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The preference of digital marketing among youngsters in calicut

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Abstract

This study investigates the preferences and effectiveness of digital marketing among youngsters in the Calicut district, India. In an increasingly digitally-driven society, understanding consumer engagement with online platforms is crucial for businesses. The research, conducted through a survey of 60 respondents from Kozhikode district, explored various aspects of digital marketing usage, including preferred platforms, benefits, perceived difficulties, and the influence of advertisements on purchasing behavior. Key findings indicate a strong preference for mobile applications and social media for product information and purchases, with a significant portion of respondents expressing satisfaction with digital marketing's benefits such as time-saving and 24/7 service. While digital marketing offers numerous advantages, challenges such as privacy issues and fraudulent activities were also identified. The study concludes that digital marketing tools are highly effective among youth in Kozhikode district, advocating for increased digital literacy and improved security measures.

Keywords: Digital marketing, youngsters, consumer behavior, security measures, traditional marketing

Introduction

The contemporary consumer landscape is characterized by an overload of information, making it challenging for companies to effectively reach their target audiences. The advent of Web 2.0 and numerous social media platforms has intensified this information deluge, leading to a "misty sight" for consumers who are inundated with communications. Despite this, social media has unlocked extensive possibilities for businesses, necessitating a focus on identity, image, and uniqueness as products become increasingly similar. A significant trend that has emerged is digital marketing, also known as data-driven marketing. This strategy concentrates on delivering valuable information to consumers rather than solely focusing on sales, aiming to foster brand loyalty and long-term purchases. Society's shift from material value to gratifying information value underscores the need for high-quality content. Modern consumers are more interested in a brand's values and what it can personally offer them, rather than just the product itself.

Digital marketing encompasses the promotion of products or services using digital technologies, primarily via the internet, but also through mobile phones, display advertising, and other digital mediums. Its evolution since the 1990s and 2000s has transformed how businesses leverage technology for marketing. With the increasing integration of digital platforms into daily life and marketing plans, and the shift from physical to digital retail, digital marketing campaigns have become more prevalent and efficient. Common digital marketing techniques include Search Engine Optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), content marketing, influencer marketing, social media marketing, and email marketing, among others. This study acknowledges digital marketing as a modern and essential technique for marketers to retain existing customers and acquire new ones, providing a competitive edge for businesses. Given the dynamic nature of marketing techniques in an increasingly online world, this research aims to understand the digital marketing platforms, tools, and portals preferred by youngsters in the Calicut district.

Statement of the Problem

Consumers are overwhelmed with communication, and companies struggle to penetrate this clutter. Despite the opportunities presented by social media, products are becoming more similar, highlighting a need for distinct identity and image. Digital marketing, with its focus on valuable, concentrated information, has emerged as a key strategy to build brand loyalty

over short-term sales. The shift towards valuing information over material goods necessitates great content. In this context, understanding the evolving preferences of youngsters in Calicut regarding digital marketing platforms and tools is crucial as marketing techniques change daily.

Significance and Scope of the Study

Digital marketing significantly influences consumer buying behavior, offering comfort, ease, versatility, and speed. Young people, in particular, show a strong interest in digital marketing. Therefore, this study investigates the digital marketing platforms preferred by youngsters. While various studies have addressed digital marketing, few have specifically focused on the preferences of youth regarding their buying behavior. This research is anticipated to be valuable for understanding the digital engagement of the youth demographic. The study evaluates the preferences of digital marketing tools among youth. Its findings and conclusions are based on the responses of 60 selected respondents from Kozhikode district.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this study are:

- To identify the various digital marketing tools utilized by youngsters.
- To identify the most preferred digital marketing tools among youngsters.
- To analyze the role of educational qualification in digital marketing usage.

