STUDY ON MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE MARKETING ON INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION: A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ANAND CITY

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Abstract

IMC mergers various promotional tools and communication/marketing/advertising services and techniques to maximize profit. IMC is ultimately achieved through concise and reliable messaging that fosters familiarity and consumer affinity. In the this research study, Descriptive research is followed. Descriptive research is usually a fact-finding view generalizing a cross - sectional study of current situation. The main goal of descriptive research is to describe any particular event, phenomenon and situations on the basis of observations. Survey for research work was conducted in the Anand city for keeping in mind that online marketing is still a metropolitan phenomenon in the developing country like India. Sample of 200 respondents was selected for survey.

Key Words: Marketing communications, advertising, online marketing

Introductions

Integrated marketing communication (IMC) is an approach used by organizations to brand and to align their communication efforts for objectives accomplishment. The American Association of Advertising Agencies defines IMC as "a concept that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines, and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact." The primary objective behind an IMC strategy is to create a unified experience for consumers across different aspects of the marketing mix. As each marketing communication channel works together in unity with the brand's core image and messaging, rather than in isolation.

As per Don Schultz (2008), IMC is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programmes over time with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences. The key difference in this definition of IMC from that of simple Marketing Communication is highlighted by use of three words: i) strategic, ii) appraise and iii) quantifiable. In essence, IMC applies use of marketing communication mix in such a way that strategically designed to accomplish organizational objectives, it is used to measure to accountability over marketers and are evaluated over time. These elements are also stressed on by various IMC authors (Schultz, 1996; Duncan & Caywood, 1996), who believe that although the concept of IMC is not new,but the fact that previously marketing communication was not coordinated strategically and strategy is now believed critical, gives this concept a new look.

Since the major domains of research topic are – Integrated Marketing Communication & Online Marketing. The review of literature will revolve around these.

Research objectives:

Based on the above research problems, the research objectives are as follows:

i. To analyze the effectiveness of online marketing as compared to traditionalmarketing tools.
ii. To know sources of information for various brands amongst customers of Anand City.
iii. To find awareness about Internet advertising amongst customers of Anand City
iv. To find purpose/reasons of using Internet amongst respondents of Anand City
v. To know customers' perception for online marketing strategies amongst respondents of Anand City.

In the this research study, Descriptive research is followed. Descriptive research is usually a fact-finding view generalizing a cross - sectional study of current situation. The main goal of descriptive research is to describe any particular event, phenomenon and situations on the basis of observations.

In present research study, the required data was collected through Sample survey using structured questionnaire. Since 'Customer`s inclination towards Online marketing' is the core focus of the study, a structured & closed ended questionnaire was prepared for customers only.

The questionnaire incorporated questions related to customers' preference for online marketing and other traditional mediums for getting awareness on various brands and making purchase decision.

In the present study, researcher has used published and unpublished sources of secondary data. Secondary data was collected to provide this research paper necessary conceptual clarity. Information related to IMC, online marketing & its implication etc. was collected through various secondary sources such as research journals, reference books, business magazines and content sharing websites.

In present study researcher has used stratified probability sampling with -

- Sample size: 200 (Sample size is selected on the basis of discussion with the research expert)

- Area covered – Anand District

- Sample frame – Households

Data Analysis & Interpretation

In the present study researcher used descriptive statistical tools. Primary data is used while analyzing and drawing inferences.

This part of study is mainly focused on verifying main objectives of study. Researcher used statistical tools like mean, standard deviation and graphs foranalysis of primary data.

Profile of Respondents

Survey for research work was conducted in the Anand city for keeping in mind that online marketing is still a metropolitan phenomenon in the developing country like India. Sample of 200 respondents was selected for survey. The questionnaire included a segment on customers profile as a classification of their demographic factors such as gender, age & occupation. During data collection phase, due care was taken in order to make sure that the given questionnaire is completely filled by the respondents.

The detailed respondent profile is as follows:

Table no. 1 Respondent's profile

Age	Occupation				Gender		
	Student	Service	Self Employed	Total	Male	Female	Total
18 to 25	81	0	0	81	38	43	81
25 to 35	19	41	3	63	31	32	63
35 to 45	0	47	9	56	29	27	56
Total	100	88	12	200	98	102	200

From the above table no.   1, Out of 200 respondents - 100 are students out of which 81 are between the age 18 to 25 years & 19 are between the age 25 to 35 years. There are 88 respondents who are jobber out of which 41 are between the age 25 to 35 years & 47 are between the age 35 to 45 years. Also, there are total 12 respondents who are self-employed out of which 3 are between the 25 to 35 years & 9 are between the age 35 to 45 years.

