



THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN INDIA AFTER CRISES OF COVID-19: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT:

In modernization world and rapid technology changes the essence of marketing become a major requirement for any business. As a mode of marketing, social media plays a vital role for the company. It is the use of social media platforms and websites for promoting or creating awareness of a product or services which is ultimately generates leads for the company. Social media marketing usually based on internet and country like India has huge internet user due to world second largest population and rapidly upgradation of technology. Social media is one of the prominent ways to communicate the information to the target customers. In the crises of covid-19, the concept of work from home becomes more relevant and in the field of marketing it focusses more towards usage of social media platforms for engaging of customers. The objectives of this paper are to identify the numbers of internet users in India and its growth position from 2015 to 2020 with a forecast until 2025. Further to identify the different social media platforms that can be used as a marketing tool by the company and also to identify the different job opportunities for an individual as a freelancer.

KEY WORDS:

Social media, Marketing, platforms of social media, freelancer, Internet.

INTRODUCTION:

In globalization scenario and upgradation of technology marketing plays a key role for all companies to promote their products. Among various modes of marketing, social media marketing plays a vital role in the field of marketing for the company. As it is based on the internet, its user is huge and continues growing year by year due to rapid upgradation of technology and life styles of the individual. In India the growth rate of internet is huge as compare to other developing country after china due to improving the economic condition, technology changes, population and living style of the people. Today more than 760 million of people in India uses smart gadgets such as smart phones, laptops, tablets etc. to communicate with the external world and self-exposure. Further the crises of covid-19 situation have acted as a catalyst to the ever-increasing rise in social media adoption in India for getting information's.

By globalization the whole world becomes a market place and it becomes more complicated for a company to survive long time due to its vast market place and high competition. But social media platforms give the best possible opportunities to the companies to cover the whole market and generate sales. It helps to minimize the cost and save the time which is a great advantage for a company.

For an individual the usage of social media platforms not only gives the information or self-exposure but also provide the opportunities to earning money as a freelancer. In the time of upgradation of technology, the individual prefers to become his own boss and start works on the social media sites or platforms with the help of skills and technology.

In India the usage of internet and social media platforms have been started since it developed by the business as well as individuals but the crises of covid-19 acted as a catalyst and pull the people turn to social media not only for support and entertainment but also as a source of information and job opportunities. In crises of covid-19, the employees were doing their work from home especially on IT sectors and generates revenue for the company. As a freelancer the individuals are also gain incomes without affected by crises with help of social media sites and platforms.

OBJECTIVES:

- To identify the number of internet users in India and its growth positions from 2015 to 2020 with a forecast until 2025.
- To identify the different social media platforms and its scope as a marketing tool for the company.
- To identify the different job opportunity sites or platforms for an individual to work as a freelancer.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research is depending on secondary data collected from Govt. of India, Different books on marketing, articles, research papers, social media sites, journal and internet source also.

DURATION OF THE STUDY:

The duration of this study is the time taken to complete the research on internet and knowledge from the books of experts on the subjects and different sources to complete or design the final research paper. The duration of the study was from November 2020 to March 2021.

ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING:

Before you know the concept of social media marketing you need to understand the meaning of Social media which is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through the building of virtual networks and communities. By design, social media is Internet-based and gives users quick electronic communication of content.

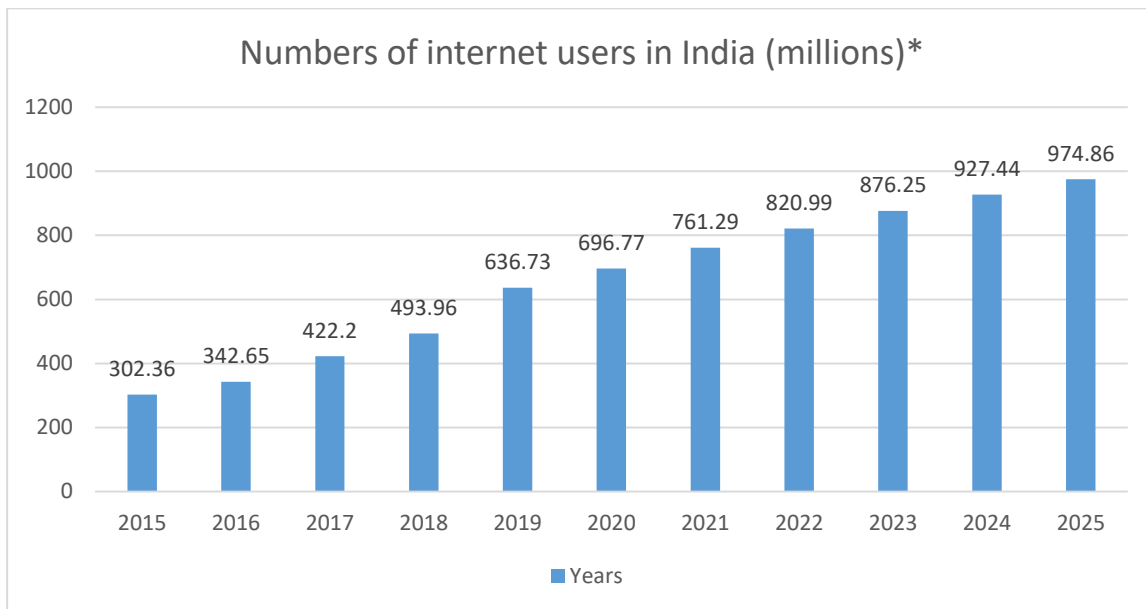
Therefore, Social media marketing is the use of social media platforms to connect with your audience to build your brand, increase sales, and drive website traffic. This involves publishing great content on your social media profiles, listening to and engaging your followers, analyzing your results, and running social media advertisements.