Literature Review

Digital marketing has revolutionized how businesses connect with consumers, offering a targeted and measurable approach through various online channels. Unlike traditional marketing that relies on print, radio, and TV, digital marketing leverages the internet's power for efficiency and cost savings, eliminating the need for physical materials. Key aspects include content marketing, which Halvorson, M. Rach (2012) [7] states are "what user wanted to read, learn about, watch or experience", and which Olejniczak, A. described as fostering authentic relationships built on trust and partnership. The internet also facilitates closer and more cost-effective customer relationships by providing continuous information, service, and support, and enabling convenient online shopping from anywhere at any time. Modern advertisers, as observed by Victor Van Valen, are utilizing innovative platforms like Yahoo! Smart Ads to deliver customized advertisements to highly targeted online audiences, a significant advancement from broad print media targeting. Peter J. Danaher and Guy, W. Mullarkey (2003) [2] found that longer exposure to a webpage increases the likelihood of remembering banner advertisements.

Consumer buying behavior is a multifaceted process influenced by situational, personal, social, and cultural factors, as stated by Hoyer, W.D., Macinnis, D.J. (2002) [1]. Retailers strategically manipulate in-store environments to encourage purchases. The consumer decision-making journey typically encompasses need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase, and post-purchase evaluation, as identified by Blackwell, R., Miniard, P. and Engel, J. (2006) [3]. Personal elements like taste and financial circumstances, as stressed by Batra, S.K & Kazmi, S. (2008) [4], are addressed by businesses through market segmentation, targeting, and product positioning.

While extensive research exists on both digital and traditional marketing, as noted by Kotler and Keller (2012), there's a notable gap in studies specifically exploring their impact on the buying behavior of young consumers. This highlights a significant area for future research to better understand the effectiveness of such digital changes on this demographic.

Methodology and Design

This study adopted an empirical approach based on the survey method. Both primary and secondary data were utilized for its conduct. Methodology, in this context, refers to the systematic and theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study, encompassing theoretical analysis of methods and principles, including concepts like paradigms, theoretical models, phases, and quantitative or qualitative techniques. A methodology provides the theoretical underpinning for understanding which methods are applicable to a specific case, rather than providing solutions directly.

A descriptive research design was employed for this study. Research design involves arranging conditions for data collection and analysis to ensure relevance to the research purpose and pre-planning the researcher's actions. The study focused on "The Preference of Digital Marketing Among Youngsters with Special Reference to Calicut" to add to existing knowledge.

The study, conducted over three weeks in Kozhikode district, focused on its youth population, which was considered infinite and immeasurable. A sample of 60 respondents was selected using convenience sampling. Data collection involved both primary sources, through a structured questionnaire, and secondary sources, including journals, books, and websites. For data analysis, statistical tools within SPSS were utilized, specifically employing percentages, ranking tables, and the Chi-Square Test.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Impact of Advertisements on Purchasing Behavior: A significant majority of respondents, 68%, indicated that advertisements in digital marketing positively impact their purchasing behavior, while 32% did not agree with this impact. This suggests a strong influence of digital advertisements on consumer decisions.

Benefits of Digital Marketing Compared to Traditional Marketing: When comparing digital and traditional marketing, respondents identified distinct advantages for each. Digital marketing was particularly appreciated for time-saving and 24/7 services. Additionally, respondents found benefits in digital marketing for aspects such as pricing, product availability, delivery, range of products, product comparison, convenience, and brand awareness. Conversely, traditional marketing was preferred for interaction with suppliers, after-sale services, and obtaining quality products.

Recommendation of Digital Marketing to Others: A substantial 80% of respondents (40% definitely will and 40% probably will) expressed an inclination to recommend digital marketing to others, with only 20% being uncertain about their recommendation. This high rate of recommendation indicates a general positive perception and satisfaction with digital marketing experiences.

Satisfaction Level with Digital Marketing Techniques

The overall satisfaction level with digital marketing techniques is favorable, as indicated by a mean value of 3.62. The majority of respondents reported being satisfied (36 out of 60) or highly satisfied (7 out of 60).

