



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DIGITAL MARKETING - A STUDY

IMTIAZ BEGUM I

Assistant professor, Department of Commerce, Government First Grade College, Chikkaballapur

ABSTRACT

While the global epidemic of Covid-19 affected many sectors, it had a significant impact on digital marketing and advertising on a global, regional, and local level. However, unlike what was observed in other domains such as the economy, human resources, and so on, this impact was mostly favourable. While the virus created a lot of uncertainty among customers and marketers alike in terms of health, social life, economic stability, employment, and so on, it also led to behavioural shifts such as working remotely, spending a lot of time indoors, adopting home-schooling, learning new recipes from the internet, increased attention on health and hygiene, avoiding crowded areas, increased social media engagement, shift toward online content, and so on, and all of these led to behavioural shifts such as working remotely, spending a lot. The behavioural change was mostly towards digital platforms and digital content, which provided marketers and brands with more options than ever before to connect with customers online. Digital medias have offered marketers with a plethora of chances to profit from growing social media participation and a need for digital information. At the same time, this forced marketers to be more conscious of their actions and social responsibilities while applying digital marketing methods. The purpose of this study is to emphasise, analyse, and comprehend the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic on digital marketing and advertising in general.

Keywords : Digital Marketing, Advertising, Covid-19, Pandemic, etc.

Introduction

Digital marketing is a branch of marketing that promotes products and services through the use of internet and digital technologies such as computers, mobile phones, websites, social media platforms, application software, e-mail, and other platforms. In the 1990s and 2000s, the rise of digital marketing transformed the way firms and marketers used technology to implement marketing plans and strategies. Content Marketing, Micro-Video Marketing (M.V.M), Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O), Search Engine Marketing (S.E.M), Social Media Marketing (S.M.M), Influencers Marketing, In-App P.O.S Advertising, Social Media Optimization (S.M.O), e-Commerce Marketing, Digital Advertisement Displays, e-mail Marketing, and other forms of digital marketing have become more common in recent years. The breakout of Covid-19 provided an unexpected boost to the Digital Marketing and Advertising industry, which had been growing steadily. by making the people locked down at home with less or no work hand and influencing a fast paced behaviour shift towards digital platforms, digital media, and digital content. Digital marketing strategies involves efforts to adopt the advertising to different platforms, and to customize the advertising to different buyers and also to different devices rather than a large coherent audience.

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the concept of digital marketing.
2. To analyse the impact of Covid-19 on digital marketing.
3. To analyse the future role of digital marketing post Covid-19.

Scope of the Study

Scope of the study is related to understand the concept of Digital Marketing, and to know the impact, that the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic had/has on digital marketing and also understand the future of digital marketing post Covid-19 pandemic.

Research Design

The study is based on the secondary sources of data. Secondary data are collected through published sources like text books, journals, magazines and through the blogs and articles published in websites.

Limitations of Study

The study is limited to secondary data. Time constraints while collecting the secondary data. Generalization of all the data from this study is not preferable.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing in simple words can be stated as the implementation of marketing plans and strategies through the use of internet and other related digital platforms. It can be defined as a marketing approach that primarily relies on the internet to connect with the target audience through various digital media channels and platforms. Under Digital Marketing, the marketers use internet, mobile devices, e-mails, social media, search engine, video streaming platforms, and other such channels to reach the customers. However, there are some marketing experts who are of the opinion that digital marketing should be regarded as a completely different and new endeavour which requires new and different ways of approaching, connecting and understanding the customers.

Digital Marketing is target specific. That means, the brands and marketers can target a specific segment of customer based on various factors, and also identify the perfect medium or channel for connecting with such customer base. Unlike the traditional marketing techniques, digital marketing is also interactive in nature. The various social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc., and AI-based technology like Chatbots incorporates marketing with customer feedback and enables for an interactive two-way communication between the company and the customer.

Advertising through digital platform is very flexible in nature and can be tailored and customized according to the needs and requirements of various customer base accordingly without much hustle and is also optimizable to various display sizes and thus eliminating the drawback of traditional techniques of advertising.

Tools for Digital Marketing

As the customers' response for traditional marketing approaches are reducing in recent times, the consumers' engagement with brands and marketing activities through digital platform has increased considerably. This increase in engagement has led to the development of various digital marketing tools.

a) Search Engine Optimization:

It is the process of improving the visibility of, and increasing the quality and quantity of traffic to the website or webpage organically (i.e., unpaid results) by optimizing the particular search engine. For example, Google search engine can be optimized in such a way that whenever a related search query is made, the search result would show the website link in the first position in organic result section.

b) Search Engine Marketing:

Unlike S.E.O, search engine marketing is a paid process, in which the search engine is paid by the marketers to show their website link on top of the search list whenever the purchased keyword (or group of keywords) are searched.

c) Social Media Marketing:

Social Media Marketing is that component of Digital Marketing under which the marketer makes use of social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc., to promote their products

and services. S.M.M may include both organic and inorganic efforts.

d) Video Marketing and Micro Video Marketing:

Video Marketing and Micro Video Marketing are gaining a huge customer engagement over the last few years. This is a technique where by video streaming platforms like YouTube and Micro video streaming platforms like Tik Tok and Vigo Video are utilised by the brands to promote their products and services to the customers.

e) e-Mail Marketing:

This is a tool used by marketers to target the customers directly through e-mails. Here e-mails are used to send promotional and other kind of messages to the potential customers and create demand for the product or service so promoted.

f) Affiliate Marketing:

Being similar in nature to commission-based sales, affiliate marketing is a process in which the company provides custom links (U.R.L) to the affiliates and whenever a customer visits the company website and / or purchase the products through the affiliate's link, the company will pay certain percentage of commission to the affiliate.

g) Mobile Marketing:

As the number of smartphone users increasing world-wide, to bank on this opportunity, brands have started to connect with their customers on mobile phones through mobile apps, e-mails, Mobile-Optimizable Websites, and social media.

h) Influencer Marketing:

It is one of the newest tools of digital marketing in which, social media influencers such as YouTube stars, Tik Tok stars etc., are used by the companies to promote their products on their respective platforms. For example, a YouTuber by the name Bhuvan Bam was roped in by Mivi to promote their earphones and speakers on his YouTube videos.