The major social media platforms (at the moment) are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, Google Ads, Blogs and etc.

GROWTH OF INTERNET USERS IN INDIA:

In 2020, India had nearly 700 million internet users across the country. And it will cross 760 million in 2021. This figure was projected to grow to over 974 million users by 2025, indicating a big market potential in internet services for the south Asian country. In fact, India was ranked as the second largest online market worldwide in 2020, coming second only to China. The number of internet users was estimated to increase in both urban as well as rural regions, indicating a dynamic growth in access to internet.

Let's understand the number of internet users in India from 2015 to 2020 with a forecast until 2025 with this demographic diagram.



• Source -statista.com

PLATFORMS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING:

Among various social media platforms, the following are the more attractive and usable by the company for promoting the products or brand awareness as well as by the individuals for freelancer work.

1. **Facebook:** Facebook is the most usable social media platforms with 2.85 billion active monthly users worldwide. Which also makes it the most usable for marketing activities of the brands and services. In India over 320 million Facebook users alone, making it the leading country in terms of Facebook audience size. To put this into context, if India's Facebook audience were a country then it would be ranked fourth in terms of largest population worldwide. Apart from India, there are several other markets with more than 100 million Facebook users each: The United States, Indonesia, and Brazil with 190 million, 140 million, and 130 million Facebook users respectively.

The company or individual here engaged the Facebook marketing manager to advertise their product or services through creating their own Facebook pages and share the products as photo or video for public awareness which ultimately generates leads for the business and also uses the individual freelancer from the market place to do the same in behalf of the company which helps to growth the business.

2. **Instagram:** Instagram is one of the most important social media platforms with 1 billion monthly active users worldwide. The United States and India were the countries which jointly headed the ranking of the countries with the most Instagram users with 140 million users accessing the photo sharing and editing app as of January 2021. Brazil ranked third with 99 million Instagram users, ahead of Indonesia with an audience of 85 million users.

The company here used to hire the Instagram influencer who have a huge fan follower in different category and advertise their products through them. As they are the role model of many so the fans used to purchase the product which ultimately generates leads for the company.

3. **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is a very popular employment-oriented online service that operates via websites and mobile apps with an huge 740 million registered members. The platform is mainly used for professional networking, and allows job seekers to post their CVs and employers to post jobs. Most of the company's revenue came from selling access to information about its members to recruiters and sales professionals.

LinkedIn allows members both workers and employers to create profiles and connect to each other in an online social network which may represent real-world professional relationships.

The company can access here the targeted clients or customers for their products and make contact with them and approach to buy their product which is ultimately increase the sales of product and growths the company.

4. **YouTube:** YouTube is an online video sharing and social media platform with a huge 2 billion users. YouTube is most popular as the range of videos on YouTube is seemingly infinite; users can find music videos, video clips, short films, feature films, documentaries, audio recordings, corporate sponsored movie trailers, live streams, vlogs, as well as content. As point of company's view, it is one of the most important social media platforms usable nowadays for promoting the products through its own YouTube channel or through Google adds which is advertise the product or services of the brand in prominent YouTube channels as paid basis in their videos as a sponsored.

5. **Pinterest:** Pinterest is an image sharing and social media service designed to enable saving and discovery of information on the internet using images, animated GIFs and videos in the form of pinboards with over 400 million monthly active users. Pinterest has largely appealed to women. A 2020 report found that over 60% of the global users are women. Although men have not been a primary audience on Pinterest, it's been found that their usage has increased 48%. In terms of age distribution,

users between the ages of 18-25 have grown twice as fast as those over the age of 25. However, both users between the ages of 18-25 and users between the ages of 25-40 have been driving the growth of Pinterest.