Difficulties in Digital Marketing: While many found digital marketing beneficial, 47% of respondents reported facing difficulties, with 53% indicating no difficulties. The problems identified included lack of experience and knowledge (25%), scope for fraudulent activities (25%), privacy issues (21%), being more susceptible (15%), and frequent interruptions (13%).

Relationship Between Educational Qualification and Digital Media for Buying Products: A chi-square test was conducted to examine the relationship between educational qualification and the use of digital media for product purchases. The calculated chi-square value was 3.710916. With a degree of freedom of 6 and a significance level of 0.05, the table value was 12.59. Since the calculated value was less than the table value, the null hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that educational qualification and digital media usage for buying products are independent of each other.

Findings

Based on Objective 1: To identify the various digital marketing utilized by the youngsters.

- 75% of respondents gain awareness about digital marketing through the internet.
- 50% of respondents use social media for obtaining information about a company's product.
- Most respondents prefer mobile apps for buying products (67%).
- Social media is identified as an important digital marketing service utilized by most respondents.
- Online purchase, e-payment, watching movies and videos, and social media purposes are common uses of digital marketing, with online purchase being the most preferred.

Based on Objective 2: To identify the most preferred digital marketing by youngsters

- The majority of respondents (67%) prefer mobile apps for buying products.
- 50% of respondents use social media for getting information about a company's product.
- The most preferred usage of digital marketing by respondents is online purchase, attributed to ease of shopping and high speed.
- Time saving and 24/7 services are the most appreciated benefits of digital marketing.
- Respondents benefit from digital marketing in terms of pricing, time saving, product availability, 24/7 service, product delivery, range of products, comparison with other products, convenience, and brand awareness.

Based on Objective 3: To analyze the role of educational qualification in digital marketing usage.

- The study found that educational qualification and digital media for buying products are independent.
- The research infers that the educational qualification of respondents plays no role in their usage of digital marketing tools and services.

Suggestions

- Since a majority of respondents (67%) prefer mobile apps for buying products and 50% use social media for getting information about company products, companies should focus on optimizing their digital marketing strategies for these platforms. This includes developing user-friendly mobile applications and engaging content for various social media channels.
- Given that 75% of respondents become aware of digital marketing through the internet, and there's a suggestion to use "non-digital platforms to provide awareness on digital marketing services to those who not avail or access internet facilities", companies could also explore integrated campaigns that leverage both online and offline channels to reach a broader audience, especially those with limited internet access.
- As 68% of respondents are influenced by advertisements in digital marketing for their purchasing behavior, businesses should invest in creative and targeted digital advertising campaigns across preferred platforms.
- Even though the study found that "educational qualification and digital media for buying the product are independent", and "education qualification of the respondents possess no role in their usage of digital marketing tools and services", the findings also indicate that "the digital marketing is mainly used by graduates. Other categories of people are not well aware about this". This suggests a gap in awareness or adoption among non-graduates. Therefore, awareness programs should be conducted by companies so that all category of people can avail digital marketing services.
- The study also highlights that "the accessibility of digital facilities by the youth segment under the age 20 and below is far too less when compared to other age group". While not directly tied to educational qualification, this age group often includes those with lower educational attainment. Thus, it is necessary to improve the knowledge of digital marketing among youngsters who comes under the age below 20.

Conclusion

This study on "The Preference of Digital Marketing Among Youngsters with Special Reference to Calicut" has evaluated the buying behavior of youth concerning digital marketing and its effectiveness. In the current digital era, both companies and consumers show a strong interest in digital platforms for marketing and purchasing products, underscoring the relevance of digital marketing. The rise of internet technology has diminished consumer preference for traditional marketing tools like television and print media. The major advantages of digital marketing, such as time and cost savings, wide information availability, and ease of shopping, render it superior to traditional marketing. The research concludes that digital marketing tools are highly effective among youth in Kozhikode district. Online purchase, e-payment, and social media usage are prominent activities, with online purchasing being the most preferred due to its ease and high speed. Despite educational qualifications, people are largely aware of digital channels, and social media significantly influences their purchasing decisions.

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