As far as gender wise segmentation is concerned, there are total 98 males out of which 38 are between the age 18 to 25 years, 31 are between the age 25 to 35 years& 29 are between the age 35 to 45 years. And there is total 102 males out of which 43 are between the age 18 to 25 years, 32 are between the age 25 to 35 years& 27 are between the age 35 to 45 years.

The details of responses given regarding the medium to get knowledge are given inthe following table.

Table no. 2 Do consumers rely on just one medium to get knowledge about any brand?

Particulars	Frequency	Percent
No	82	41.0
Somewhat	47	23.5
Yes	71	35.5
Total	200	100.0

From table no.2, it is observed that when respondents were asked if they rely onjust one medium to get knowledge about any brand; 41% have given negative response, 35.5% respondents have given complete positive response while only, 23.5% responded that they rely partially.

Table no. 3 Sources of awareness for various brands

Sources of awareness	Frequency	Percent
Print ads	22	11.0
Television commercials	53	26.5
In-store promotion	37	18.5
Outdoor media	18	9.0
Online media	70	35.0
Total	200	100.0

From table no. 3, it is observed that when respondents were asked about through which source do, they refer the most to get information about various brands; 11% have chosen print ads, 26.5% respondents have chosen Television commercial, 18.5% have chosen In-store promotion, Only 9 % have chosen
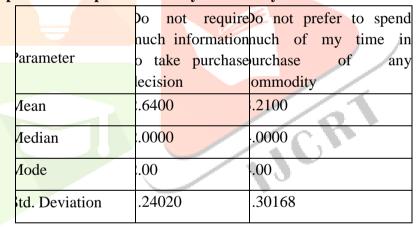
Outdoor media, 35 % respondents have chosen Online media, which is the higher of all.

Table no. 4 Details for information and time spend to take purchase of any commodity

	Do not require much information to take purchase decision		Do not prefer to spend much of my time in purchase of any commodity	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	3	6.5	7	3.5
Disagree	0	0.0	8	9.0
No opinion	6	8.0	4	7.0
Agree	8	4.0	8	4.0
Strongly agree	3	1.5	3	6.5
Total	00	00.0	00	00.0

From table no.4, it is observed that when respondents were first asked whether they require much information to take purchase decision; secondly whether they spend much time for purchasing any commodity; 16.5% respondents shown strong disagreement to the first question and 13.5% to second question, whereas 40% respondents were disagreeing to the first question and 19% to second question. Considering data of complete sample of all respondents' descriptive statistics parameter scores are calculated and tabulated below.

statistic scores for information and time spend to take purchase of any commodity

Parameter	Do not require much information to take purchase decision	Do not prefer to spend much of my time in purchase of any commodity
Mean	2.6400	3.2100
Median	2.0000	3.0000
Mode	2.00	2.00
Std. Deviation	1.24020	1.30168

From table no. 5, it is observed that

1. Mean value scores for parameter much information to take purchase decision is not required is 2.64 which indicates respondent disagreement. It means they really required much information to take purchase decision. Median and mode values are equal to 2 also support this result.

2. Mean value scores for parameter much time is required to spend to take purchase of any commodity is 3.21 which indicates respondent agreement. It means they do not prefer to spend much of their time in purchase of any commodity.

Importance of Online advertising in changing market scenario:

Online Marketing refers to a set of powerful tools and methodologies used for promoting products and services through the internet. It connects organizations with qualified potential customers and takes business development to a much higher level than traditional marketing.

Knowledge about the use of internet:

Today, Internet is one of the most important parts of our daily lives. There are large numbers of activities that can be done using internet and so it is very important. Most of the traditional communication media including telephone, music, film, and television are being reshaped or redefined by the internet.

To understand whether respondents are convergent with the use of Internet; they were asked about their knowledge about use if internet. The details of which are tabulated below.

Table no. 6 Knowledge about the use of internet

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
	Not knowledgeable about	4	.0
	Somewhat knowledgeable about	8	4.0
	Knowledgeable about	7	3.5
	Very well knowledgeable about	1	5.5
	Total	**00**	**00.0**

Interpretation:

From table no. 6, it is observed that 7% were not knowledgeable about internet and 14% were somewhat knowledgeable about internet.

It means major percentage of respondents is very well knowledgeable about internet. They are well aware with various usage, functions and benefits being offered by internet. While out of 200 respondents, only few i.e., 7% were not awared about internet. So, it reveals that there is high degree of knowledge for internet usage.

Frequency of being online:

Table no. 7 Descriptive statistic scores for knowledge about the use of internet andfrequency of being online

	Are you convergent with the useof internet?	Frequency of beingonline
Mean	.1750	.5650
Median	.0000	.0000
Mode	.00	.00
Std. Deviation	92120	.23832

From table no. 7, it is observed that Mean value scores for parameter their convergence with internet is 3.17which indicates respondent agreement of being convergent with internet.

