their marketing plans and people using digital devices instead of visiting bricks and mortar, Online marketing campaigns are becoming more prevalent and effective.

India is one of fast moving nations towards digital economy and this movement has been drastically experienced in the year 2015– a newly formed government launched digital India campaign resulting into boom in internet users. IAMAI-IMRB report says Urban India with an estimated population of 444 million already has 269 million (60%) using the Internet and Rural India, with an estimated population of 906 million as per 2011 census, has only 163 million (17%) Internet users. The telecom sector is also playing prominent role in the digitalization movement. The users of mobile is growing by the day, with 42% of Indian online users' access to internet by their mobile devices. With the advent of such revolution it is inevitable that marketing strategies be adapted in a new frame to cater to the changing trends of time. Today, with players like Snapdeal, Flipkart and Myntra the Indian e-commerce reported 77% growth from last year and now stands at USD 3 billion. Recent launch of reliance telecom Jio with the free & unlimited internet facilities has fuelled this revolution. The other prominent companies like Airtel, Idea and Vodafone are also offering attractive high-speed internet plans along with various digital benefits. Indian banks have also embraced the digital habits of their customers and started providing more customer friendly & secure monetary transaction services than ever before. As the Indian consumers are spending more time on social media and internet surfing drive the marketers to adapt their marketing strategies to tap their target market. E-Marketing techniques among others like search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), Social Media Marketing (SMM), Social Media Optimization (SMO), Content Marketing, Domain Name Branding, Campaign Marketing, data-driven marketing, direct marketing, display advertising, e–books, Referral Marketing and Viral Marketing are becoming more popular in this digital age. In fact, E-Marketing now extends to non-Internet channels that provide online media, such as call-back, mobile phones (SMS and MMS) etc.

2.BACKGROUND

The term Online marketing (E-Marketing) was popularized in early 1990s, but it has its roots in the mid-1980s, when the "SoftAd Group", now "ChannelNet", developed first advertising campaigns for automobile companies using Information Technology: People used to send reply cards attached in magazines and received in return floppy disks containing multimedia content promoting various cars and free test drives.

E-Marketing became more systemized in the 2000 decade, especially after the escalation of devices' capability to access digital media at almost any given time led to great growth. Statistics produced in 2012 and 2013 showed that E-Marketing was still in a growing stage and perhaps has a long way to go.

Online media growth is estimated at 4.5 trillion, online ads served annually with digital media spend at 48% growth in 2010. An increasing portion of advertising stems from businesses employing Online Behavioural Advertising (OBA) to tailored advertising for internet users, simultaneously, OBA raises concern of consumer privacy and data protection that is considered as real challenges to the e-marketers.

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The main objective of this paper is to identify the effectiveness of digital marketing in the competitive market. The supportive objectives are following:

   I.   To show the various elements of digital marketing;
  II.   To focus on the superiority of E-Marketing over Traditional Marketing;
 III.   To show the various advantages of digital marketing to the customers;
  IV.   To identify the major concern of E-Marketing.

3.METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the present study, mainly secondary data have been used. The required secondary data were collected from various journals, research papers, websites, various reports and newspaper articles published online.

4.ELEMENTS OF E-MARKETING

There are various elements by which digital marketing is formed. All forms operate through electronic devices. The most important elements of digital marketing are given below:

   I.   **Online advertising**

Online advertising is a very important part of digital marketing. It is also called internet advertising through which company can deliver the message about the products or services. Internet-based advertising provides the content and ads that best matches to consumer interests. Publishers put about their products or services on their websites so that consumers or users get free information. Advertisers should place more effective and relevant ads online. Through online advertising, company well controls its budget and it has full control on time.

  II.   **Email Marketing**

When message about the products or services is sent through email to the existing or potential consumer, it is defined as email marketing. Direct digital marketing is used to send ads, to build brand and customer loyalty, to build customer trust and to make brand awareness. Company can promote its products and services by using this element of digital marketing easily. It is relatively low cost comparing to advertising or other forms of media exposure. Company can bring complete attention of the customer by creating attractive mix of graphics, text and links on the products and services.

