



Online Marketing: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract:

Online Marketing is a combination of innovative tools and methodologies used for marketing products and services over the internet. Online marketing is also known as Internet marketing or online advertising. Online marketing combines the IT with the commerce. Online marketing is the process of targeting, attracting and winning and retaining the potential customers through Internet. Online Marketing covers a wide range of marketing strategies which are excluded from traditional marketing because online marketing includes extra platforms and marketing mechanisms over the internet. Online marketing overcomes the barrier of traditional marketing i.e. reaching the mass with minimum cost. Online marketing helps the company to build its brands online and to attract potential customers. Online marketing provides platform to companies to communicate with their customers and feedback given by the customers helps the company to easy work on their pitfalls and customers can make a wise decision of buying by analyzing the posted feedbacks on the company website. Online marketing provides 24x7 services is the major plus point of e-marketing. This paper examines how online marketing overcome the limitations of traditional marketing and study the challenges exist in India relating to Online Marketing.

Keywords: *Challenges, Digital marketing, E-marketing Channels, Opportunities*

1. Objective

1. To study the advantages of online marketing for Indian companies.
2. To discuss the various E-marketing channels.
3. To examine the limitations of online marketing.

2. Research Methodology

This research paper is descriptive in nature and based on secondary data collected from the various research papers, journals, websites, blogs etc.

3. Channels of Online Marketing

3.1 E-mail Marketing

E-mail marketing is a means to communicate directly to existing and potential customers through electronic mail. It is the cheapest channel for digital marketing. It provides a platform to establish brand awareness in the eyes of the customers as well as highlight the new offers to existing or potential customers. The biggest challenge of E-mail marketing is to send the right amount of e-mails to your customers so they do not mark you as spam. It is a paperless marketing channel via internet and reduced postal cost of the companies.

3.2 Search Engine Optimizer

Search Engine Optimizer (SEO) function is to pop up web pages or certain websites when a particular keyword is typed on search engine. It increases the chances of potential customers to visit the web-page pop-up and these visitors may become customers in future.

3.2 Pay per Click Advertising (PPC)

Pay Per Click is the channel of digital marketing which is based on paying for visiting the website by the advertiser. The payment per click depends upon the type of ads and PPC shows ads according to the criteria defined by the advertiser. It is very useful channel to attract new visitors.

3.3 Social media marketing

Social Media Marketing is the channel to use social media platforms for marketing the brand, posting feedback, opinions about the product. It is the means for promoting the brand by users with their friends on different social media platforms. It converts buyers into their salesperson. Social platforms such as Face book, MySpace, and LinkedIn, blogs, Twitter, You tube etc are means of building network and targeting potential customers.

3.4 Display marketing

The Display advertising includes creating graphical advertisements and putting them on websites, e-mails. These advertisements may be in the form of text, images, audio or video clips, animation. It is important to target audience for your advertisement according to certain parameters. It will help business to create awareness about their brands and promote its products and offers.

3.5 Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is based on association of business owner and one or more websites. The affiliate website display advertisements of its client on the website. The website of its affiliates is used to market the business of its client and in return gets a share in profits. It is a cost-effective way of marketing as business owner have to pay only when a user click to open the website of business owner or when user register itself or buys a product from business owner.

4. Benefits of Digital Marketing

4.1 Level Playing Field

Starting a new business and competing with well- established business having multiple branches is impossible in Traditional marketing. But Digital marketing overcome this limitation by providing equal playing field to both. Now with the innovative digital marketing strategy and excellent customer service, one can win over its competitor easily.

4.2 Cost Effective

The Cost of advertisement in Traditional marketing channels such as advertisement on front page of Hindustan Times Newspaper or telecasting advertisement at prime slots is very high as compared to advertisements in Digital marketing channels like ads on Google, YouTube, face book, websites etc. Therefore, Digital marketing strategies are cost effective.

4.3 Real Time Results

In the Traditional marketing, measuring results of marketing strategies at a click of a button is not possible. But under Digital Marketing provides the opportunity to analyse results at real time and improving the strategies to get better results. Accessing information regarding number of website visitors, peak hours of business, conversion rates by using E-marketing solutions like Google Analytics etc.