Hence, most of the consumers are well versed with the usefulness of internet and they actually make maximum utilization of the various functions served by internetand therefore their tendency of being online is high.

Purpose for using Internet:

To understand the real purpose for using internet respondents were asked to ranking each purpose between the scales of 1 to 5, where 1 is the most important and 5 is least important.

The details are tabulated in the following table.

Table no. 8 Purpose for using internet

	Social networks		Media sharing sites		Blogs		Podcasts & RSS		Collaborative websites		Other content sharing websites		Online shopping	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Most important	3	6.5	0	5	6	3	3	6.5	2	6.0	3	1.5	0	0.0
2.00	5	2.5	8	4	2	1	2	6.0	3	1.5	3	1.5	2	1.0
3.00	0	0	2	1	5	2.5	5	2.5	5	2.5	9	4.5	1	0.5
4.00	0	0	4	7	0	0	7	3.5	8	9.0	7	8.5	0	0.0
Least important	2	1	6	3	7	3.5	3	1.5	2	1.0	8	4.0	7	8.5
Total	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00

From table no. 8, it is observed that Social networks are considered most important 36.5% respondents andleast important by 11% respondents, Media sharing sites are considered most important 25% respondents and least important by 23% respondents.

It means that Social networking is the foremost purpose for which majority of respondents use internet. Certain social networking sites such as Facebook, Orkut, LinkedIn etc. have become popular in recent times, used to share the personal & professional views with known and unknown people who can be found out through these sites. After Social networking, second preference given to the online shopping. It allows flexibility to the consumers to view a wide range of products & brands, evaluate them online by reading their features and making an online purchase. Media sharing is at third place. It allows them to share media material such as photos, music, video, news etc.

To analyze in detailed, some important statistics (parameter) were calculated, andthe results of analysis are tabulated below.

Table no. 9 Descriptive statistic scores Purpose for using internet

	Social networks	Media sharing sites	Blogs	Podcasts & RSS	Collaborative websites	Other content sharing websites	Online shopping
N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Median	2.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.00	2.00
Mode	1.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.00

Hence, respondents strongly feel that the most important activities to be done through internet are social networking as it connects them with others, online shopping as it offers them convenience of shopping and media sharing site as it allows them to download their favorite enticing material such as songs, video, games etc.

Use of online activities by companies in their marketing efforts:

Online advertising is geared towards defining markets through unique and useful applications. Having an onlinepresence will first bring their business to the potential customer's attention. If online presence is complete with positive reviews and a professionally updated website; customers will see the reputation of the brand and will be more likely to choose those brands. To analyze in detailed respondents were asked to give their view on agreement scale considering two different attributes.

Table no.10 Do companies include online activities in their marketing strategy?

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
	Strongly disagree	2	6.0
2	Disagree	1	0.5
	No opinion	2	1.0
	Agree	3	1.5
	Strongly agree	2	1.0
	Total	00	00.0

From table no. 10, it is observed that when respondents were asked whethercompanies should use online activities in marketing efforts; 16% were strongly disagreed, 20.5% shown disagreement and 21.5% shown agreement whereas 31% were strongly agreed.

It means majority of respondents are completely agreed that companies should use online activities in their marketing efforts. Since online activities facilitate good access and higher reach to the customers; companies must take this advantage by incorporating online advertising in their marketing strategy.

Hence, consumers are with the strong opinion that companies use online activities to spread awareness & sell their product.

Table no. 11 Importance of factors motivating respondents to like the brand on internet

	Discount		Stay informed ab the activities of company		Get updates on brands and its future extensions		For fun, entertain- ment		Get access to the exclusive content		Interaction	
	T	%	T	%	T	%	T	%	T	%	T	%
Most important	9	4.5	2	6.0	6	8.0	3	6.5	3	6.5	8	4.0
Important	6	3.0	2	6.0	9	4.5	6	8.0	9	9.5	1	0.5
Least important	4	2.0	2	1.0	1	0.5	5	2.5	2	1.0	6	8.0
Not important	1	0.5	4	7.0	4	7.0	6	3.0	6	3.0	5	7.5

It means majority of respondents are motivated to use internet as it offers them products at discounted rates, gives access to exclusive content such as specific functional & emotional benefits of the brand and facilitates interaction about the brand directly with the company.