The company use this social media platform as a marketing tool to share the photos of the products or brand and make awareness to the targeted customers about their new product launches and generates sales from this for the business.

6. Blogs: Blogs is a discussion or informational website published on the World Wide Web consisting of discrete, often informal diary-style text entries (posts). Today, there are more than 570 million blogs on the web. Companies that recognize the need for information, originality/ and accessibility employ blogs to make their products popular and unique/ and ultimately reach out to consumers who are sharing further to social media. Blogs allow a product or company to provide longer descriptions of products or services, can include testimonials and can link to and from other social network and blog pages. Blogs can be updated frequently and are promotional techniques for keeping customers, and also for acquiring followers and subscribers who can then be directed to social network pages. Online communities can enable a business to reach the clients of other businesses using the platform. To allow firms to measure their standing in the corporate world, sites enable employees to place evaluations of their companies.

7. Twitter: Twitter is a microblogging and social networking service provider with more than 330 million monthly active users on which users post and interact with messages known as "tweets". Twitter allows companies to promote their products in short messages known as tweets limited to 280 characters which appear on followers' Home timelines. Tweets can contain text, Hashtag, photo, video, Animated GIF, Emoji, or links to the product's website and other social media profiles, etc. Twitter is also used by companies to provide customer service. Some companies make support available 24/7 and answer promptly, thus improving brand loyalty and appreciation.

PLATFORMS OR WEBSITES FOR FREELANCER WORK:

The individual who have skills and willing to work as a freelancer can start their career on the following sites or platforms such as Upwork, Fiverr, PeoplePerHour, Freelancer.com, Guru.com, 99Designs, Toptal, gulance and etc.

Let's discuss the top most among the above-mentioned platforms or websites:

1. Upwork: Upwork (formerly known as Elance oDesk) is top most popular freelancing platforms in the world. It has over eighteen million registered freelancers and five million registered clients with three million jobs worth over \$1Bn USD are posted annually, making Upwork the largest freelancer marketplace in the world. Those in web development, graphic design, customer support, and even freelance writing will find that Upwork has much to offer. The seemingly unending feed of job postings is continually updated. From small businesses to huge corporations, many different types of companies are looking to hire bloggers, freelance designers, and freelance writers through Upwork.

Upwork, formerly Elance-oDesk, has a bit of a learning curve when you first get up and running. You have to learn the artistry to writing effective proposals, and you may have to bid below your pay rate to build up your feedback rating. Many freelance jobs are posted on Upwork, but there's a hungry audience competing for them. Unless you're an Upwork superstar, bidding on a project that already has 30 proposals usually isn't worth it.

That being said, some freelance designers secure plenty of work on Upwork and score project after project. Upwork can be worth the time — it offers the potential for great returns once you've established yourself on the platform.

How to Get Started on Upwork as a Freelancer:

- ❖ Go to Upwork.com and click on “Sign Up”
- ❖ Sign up using your work email address, Apple or your Google Account
- ❖ Add your personal information
- ❖ Start your Upwork profile by telling about the work you do
- ❖ Highlight your educational background
- ❖ Highlight your past work experience
- ❖ Add your language proficiency
- ❖ Set your hourly rate
- ❖ Indicate your title and overview
- ❖ Add profile photo
- ❖ Add your contact details
- ❖ Preview your profile before submitting
- ❖ Become a freelancer on Upwork
- ❖ Start bidding and take the project and complete

- 2. Fiverr:** Fiverr is one of the popular platforms in the freelancing world. It brings the concept of a marketplace that would provide a two-sided platform for people to buy and sell a variety of digital services typically offered by freelance contractors. Services offered on the site include writing, translation, graphic design, video editing and programming. Fiverr's services start at US\$5, and can go up to thousands of dollars with gig extras. Each service offered is called a "gig". With a user-friendly interface, you get everything you need here. From a business card design to WordPress website design or writing articles to lead generation.

It is the reverse of Upwork. On Upwork, you set up your profile and then you shop for jobs. You are the one bidding for work and trying to find the jobs that work for you. On Fiverr, the reverse is true. You set up "gigs" which are advertised services that you define. Clients shop for someone to do a job they need completed and choose to hire you via one of your gigs.

How to create an account in Fiver and starts Work:

- From the Fiverr homepage, click **Become a Seller**.
- Click **Become a Seller**.
- Enter your email address and click **Continue**.
- Note: You can also join with Facebook and Google Connect.
- Choose a username.
- Choose a password and click **Join**.