 III.   **Social Media**

Today, social media marketing is one of the most important digital marketing channels. It is a computer-based tool that allows people to create, exchange ideas, information and pictures about the company's product or services. According to Nielsen, internet users continue to spend more time with social media sites than any other type. Social media marketing networks include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+. Through Facebook, company can promote events concerning product and services, run

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promotions that comply with the Facebook guidelines and explore new opportunities. Through Twitter, company can increase the awareness and visibility of their brand. It is the best tool for the promotion of company's products and services. In LinkedIn, professionals write their profile and share information with others. Company can develop their profile in LinkedIn so that the professionals can view and can get more information about the company's product and services. Google is also social media network that is more effective than other social media like Facebook, Twitter. It is not only simple social media network but also it is an authorship tool that links web-content directly with its owner.

IV. Text Messaging

It is a way to send information about the products and services from cellular and smart phone devices. By using phone devices, company can send information in the form of text (SMS), pictures, video or audio (MMS). Marketing through cellphone SMS (Short Message Service) became increasingly popular in the early 2000s in Europe and some parts of Asia. One can send order confirmations, shipping alerts using text message. Using SMS for campaigns get faster and more substantial results. Under this technique, companies can send marketing messages to their customers in real-time, any time and can be confident that the message will be seen. Company can create a questionnaire and obtain valuable customer feedback essential to develop their products or services in future.

V. Affiliate Marketing:

Affiliate marketing is a type of performance-based marketing. In this type of marketing, a company rewards affiliates for each visitor or customer they bring by marketing efforts they create on behalf of company. Industry has four core players: the merchant (also known as "retailer" or "brand"), the network, the publisher (also known as "the affiliate") and the customer. The market has grown in such complexity resulting in the emergence of a secondary tier of players including affiliate management agencies, super-affiliates and specialized third party vendors. There are two ways to approach affiliate marketing: Company can offer an affiliate program to others or it can sign up to be another business's affiliate. If company wants to drive an affiliate program, then, the company owner has to pay affiliates a commission fee for every lead or sale they drive to company's website. Company's main goal here is to find affiliates who can reach untapped markets.

For example, a company with an e-zine may become a good affiliate because its subscribers are hungry for resources. So, introducing one's offer through "trusted" company can grab the attention of prospects which might not have otherwise reached.

VI. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of affecting the visibility of a website or a web page in a search engine's "natural" or un-paid ("organic") search results. In general, the earlier (or higher ranked on the search results page), and more

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frequently a website appears in the search result list, the more visitors it will receive from the search engine users. SEO may target different kinds of search including image search, local search, video search, academic search, news search and industry-specific vertical search engines.

VII. Pay Per Click (PPC)

Pay-per-click marketing is a way of using search engine advertising to generate clicks to your website rather than "earning" those clicks organically. Pay per click is good for searchers and advertisers. It is the best way for company's ads since it brings low cost and greater engagement with the products and services.

5. SUPERIORITY OF E-MARKETING OVER TRADITIONAL MARKETING

I Level playing field

E-Marketing has made available a platform wherein any business can compete with any competitor regardless of size with a solid e-marketing strategy. Traditionally a smaller retailer would struggle to match the finesse of the fixtures and fittings of its larger competitors. Online, a crisp well thought out site with a smooth customer journey and fantastic service is king – not size.

II Reduced cost

Even the micro business units are able to develop its e-marketing strategy for a very little cost and can potentially substitute unaffordable costly advertising channels such as Yellow Pages, television, radio, billboards and magazine.

III Simple to measure

Unlike traditional marketing techniques marketers can access real time effectiveness of what is or is not working for the business online and they can adapt new marketing strategies at first hand to improve the results. For measuring traffic in the site, Google Analytics can be used to measure specific goals they want to achieve for their website or blogs and most packaged email marketing solutions provide good insight into how many people are opening, reading and converting from emails.

IV Real time results

Marketers need not have to wait for long time for a boost to their business like they would have to wait for a fax or form to be responded. They can track the numbers of visitors visited their website and its subscribers increase, peak trading times, conversion rates and much more at the click of a button.

V Refinement of the strategies

Basically anything that a marketer capture in its customer journey can be reported on and honed for greater success at the fraction of the cost of traditional marketing. After all, how annoying is it to get a couple of forms returned from a mailshot. Marketing online enables them to refine their strategy at any point of time and any improvements or opportunities can be seen for further refinement almost instantaneously.

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VI   **Brand Development**

A well planned website with quality content targeting the needs and adding value to their target audience can provide significant value and lead generation opportunities. The same can be said for utilizing social media channels and personalized email marketing.