Table no. 12 Preference for the print ads or television commercials

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	3	1.5
Disagree	1	0.5
No opinion	9	.5
Agree	9	9.5
Strongly agree	8	9.0
Total	00	00.0

From table no. 12, it is observed that whether they don't prefer the print ads orTelevision commercials much to get the brand awareness, 11.5% respondents have shown strong, 20.5% respondents were disagreeing and 39.5% respondents were agreed

It means majority of respondents agreed that they do not prefer Television commercials or print ads to get brand related awareness. So, these popular traditional mediums are no longer remained first preference for the consumers to receive ad messages.

Table no. 13 Descriptive statistic scores for Preference for the print ads or televisioncommercials

Parameter	Value
N	00
Mean	.3400
Median	.0000
Mode	.00
Std. Deviation	.30880

Hence, it reveals that today consumers do rely on print ads television commercials much to get awareness.

Table no. 14 **Benefits of online marketing over traditional marketing**

	Frequency	Percent
Wide range of information	8	4.0
Ease of shopping	6	3.0
Time saving	1	5.5
Low cost	4	2.0
Interactive medium	1	5.5
Total	00	00.0

From table no. 14, it is observed that 24% of respondents find online marketing advantageous as it offers widerange of information about the brand, 23% of respondents find online marketing advantageous as it offers ease ofshopping and 25.5% of respondents find online marketing advantageous as it is an interactive medium.

Table no. 15 Loopholes in online marketing over traditional marketing tools

	Frequency	Percent
More Susceptible	33	16.5
More scope for fraudulent activities	52	26.0
Lack demonstration	40	20.0
Privacy Issue	42	21.0
Often interrupting	33	16.5
Total	200	100.0

From table no. 15, it is observed that 16.5 % of respondents find online marketing is not safe as it is moresusceptible, 26% of respondents find online marketing is not safe as there is more scopeof fraudulent activities, 20% of respondents find online marketing is not safe as it lacksdemonstrations and 21% of respondents find online marketing is not safe as it may result insome serious privacy issues.

Conclusion

The study concludes that consumers rely upon more than one medium in order to enhance their brand related knowledge. It means that they use the combination of various sources for making final purchase decision. Along with the traditional sources, they heavily rely on modern marketing tool i.e., online advertising.

Consumers do require detailed information about the brand so as to evaluate its strengths & weaknesses; this ample amount of information then saves their time byallowing them to make the purchase decision quickly. This shows that consumers try to get more information before they make purchase. They receive this information through various mediums; so, integration of these mediums is necessary to feed the required information to the customers for brand evaluation which in turns will save consumers' time & efforts while making an actual purchase.

The study also reveals that main reason for growing importance of online marketing is the increasing literacy about internet among people. They have identified that internet is truly advantageous through which they can serve their various purposes mainly social networking, online shopping & media sharing (photo, music, video). This efficacy of internet has intensified their tendency of being online.

Today's consumers strongly feel that every company must use this efficacy to strengthen its marketing efforts. So that they will get motivated to use online

Marketing with the intent of getting access to exclusive content about the brand andgetting discount and sharing their feedback about brand with the advertiser.

With the advent of internet technology, consumers' preference towards traditional marketing tools has decreased. Most popular traditional marketing tools are television & print media. The major benefits of online marketing are its capability of interaction between consumers and advertisers followed by availability of wide range of information & ease of shopping. These benefits make online marketing superior than traditional marketing.

But at the same time consumers are susceptible about the user-safety side ofinternet. They feel that online marketing is unsafe as it may lead to increase in frauds & privacy issue.

Recommendation

Conclusion given above reveals that consumers use more than one medium tomake brand choice, therefore it is recommended that Companies should mix & match various mediums to reach their desired target audience. This will help to spread awareness among them and to influence buyer's behavior thus companies must formulate an effective Integrated Marketing Communication plan where they can combine various tools to grasp maximum prospects.

It is also revealed that consumers have good enough knowledge about internet technology and they are in favor of using online marketing, therefore it is recommended that Every company big or small should grab this advantage and include online marketing in their marketing efforts. Online marketing forms can be mainly web marketing, E-commerce, social media marketing. **Consumers find certain benefits in online marketing over traditional marketing; therefore, companies can spend more on online media rather than the traditional tools.**

But along with its advantages, online marketing has certain limitations also, limitations like possibility of fraudulent activities or privacy issues are beyond control. Cybercrime cannot be eradicated easily or completely therefore, it is recommended that Companies should not rely entirely on online marketing; they must make it a part of Integrated Marketing Communication strategy. As a result of which limitations of online marketing will be covered as the other mediums will build the required credibility and positive image about the brand. This credibility will generate trust among consumers towards the brand.
The study could be extended; so as to cover all the states of India as the researcher believes that consumer buying behavior w.r.t online marketing may be at the variance in different states.

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