You are now a registered user on Fiverr. An email will be sent for you to activate your account.

- Within the email you receive from Fiverr, click **Activate Your Account**.
- Creates gigs and publish to start your work.


- 3. PeoplePerHour:** PeoplePerHour is a UK-based company whose function is as an online platform giving businesses access to freelance workers. Businesses opting to use the website are often start-ups or SMEs looking to grow flexibly by hiring freelancers to handle projects rather than hiring in-house or via agencies. Jobs start from little as an hour ("Offers") and can be ramped up as needed to build whole teams online, meaning the model is scalable all the way up to global enterprises. They operate as part of what has become part of the "talent cloud" with thousands of freelancers, offerings a range of skills on a flexible and efficient basis.


As the leading marketplace for freelance talent in the UK, PeoplePerHour hold a powerful insight into the self-employed segment of the labour market and have created and collaborated on

numerous research projects on SMEs, freelancing and the gig economy and provide resources for new and growing businesses and those looking to pursue a freelance career.

How Does PeoplePerHour Work:

- **Sign up and complete your profile.** In your profile you will highlight your skills and experience. Add your photos, videos, and samples to wow buyers. Profiles are ranked based on your activity per month. You can get ranked higher in search results by selling your services frequently.
- **Search for jobs and send proposals.** If you find a job you are interested in, bid on it by sending a proposal. You can bid on 15 projects/jobs a month for free. You can buy more credits if you have used all your free proposal credits to apply to more projects.
- **Complete the job.**
- **Get paid.**

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- 4. Freelancer.com:** Founded in 2009, Freelancer.com is a powerful freelancing website with 50000000 users. Freelancer.com is a marketplace where employers and employees are able to find each other. The site allows employers to post work for site members who place bids in a competitive tender process. The site also allows members to host and enter contests for which prize money is offered as a reward. Freelancers and employers develop profiles on the site as they offer, win and complete work and write and receive reviews of people they work with or for. Freelancer takes a 10% fee, which can be reduced with paid monthly membership, with a minimum fee of \$5.



Most of Freelancer's users come from India, the United States, Philippines, Pakistan and the United Kingdom, but it is represented through its user network in 247 countries, regions and territories; and in both emerging and developed markets. The top three job categories that most frequently get job requests are IT and software, 34%; design, media and architecture, 31%; and writing and content, 13%. The company has offices in Manila, Philippines; Sydney, Australia; Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada; Buenos Aires, Argentina; London, United Kingdom; and Jakarta, Indonesia.

How Does Freelancer.com Work:

- Determine what you are good at, commit to a life of freelancing, and sign up for a Freelancer.com account.
- Set up your profile
- Find projects and start bidding.
- Work.
- Get paid and earn five-star feedback.

5. Guru.com: Guru was founded in 1998 to connect companies with quality freelancers. Today, Guru serves 800,000 employers, has paid \$250 million to freelancers across the globe, and claims an impressive 99% client satisfaction rate because it specifically caters to experienced professionals rather than entry-level job seekers.

Guru caters to freelancers in eight main areas: administration, business and finance, engineering and architecture, design, sales and marketing, programming, writing and translation, and legal. After you've completed your profile on Guru, you can browse through job listings or use the platform's Top Match and Good Match filters to find clients who are likely to be a good fit. When you find a listing that matches your interest and skill set, you can submit a bid for it. You can also work on projects with other freelancers through Guru's virtual WorkRooms feature. Like many of the other freelance job sites we reviewed, freelancers use Guru's platform to communicate with clients, draft contracts, send invoices, and get paid.

It's free to make a profile on Guru, but the platform sells tiered membership packages to help boost your rankings in search, send messages to clients before bidding on a project, and up the amount of jobs you can bid for. Basic plan is free with 10 bids per month and 9% fee taken from every invoice. Guru's paid plans are also available with extra benefits.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion of this study it is to state that the social media on marketing takes an impact role for every company for taking their business in next level. Country like India with over 1.3 billion population and more than 700 million internet users, social media is not just used for getting information or self-exposure but also replaces the old marketing techniques to digital marketing and it will be growing more in upcoming years. With utilization of social media, the opportunities to earning money as a freelancer is also growing. Youths of this country with procuring different skills can start a self-oriented business and generates revenue and helps to contribution in our economy by using all these digital platforms. The situation of Covid-19 acted as a catalyst and pull the people turn to social media more and it increases day by day. The scope of social media marketing in near future is huge and business needs to update them in earlier to overcome these rapid changes of marketing strategy to survive in the competitive market place.

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