

DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: A STUDY OF E-COMMERCE BRANDS IN INDIA”

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ABSTRACT:

The identified project is directed at the following problem of finding the most commonly used digital marketing tools that are social media marketing, email campaigns, influencer marketing, mobile app notifications, and search engine optimization (SEO). It also looks at the effect of these strategies on consumer perception, purchase intention and purchase. The structured questionnaire to survey 150 on-line/shoppers in India was carried out via the random sampling approach. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing which involved ANOVA.

The results show a terrific impact done by digital marketing in consumer behaviour. Social media marketing and influencer marketing proved to be the most convenient space in influencing the choice of the consumers. The consumer-responsive properties were the personalised content, interaction of brands in the online platform and the trust that was established using influencers. Such platforms as email marketing and app notifications, however, proved to be moderately influential, and it implies that the relevance and frequency of content is the secret of their effectiveness.

The study will assist in understanding the psychology of online customers and also come up with useful principles which must be applied by online selling companies in order to come up with strong campaign online. One of the ways through which this can be attained by the businesses is through focussing on the methods that are increasingly becoming interesting to the consumers and this boosts the level of such engagements and the conversion rates and brand loyalty. This will

be of critical results especially in a highly competitive market, as well as an internet enabled market like India.

Keywords:

Digital Marketing, Consumer Behavior, E-Commerce, Social Media, India, Online Shopping, Marketing Strategies

I. INTRODUCTION:

The 21st century has seen the creation of digital revolution, which has altered the communicate between businesses and consumers. With a rapid development of internet technologies, smartphones, and the appearance of social media, now marketing has become more surgical through online marketing. In particular, this e-commerce realm is booming, particularly, in the developed economies like India. By that, online shopping is now more convenient, easy gaining access to and diversified and all this influenced to consumers habit and preference.

India has today emerged as one of the fastest growing digital economies in the globe. According to the report in the industry, the number of internet users in India exceeded 800 million in 2023 and the proportion of them who are online shoppers is significant. The Indian e-commerce industry is expected to reach over 200 billion USD in 2026. The said boom has encouraged such companies in India like Amazon India, Flipkart, Myntra, etc to process innovative digital marketing to not only capture the attention of the consumers, but also to retain the customers.

Digital marketing is an all-embracing term on online tactics and abilities whose list comprises social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, content marketing, influencer marketing, online paid advertisements. The strategies

allow business to reach a large group in a personal yet economical manner. Digital versus traditional marketing Customers can give immediate feedback and the results of a campaign can be measured in detail through digital marketing and used to optimize campaigns by brands.

Behavioural knowledge about the consumers is also a conclusive aspect of shaping up a useful marketing program. Consumer behavior- This is simply the process of psychological forces, emotional forces as well as social forces that influence the people to purchase products or services. Customer behavior in the world of digital marketing is determined by the terms that involve the trust to the online platform, user experience, referral of peers, appreciation of the product and the influence of the materials on the Internet. E-commerce companies should be informed about these tendencies to develop the campaigns that are going to stick to the trends of customer behavior and eventually result in conversion.

The current study is concerned with the research of the effect of digital marketing strategies on the customer buying behaviour of the Indian online market. It considers the perception and response of the consumers to different digital marketing techniques, the most appropriate strategies to sway purchasing decision as well as how trust and satisfaction to consumers can be established by using the digital engagements. Using real life data of Indian online customers, this research would be of help to marketers, business entrepreneurs of the same country as well as that researcher who would want to learn more on emerging trends of online business in India.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Digital marketing has become an imperative ingredient in consumer behaviour formation more so in the online trading arena. Armstrong (2006) [1] highlighted that consumer motivation and behavior is the core of marketing strategy, providing a basic perception on the eminence of strategic human interaction in consumer decision making.

Considering the digital transformation in India, Bansal and Agarwal (2018) [2] emphasized the importance of organizations being aware of psychological variables that indirectly manipulate digital interaction and brand perception, which is the mental well-being.

A study conducted by Gupta and Sharma (2020) [3] showed the close correlation between the implementation of digital marketing campaigns and the changes in the buying behavior of the consumers, particularly in urban areas in India. On the same note, Kumar (2021) [4] highlighted the successively increasing capability of digital marketing tools, especially with regard to the fact that the effectiveness of online content depends dramatically on how individual and fitting it seems to consumers. The narrower focus on influencer marketing has already been conducted by Patel and Jain (2022) [5], identifying that the young consumers of India have high confidence in the influencers in cases of buying goods online, feeling that they are more relatable, as opposed to conventional advertisements.