4.4 Refinement of your strategy

Digital marketing provides the opportunity to analyse the behaviour of the audience on our websites by using e-marketing solutions like Google analytics. So, the merit of digital marketing is to fine tune the strategy according to the audience behaviour and gain improved results. It allows measuring of overall performance of digital marketing. The cost of data mining and target audience study is possible at the cost which is much less as compared to traditional marketing.

4.5 Brand Development

Digital marketing provides a great platform to new businesses to increase its presence online and thereby, creates brand awareness as well as promote new products easily. Digital marketing channels like websites, e-mail marketing, social media etc. adds significant values to target audience. Digital marketing makes brand awareness possible particularly at such a less time and on particular target audience.

4.6 Mass Reach

Digital marketing provides an opportunity to target audience from anywhere in the world from niche to going global. The level of efforts and resources needed for going global is equal in digital marketing as compared to traditional marketing. The brand can be built anywhere in the world by initiating one marketing campaign. Digital marketing pursue the target audience to visit the website, review feedback, buy products as everything is one click away so it will definitely increase changes of building good brand anywhere in the world.

<u>Traditional</u>	<u>Digital</u>
<p>Includes...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print media (newspaper and magazine ads, newsletters, brochures and other printed material) • Broadcast media (such as TV and radio ads) • Direct mail (including fliers, post cards, catalogs) • Telemarketing 	<p>Includes marketing efforts anchored on electronic devices such as--</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites • Social networking sites • Content marketing • Banner ads • Google ads • Video marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven techniques with high success rate • Long-standing initiatives that the public already understands • Metrics for measuring success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-efficient methods of marketing • Unprecedented audience reach • Allows direct response from intended audience

5. Challenges Faced By Digital Marketing

5.1 Unable to provide Hand- on Experience

The Indian audience is not to buy product with physically seen it. Still now most of the audience used Internet websites of brand to get information through posts, feedback but prefer to buy it from the shop. People still have security issues relating to online transactions. Digital marketing cannot cover the targeted audience wanting on-hand experience.

5.2 Digital marketing can be easily used to Defraud

The major disadvantage of Digital marketing is that competitors replicate campaigns and logos to defraud audience and reduced the market size of its competitor easily. Many illegitimate websites replicate original websites and spam the customers and hacked the confidential data. Competitors defame the brand by posting negative feedbacks becomes the biggest drawback of digital marketing.

5.3 Lot of Ad Online

Digital marketing is affected by lot of Ad online, as it irritates the audience and becomes very hard for online brands to get notices by the targeted audience. Most of the customers have the habit of simply ignoring the online Ads which will lead to lose web traffic and lose of brand image.

5.4 Rules of digital marketing changing rapidly

As it is said that physical appearance do matter, just like it the Website page do matters. It is continuously keep-in check so it does not look outdated as rules of digital marketing is continuously changing. Professional expertise is used so targeted audience take it seriously. Consistently Monitoring of webpage is used to take greatest advantage of digital marketing.

5.5 Digital marketing is not appropriate in most of the cases

Digital marketing main requisite is the access of Internet. The targeted audience which do not have Internet access or are not Tech Savvy are not covered by digital marketing channels. Digital marketing also not lead to repeat sales as it lacks personal Human touch.

6. Conclusion

Digital marketing provides businesses the opportunity to collect data about their consumer behaviour which is a very difficult task to achieve in traditional marketing. With the progress in the digital marketing and social media platforms, the customer base increased for online brands. In the coming years, digital marketing in India will be more advantageous. With Government initiatives like Digital India and due to Demonitization, the penetration of credit cards, debit cards has witnessed a promising growth. Moreover, Discount-lovers consumers are quite attracted to this trend as online retailers offers products at extra discounted prices with cash back offers as compared to store-based retailers. Digital marketing provides 24x7, started, efficient and world-class shopping experience. With the Continuous evolvement of Internet, new marketing strategies will be emerging to market products and services in future. By knowing the strength of Digital marketing by looking at its advantages and disadvantages will help Business and online marketers to be prepared for its pitfalls and to use for their greatest advantage.

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