Impact of Covid-19 On Digital Marketing

The widespread of Covid-19 had a drastic negative impact on on-field marketing activities, mainly due to lockdown. However, this opened the doors for digital marketing as people shifted to digital mediums faster than anticipated. The following points explain the impact of covid-19 on digital marketing and advertising.

i. Increased Social Media engagement paved way for increased Social Media Marketing:

Due to Covid-19 outbreak resulting in lockdown and work from home being in place, people had a lot of free time, which they mostly spent on social media. As a result, this provides an opportunity for marketers to capitalize on and better connect with their customers through various Social Media sites, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.,

ii. Shift from K.P.I expectations to lifetime value:

Digital Marketing is traditionally based on analytics and Key Performance Indicators (K.P.I) for measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of digital marketing campaigns. However, the outbreak of Corona Virus has devalued the importance of, and emphasis on

K.P. I's and increased the importance of Customer Lifetime Value.

iii. Increased demand for Video and Micro- Video Content:

While the internet revolution led by Reliance Jio made the internet cheaper, the advent of Covid-19, made people so much so free that they had a lot of time to spend now. As a result, the demand for video contents in Video streaming platforms like YouTube has increased tremendously. Similarly, in case of micro video content platforms there has been a huge increase in demand. These things, provided the marketers with an opportunity to bank on Video and Micro Video contents to advertise and promote their products and services.

iv. Increased importance of A.I based Chat-bots:

While the online activities of the people have increased during quarantine, and the majority of the workforce was on work from home status, the companies adopted to A.I based Chat-bots, that would provide necessary assistance to the customers through a pre-programmed chat room. The use of these kinds of chat-bot the customers liking towards these bots has also increased unexpectedly, and as a result, these chat-bots have become a virtual assistant to the customers.

v. Emphasis of Experiential Marketing:

As people are spending more time online during this lockdown period, the marketers have to emphasize on making the customers online experience engaging or else the chances are that the customer can get bored soon, if the webpage, landing page or virtual environment does not provide a good experience. Thus, the marketers are heavily emphasizing on making the customers online experience a delightful one when they visit the website, attend webinar, visit curated content hub, visit landing pages etc.,

vi. Surge in demand for O.T.T. Content Hubs:

Covid-19 lockdown period also saw a surge in demand for and viewership of Over-The-Top Content Hubs such as Netflix and Amazon Prime. The surge in demand for these O.T.T platforms provides the Digital Marketer with an opportunity to promote and market their products and services through these platforms.

vii. Increased Product Research among customers:

Over the last few months the people are spending more time in researching

products and services online. Thus, it is forcing brands and marketers to manage their online reputation effectively and be responsive towards the customer reviews and requests and avoid any possible backlash.

Future of Digital Marketing Post Covid-19: There is no doubt that Covid-19's impact on Digital marketing is positive for most of the part, but going forward in the future, post Covid era the marketers have to maintain or rather improve on the current digital opportunities in order to retain the customer base so acquired during the Covid period.

i. Being socially responsible in social media:

Although the companies have gained a great quantity of customer engagement on various social media platforms, going forward in the future the firms have to maintain this engagement while ensuring that they act with responsibility.

ii. Upholding Online Reputation:

With an increase in the customers' online time spend, and increase in social media activities, any mistakes from the brands or company's part can lead to faster widespread of negative information and may lead to drastic backlash. Thus, maintaining the online reputation will be very much difficult and essential as well.

i. Managing web traffic:

Post Covid, as the people get back to their normal lifestyles and routines, the challenge in front of the marketers would be to get the same quantity and quality web traffic on their websites and landing pages. The marketers have to continue making engaging digital content and virtual environment even post Covid to manage and maintain the web traffic.

ii. Speculation on A.I based Chat-bots:

As the usage of chat-bots are increasing during the lockdown period and the customers finding it as useful service, going ahead in the future the onus on marketers will be invest more on such A.I Based technology while ensuring the

U.I and UX is good and make sure that there aren't much of technical issues.

Conclusion

In the present scenario, digital is at the heart of all companies and Digital marketing is an essential tool in the hands of brands and marketers for implementing marketing strategies during the pandemic period. While the field of marketing in general was drastically impacted, the branch of digital marketing has seen a tremendous boost. Covid-19 has put Digital marketing on Fast-track and paved the way for further development and enhancement of digital marketing activities.

References

- ❖ Ian Dodson, “The Art of Digital Marketing”, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (2016): 01-05.
- ❖ Annmarie Hanlon, “Digital Marketing: Strategic Planning and Integration”, Sage Publication, (2019).
- ❖ Dave Chaffey, P.R. Smith, “Digital Marketing Excellence: Planning, Optimizing and Integrating OnlineMarketing”, Routledge, Fifth Edition, (2017).
- ❖ <https://diginomica.com/what-future-digital-marketing-and-impact-covid-19- discover-martech-virtual-event-review>
- ❖ <https://virtual.clickz.com/>
- ❖ <https://marketing.toolbox.com/articles/wh at-is-digital-marketing-definition-types- best-practices-with-examples>
- ❖ <https://www.marketingprofs.com/chirp/20 20/43008/covid-19-impact-on-business- and-digital-marketing-initiatives- infographic>