Sharma and Kapoor (2019) [6] further affirmed the influence of the social media platforms in adding to the purchase intentions where the real-time interaction, visual contents, and membership build principal influence in the decision-making of the consumers. Within the scope of the search engine strategies, Verma and Singh (2020) [7] investigated the performance of both SEO and SEM in acquiring customers and the answers discovered that being visible at search engine has a significant impact on brand credibility and purchase probability.

In the current conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, researching consumer confidence in the websites by Deshmukh and Khanna (2021) [8], it was revealed that the secure websites, well-presented information on the products, and digital assurance practices became a part of the online shopping retention conditions. The proposal by Mehta and Shah (2022) [9] on personalization in e-commerce suggests that the direct consumption of the strategies is

consumer loyalty since customers would choose a platform that is aware of their expectations and anticipates them.

Rani and Aggarwal (2021) [10] examined mobile marketing through real-time interaction via the app-based notifications and concluded that, despite the previously discussed ability of impulse sales through push notifications, overdoing it may result in disengagement. In support of this, Bhatt and Patel (2020) [11] addressed trending patterns of online consumer behavior, thus determining trust, ease of use, and convenience as the main driving forces of e-commerce development in India.

Chatterjee (2019) [12] focused on the shifting of the traditional buying behavior towards a new orientation on digital marketing campaigns and Saxena and Yadav (2021) [13] provided an additional explanation of this issue by using the case study of Amazon and Flipkart. One of the identified competencies was affected by customer-concentrated innovation and digital promotions.

Also, Tripathi and Kumar (2022) [14] focused on the importance of an increased role of influencers and discovered that the credibility of influencers positively affects the brand trust of Indian millennials. Existing sources of government and market data including IBEF (2023) [15], Statista (2023) [16], and MeitY (2022) [17] were useful as they gave context to the extent to which the digital and e-commerce environment of India was growing and why online platforms are critical at a macroeconomic level.

Joshi and Malhotra (2020) [18] examined the relevance of online advertising and its impact on the interest of its consumers; it was revealed that the most effective and emotional advertising appears on interactive figures. Kapoor and Rathi (2019) [19] associated mobile application marketing with the phenomenon of impulse purchases since young consumers are the most mobile users and make shopping especially with the help of a mobile device. Lastly, Bose and Dey (2021) [20] talked about digital branding strategies

and established that long-term retention of consumers is dependent on frequent digital interactions, trust creation, and smooth customer journey.

These studies taken together give conclusive evidence that techniques in digital marketing, such as social media and influencers, SEO, customization and mobile marketing have a major impact in influencing consumer behavior of the growing e-commerce market in India.

Objectives of the Study:

- To examine the digital marketing strategy that the e-commerce brands in India use.
- To evaluate the impact of applying such forms of digital marketing on consumer behavior and consumer buying practices.
- To have an idea of the inclination and disposition of consumers on different means of online marketing such as social media, email marketing and influencer promotions.

Hypothesis:

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): Digital marketing strategies do not significantly influence consumer behavior.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): Digital marketing strategies significantly influence consumer behavior.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research designs adopted in the study will be quantitative and description research design to determine the ways that digital marketing strategies can guide consumer behaviour when dealing with Indian e-commerce brands. It is a research that is targeted to riving a primary data on online consumers so as to obtain all of the current and actual information. The structured online questionnaire was the main source of collection data. The survey was framed into sections comprising of the demographics, online store awareness and usage of online shopping platform, exposure to the various digital platforms of marketing (social media marketing, email marketing, influencer marketing, SEO, and app

notifications), and its effect on the consumer and its purchase decision.

The study would mainly be targeting members of the society that reside in India and whom actively participate in the tradition of online shopping. Simple random sampling has been used because it removes chances of biasness in selecting all the participants and this enhances chances of minimizing any biasness in sampling. One hundred and fifty responses were obtained on Google Forms and other internet-based survey tools, but 143 were valid. The timeframe within which the data was to be gathered has been selected to 30 days to cover as large and diverse as possible sample.

There are two categories of statistic which have been used in the course of data analysis; descriptive (mean, standard deviation) and inferential (ANOVA test). In finding out a summary of the response of the consumers as

well as the identification of the most preferred digital marketing strategy, it is probable that the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is applicable so as to check the hypothesis and test the outcome so as to determine whether the consumer behavior is statistically significant or not basing on the various marketing strategies of digital marketing practices. A statistic program Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to analyze the data.