VII   **Far greater exposure**

Marketer's business can be tracked anywhere in the world from one marketing campaign, the cost to do this using traditional methods would be considerable. Plus once they have optimized the key word search content in their website they can easily see a long-term return on their investment and will be fairly low cost to maintain the rankings.

VIII   **Viral**

Online, using social media share buttons on the website, email and social media channels enables the message to be shared incredibly quickly, just look how effective it is for sharing breaking news. If they consider the average Facebook user has 150 friends of which an average of 12% see their liked posts – then one message has actually been seen by 18 new prospects, now if a number of them also like and share the same message and their friends do the same? This really proves to be of great success. However a word of caution needs to be considered, bad news can travel much quicker so make sure they must have a risk management strategy to tackle such negative press as soon as it is circulated.

IX   **Not Intrusive**

It is common that most people dislike receiving sales mailshots or phone calls at inconvenient times on stuff that they have little interest in. Online people get the choice to opt in or out of communications and often it is relevant because they were the ones searching for it in the first place.

X   **Greater engagement**

With digital marketing, marketers can encourage their prospects, clients and followers to take action, visit their website, read about their products and services, rate them, buy them and provide feedback which is visible to their e-market. So it doesn't take long for good publicity to enhance the prospects of their business.

6. ADVANTAGES OF E-MARKETING TO THE CUSTOMERS

E-Marketing is becoming more popular and addictive because it aligns with the way consumers make purchasing decisions. Studies by analysts such as Gartner reveal that increasing numbers of consumers use social media and research on mobile Internet to carry out preliminary product and price research before making final decisions. E-Marketing enables e-tailers to build relations with customers and prospects through regular, low-cost personalized communication, reflecting the move away from mass marketing. E-Marketing enables the marketers to lead consumers honestly toward their product or service based on their criteria. Presenting them with

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the right, useful information at the correct time lets them make the choice to engage you, instead of going after them.

7. CONVENIENCE

E-Marketing enables a marketer to be open for business around the clock without worrying about store opening hours or overtime payments for staff. Offering their products on the Internet is also convenient for customers. They can browse marketer's online store at any time and place orders when it is convenient for them.

8. REACH

By marketing on the Internet, they can overcome barriers of distance. They can sell goods in any part of the country without setting up local outlets, widening their target market. They can also build an export business without opening a network of distributors in different countries. However, if they want to sell internationally, they may use localization services to ensure that their products aresuitable for target markets and comply with local business regulations. Localization services include translation and product modification to reflect local market differences.

9. COST

Marketing products on the Internet costs less than marketing them through bricks and mortars outlet. They need not require any recurring costs of property rental and maintenance cost. They are not required to purchase stock for display in a store. They can use just in time techniques to stock in line with demand, keeping their inventory costs low.

10. PERSONALIZATION

E-Marketing enables marketers to personalize offers to customers by building a profile of their purchasing history and preferences. By tracking the web pages and product information that prospects visit, they can make targeted offers that reflect their interests. The information available from tracking website visits also provides data for planning cross-selling campaigns so that they can increase their revenue.

11. RELATIONSHIPS

The Internet provides an important platform for building relationships with customers and increasing customers' retention levels. When a customer purchases a product from a marketer's online store, they can begin the relationship by sending a follow-up email to confirm the transaction and greets the customer. Emailing customers regularly with special, personalized offers helps to maintain the relationship. They can also invite customers to submit product reviews on their website, helping to build a sense of community.

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12. SOCIAL

E-Marketing enables a marketer to take advantage of the growing importance of social media. An article on the Harvard Business School Executive Education website highlighted the link between social networking and online revenue growth. According to the article, a group of consumers that responded most strongly to the influence of social networks generated increased sales of around 5 percent. They can take advantage of this type of influence by incorporating social networking tools in their E-Marketing campaigns.

13. CHALLENGES OF E-MARKETING

Digital Marketing is a growing field across sectors today. Being cost-effective, flexible, and fast and attractive, leads to tremendous global reach. However, this effective, new technique also embroils its special disadvantages, e.g. lack of personal contact, security and privacy, etc. which should be taken account for in order to fully harness the capabilities of this opportunity. Following are the most prominent challenges that e-marketers, today, face while aligning their business strategy (more specifically, their marketing strategy) with E-Marketing.