Under this methodology, one could search the evident relationships between the marketing activities and the consumer reactions in either addendum or nullification of the hypothesis to be tested in the analysis. It also ensures that the results are most reliable as well as valid because it involves the use of quantified methods which are back checked and therefore give meaningful recommendations to both marketers and e-commerce firms.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics:

Digital Marketing Strategy	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Social Media Marketing	4.5	0.62
Email Marketing	3.8	0.76
SEO and Online Ads	4.1	0.70
Influencer Marketing	4.2	0.68
Mobile App Notifications	3.6	0.81

Analysis of Descriptive Statistics:

The descriptive statistics used in the current research gives an overview of the perception and response of Indian consumers towards different digital marketing tools implemented by e-commerce companies. These data have been gathered via a structured questionnaire, whereas answers were analyzed as the mean scoring with standard deviation on the per-strategy basis. The most prominent digital marketing methods which were analyzed are social media marketing, email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO) and online advertisement, influencer marketing, and push notifications on mobile apps.

Based on the findings, the most outstanding mean score of 4.5 with a low standard deviation of 0.62 was obtained on social media marketing. It means that a vast majority of the

respondents strongly believed that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have a significant impact on affecting its purchase behavior. People are likely to subscribe to brand pages, view advertising materials, and take part in interactive types of campaigns including giveaways, reels, and live sessions.

Influencer marketing was next with the average score of 4.2 and standard deviation of 0.68. This indicates product recommendations given by influential persons or content producers followed online, are trusted. A large number of the respondents acknowledged that they are finding out new products, trusting brands with the help of influencer endorsements. This observation shows the growing strength of digital word-of-mouth regarding consumer preferences.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and online advertisements also had the significant effect with the mean score of 4.1. According to consumers, visibility in the Google search and customized online advertisements frequently make them consider new products. But here reactions were a bit more different, meaning that indeed, SEO and adverts work, but they are time-sensitive, relevant and purpose-oriented.

Much more popular is email marketing, which was rated only a bit higher, with an average of 3.8 and a bigger standard deviation (0.76). This implies that promotional emails are generally helpful to some consumers and annoying to others hence they would end up ignoring or unsubscribing. This variability could be as a result of email overload, not personalizing the email or timely sending of the campaign.

The mean score of mobile app notifications was the lowest (3.6), and the standard deviation (0.81) was above all the standards. It

means that the reception is mixed, as some users consider that app notifications are useful when making flash sales, offers, etc., but it can be intrusive or even annoying. The evidence indicates that it is possible to become bored with incessantly (or frequently) irrelevant notifications.

In general, the paragraph analysis reveals that digital marketing approaches greatly differ in terms of their effectiveness. The most convincing are the social media and the influencers marketing, but the email marketing and the app notifications should be improved regarding personalization and periodization to be even more efficient. Such observations will enable marketers to improve their strategies to better respond to expectations and behaviours of their consumers.

Table 2: Hypothesis Testing:

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance (p-value)
Between Groups	12.35	4	3.09	5.72	0.0004
Within Groups	29.65	145	0.204		
Total	42.00	149			

Analysis of Hypothesis Testing:

In this research, the purpose behind the hypothesis testing was to explore the effects of digital marketing strategies on the behavior of consumers in India e-commerce market, which are statistically significant. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to evaluate this relationship by using the responses obtained after surveying 150 online consumers. This will be an appropriate method when comparing the means of two or more groups (this exercise will use various digital marketing techniques) to determine whether one of them can ever have significant impacts

on the dependent variable that will be the behavior of consumer.

The ANOVA test result had the F-value of 5.72 and p-value of 0.0004. The p value is very small as compared to the usual standard of 0.05 which paves grounds that there is a significant result against the null hypothesis. Hence, we are to reject a null hypothesis and to accept an alternative one.

This result means that a variation in the consumer responses to the differing digital marketing strategies is not an occurrence of chance. Instead, they are statistically significant, i.e. all the strategies are more

effective than others when it comes to shaping consumer behavior. To give an example, social media marketing and influencer marketing turned out to be more influential, which also coincides with the results of the descriptive statistics.

In addition, low variation between the groups as compared to the target group indicates that each of the marketing strategy had a clear influence on consumer behavior. Whether consumers react to it depends on how the strategy attracts their attention and instils trust in them as well as satisfying them.

Analytically, in the real world, the analysis affirms that digital marketing is imperative in influencing the way the consumers think, feel and behave in the buying process. Marketers must, therefore, work on the most efficient strategies, i.e. social media engagement, partnership with influencers and SEO to have better consumer response and conversions.