While most people today talk of how E-Marketing is defining businesses and creating new opportunities, herein we try to bring to highlight some of the emerging challenges of E-Marketing in India. The idea is not to discourage E-Marketing but to be aware of its pitfalls in order to exploit the opportunities.

So, **what exactly is E-Marketing**? E-Marketing is any form of marketing carried through the internet. Now, consider these facts:

I   According to IMAI and IMRB, number of Internet users in India is expected to reach 450-465 million by June 2016, up 4-8% from 432 million in 2015

II   The same report reveals that, overall, the Internet penetration in India is expected to be around 31% in first quarter of 2016.

III   In urban India, the Internet user base grew by 7% to 263 million for year-on-year period ended June 2015, which is expected to be 275-285 million by June 2016. For the same annual period ending June 2015, rural India's Internet user base grew by 22% between to 157 million and is forecast to reach 170-180 million by June 2016 Internet reaches 29 million Indian households

IV   77% of urban users and 92% of rural users consider mobile as the primary device for accessing the Internet, largely driven by availability and affordability of smart phones.

V   It is estimated that the base of smart phone users in India grew to over 300 million in 2016 resulting huge growth in Indian smart phone market i.e. around 18% for year ended 2016 in contrast to the global smart phone market which grew at 3% on average

VI   IMRB claiming that India had surpassed the US to become the second largest smart phone market in the world after China.

VII   Over 4 in 5 are 'daily' users. Daily users' base grew faster, at 33%

VIII   9 out of 10 'home' and 'office' based online Indians log on to the net 'daily'

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IX   Around 86% of internet users access to social media sites.

Internet penetration, in India, is evolving day by day that clearly indicates e-marketing has a huge potential in India. But, it should not be ignored, every opportunities brings new unprecedented challenges that need to be taken care of by the marketers. The aim of this paper not to discourage the marketers to embrace digital communication techniques into their marketing strategies but to highlight the emerging challenges of e-marketing to this revolutionized age so as to take more informed decisions.

Broadly speaking, there are two kinds of e-marketing strategies, namely the 'Push marketing' strategy and 'Pull marketing' strategy. In pull marketing, the onus to explore different available products and services is on the target markets while in push marketing, the marketers endeavour to push their products to their target markets.

E-marketing exploits various channels for both the push and pull marketing strategies. There are various channels of e-marketing- sending promotional information to existing customers or prospective buyers through emails, spreading awareness through blogging and forums, podcasting, video streaming, search engine marketing, social media marketing, SMS marketing, application based mobile marketing etc. There is no dearth of options available to choose the modes of communication in this digital era. Markets are transforming into globalized e-market, accessible to all irrespective of their location, thanks to digital media, thus, strengthening the platform where e-commerce based businesses are flourishing year after year. E-marketing enabling the people to interact with the sellers from everywhere at any time by their laptops, smart phones etc. Today, in India, no industry is untouched by the disruptive digital marketing that exploits, directly or indirectly, the e-marketing techniques whether it B2B or B2C or C2C. Recently, even the marketers of perishable products, which were seen as incompetent for e-marketing, have exploited these digital channels and are going good.

14. IDENTIFICATION OF OPTIMUM CHANNELS

While each channel has its own reach, advantages and richness but there also exist associated costs with each of them. Every business has a fixed marketing budget and thus need to invest optimally, considering trade-off, to maximize its returns. The problem is how to allocate that scarce budget as there is neither any scientific method nor rule of thumb to choose a particular media. Especially with the emerging social media marketing, companies are in more dilemma which one is more efficient for their business at the optimal cost due to lack of availability data.

General tendency of marketers are reactive rather than proactive in choosing the communication channel for their business. They are more laggard to choose a new channel rather than early-adopters by assessing their own business model. What is required is an inside-out approach where the business leaders identify what are their objectives and choose channel accordingly to fits best with respect to these objectives. Unfortunately, Indian marketers, today, are falling into the trap of late-adopters.

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They, conversely, select a channel and then see how it can meet their objective, which shows the defensive attitude of Indian marketers instead of choosing optimal channel as per their objectives. The choice of channel is not only challenge, but the allocation of fund into different channels need to be chosen at different times, depending on the changing market dynamics is more challenging. Further, the decision regarding frequency of messages to be sent is also critical. Too many messages may bug the customers while too less may not capture their attention. It requires tailored-marketing practice- relevant messages to different customers at different rate.