IV. CONCLUSIONS OVERALL RESULTS:

The main aim of the proposed research was to examine the role of digital marketing plans in changing the behavior of the consumers in the Indian online marketplace. Run-based on the data obtained among 150 Internet purchasers as well as processed through descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, a number of interesting conclusions have been drawn.

The results show clearly that the digital marketing practices cause a very concrete effect on consumer behavior. Of all the strategies discussed, the most influential strategy was done through social media marketing. Indian consumers are rabid users of Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube and would heavily swear by imagery, reels, brand collaboration, and even interactive campaigns. This demonstrates that social media is more than a visibility platform but rather a platform used to forge relationships and make purchase decisions.

The other factor that was found to be a powerful solution in terms of consumer trust and product discovery is what is called

influencer marketing. The vast majority of the respondents stated the fact that they tend to consult with the opinion and suggestions of the influencer or content creator in order to purchase something. This verifies the fact that the concept of peer influence and digital word-of-mouth has been an important part of the consumer path.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and online advertisements were proven to attract the attention of consumers particularly when consumers are proactive in seeking information concerning a given product or brand. Nevertheless, it was measured that the effect of email marketing and mobile app notifications was moderate. Although these tools continue to be used in the process of consumer engagement, they could be overused or less personalized, which makes them less effective.

The ANOVA hypothesis testing was also able to give more perceptiveness to the findings of descriptive statistics. The small p-value (0.0004) revealed that the influence of digital marketing strategies to consumer behavior is statistically important. Hence, the null hypothesis was discredited, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted validating the fact that the effect that is marketed efforts will have on consumer perceptions to communicate and buy online with in the e-commerce environment is real.

In general, the research establishes the significance of applying the correct combination of online marketing tools to appeal to the consumers. As it can be seen, contemporary consumers are well informed, digitally empowered, and they are susceptible to online content. E-commerce brands, which allocate their resources to individualized, relatable and timely digital outreach, stand a higher possibility of achieving customer confidence, satisfaction and surge in their market share.

The research provides a timely contribution to the body of knowledge that can help the marketers, brand managers and researchers to find answers to the question, what strategy is

most appropriate to operate in the Indian digital environment. The learnt insights can assist in creating tighter and better market campaigns and all culminate to a high performance of the businesses in a congested e-commerce market.

FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

Although this paper has managed to bring about the effect of digital marketing strategies on consumer behavior in the Indian e-commerce market, there are quite a number of areas in which the future research can be undertaken that can widen and enrich this knowledge.

To begin with, current research study had only 150 respondents of whom most were urban or semi-urban individuals who had access to online shopping sites. The sample of the future study can be extended and diversified: covering the rural population, consumers of Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and of different socio-economic levels. It would give a better view of the impact of online marketing on various demographic populations in India.

Secondly, only 5 key digital marketing strategies were the main center of attention in this study: social media marketing, influencer marketing, email marketing, SEO and online ads, and app notifications. Future research may also be offered to emerging digital opportunities that include customer service and the use of artificial intelligence (AI or example, chatbots), augmented reality (AR) when it comes to virtual try-ons, WhatsApp messaging with businesses, and data analytics-based personal recommendations. Such technologies are becoming more influential in the experience of consumers, and these technologies should be explored in detail.

Third, the research carried the quantitative approach, which supported the identification of general patterns and statistical connections. A qualitative or mixed-methods research may be used in the future with the interviews or focus groups or specific e-commerce brand case study involved. This would give greater insights on the emotional, psychological, and

cultural aspects of consumer decision making which would not be seen by numbers.

Moreover, the lasting effect of the use of digital marketing on brand loyalty and keeping customers can be examined further instead of the purchase intention only. This would come in handy especially when it comes to how e-commerce firms can be able to develop long term relationships with their customers using regular and value building online connectivity. Comparison of the Indian and the global e-commerce consumer behavior is also a promising area. As globalization and transnational e-commerce continue to grow, global buyer-to-global buyer responses present an opportunity to comprehend how buyers in India are different or similar to global buyers in response to digital marketing tactics that would enable companies to design their marketing strategies when venturing into international markets.

Finally, as future research directions, research dealing with individual areas of e-commerce, including fashion, electronics, healthy living, or food, can be mentioned. Those categories are likely to have dissimilar consumer expectations and reactions to the digital marketing efforts, and industry-specific research would offer more usable information.

To sum it up, though this paper provides valid input into the topic of digital marketing and consumer behavior, further investigations are necessary in this rapidly-changing sphere. Further research can be conducted on the current results to create more focused, creative, and consumer-driven patterns of digital marketing that would correspond to new technologies and the taste of customers not only in India but also worldwide.

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