15. CAPABILITY OF E-MARKETING TO NEGATIVE MESSAGES

In this digital age, viral marketing is getting more popular as this marketing technique costs least among others but on the other hand, it breaks the business in no time as it takes minutes for a negative word to spread. This marketing technique is very dangerous as the messages gone viral have no control of marketer. A very evident case of Dell has proved this problem how it affects the business, a customer shared his experience of Dell and named the brand "the Dell-Hell" as his complaint was not satisfactorily solved. The frustrated customer, "Blogger Jeff Jarvis" started a series of blogs, popularly called the "Dell-Hell" and within days many more agitated customers pushed that message, as a result, the sale of company dropped and Dell lost crucial points on few of the industry's crucial customer satisfaction surveys.
Thus, while companies create many avenues of customer interactions, they need to be responsive and understand the customers' response as one wrong word can push back the marketer in fierce competition. They also need to keep eyes on social marketing platform and try to break such words at its early stage because once it is pushed it becomes impossible for marketer to regress. Even more worrisome is the point that your competitors may get into unethical practices and malign your business. This is more so in developing countries where the regulatory laws are not strong.

16. LACK OF METRICS TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MARKETING

Lack of metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of new channels poses a big problem to the marketer as it becomes difficult to evaluate the benefit acquired at given cost thus resist the marketers to make rational decision. So, while businesses are aware of the need to spend on digital avenues, they are not aware of how to measure which channel works best for their industry, for their business. Thus, it is really a subjective judgement made by marketers which is not ideal. Analytics is working on developing sophisticated tools for measuring the effectiveness of the digital marketing and hopefully should throw some light for the business houses.

17. PACE OF EVOLVING

Few years ago, companies used to do make 5 year plans on their marketing strategies. Not any more can they do so. What is "hot" one year is out-of-date the other. Companies are in a

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fix and do not know how to strategically plan their investments in digital marketing. We must not forget that investing in channels like mobile application development, etc. incur huge costs and the companies need to really reap the benefits of developing these quickly, before the technology fades and newer technology emerges. We cannot get up one fine morning and think of going online.

Many banks are still in a fix on whether to develop mobile applications, how much complexity to add on these applications and what all platforms to cater to. It takes a lot of money, infrastructure to get into digital marketing space. Add to that the cost of maintaining the older channels, and businesses are in a fix. Businesses must not just be agile to evaluate and adopt new digital marketing opportunities, but also smart enough to abandon the older ones. Maintaining older channels, even though they are no longer generating business kills the revenue stream for many businesses.

18. IGNORANCE OF INDIAN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDE

Marketers must remember that going digital need not necessarily translate brick and mortar into pure online as there are certain high value products that are ideal to be sold online. However, the transition of indian consumers' attitude is changing gradually. Most businesses use digital marketing for creating brand awareness, this does not mean translate into sales. We cannot expect people to buy high value as well as delicate items online. This is reason some marketers, like lenskart.com, firstcry.com etc., are adopting brick and click strategy instead of going 'pure online'. Another reason of this move is indian people still like to feel certain products before purchasing. As a result, majority of indian customers browse marketers' website to make buying decision online, but prefer to go to a physical store to buy. Thus digital marketing cost is over and above the usual costs incurred and do not act as substitute. Businesses need to maintain both the traditional and digital channels of marketing and sales and this is additional cost.

19. CONCLUSION

This paper deliberated the challenges and the opportunities in the ever expanding area of e- marketing. This field needs relentless learning. One cannot oversee the fact that it is a technology determined approach. There is a dreadful need to keep abreast of the latest developments in the field of computer science and information technology. Poorly created and executed programs create mistrust amongst clients and marketers. Spam, identity theft, meddling advertising, technical snags, not keeping terms with contract / agreements, gap between ordered products and actual deliveries have created profound mistrust in e- marketing. Hence the growth of e-marketing depends also on the growth of business ethics on the one hand and consumer protection laws on the other. In other words, the significance of "credibility in business in general and e-marketing in particular is enormous which can be addressed with skill development in the field of information technologies, while one has to adopt cautiously.

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While digital marketing is necessary and literally, no business survives without it, it incurs huge cost, changes every day and presents the problem of plenty. Marketers need to be prompt to identify what would work for them in the short run as well as in the long run, and work in tandem with the other organization functions to effectively use the channel of digital marketing. No doubt, the digitalmarketing is here to stay. The challenges if overcome will help each business to differentiate and grow as a leader in its industry.

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