

DIGITAL MARKETING BEFORE AND AFTER COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Digital Marketing is not a new term. It was first coined in the year 1990. Digital Marketing is a type of marketing that was the internet, and digital technologies like Mobile devices, Computers and other social and digital media platforms to promote products and services. Whenever a product or service or anything is advertised or marketed through an online medium, it becomes a part of Digital Marketing.

The covid-19 pandemic had shaken all corners of the world, and made most of the countries to go to lockdown. People are not leaving home as much, but spending way more time online than ever before. Internet usage grown 25% within a few days in the mid of April as the pandemic started forcing everyone into lockdown situation. The true fact is that the need for products and services had never gone down during the corona days but, increased ever than before.

Since January 2020, the world has been watching the Covid-19 hit and numerous questions were asked in the boardrooms, an earnings calls, in the media and the Government. People want to how the businesses will survive when the whole world was shut down the answer to all those questions came in the form of Digital Marketing had transformed before and after Covid-19.

Keywords: Marketing, Digital marketing, Covid-19, Products, Services, Business, Social-media, Online Marketing.

1. Introduction

Every business firm's ultimate goal is to make their products and services reach their customers and thereby earn maximum profit from it. Therefore, they always try to adopt the best and latest techniques to make their products and services reaches their target audience in the best way. One such method is digital marketing strategy. Traditionally, the customers will visit the several retail shops and the make the purchases they want. Such traditional forms of marketing channels have a much smaller audience set. Digital marketing is an entirely different concept in which the selling and buying of products and services is possible through Internet.

In this current scenario Internet had become an inevitable part of everyone's life. Internet users range from youngsters to adults. A day without Internet had become a bad nightmare for everyone. Also, the covid-19 had acted as a catalyst in the increase of internet usage. The covid-19 pandemic had resulted in continuous shutdowns and lockdowns which in turn resulted in the closure of retail shops and services. Although the coronavirus had made everyone sit in the home, but the need for products and services was not reduced.

The customers felt it more convenient than before as they can access everything through internet easily. Everything is made available at doorstep without much effort and pain. So, if there ever was a time for a business company to invest more in digital marketing, then it is now. On the other-hand

the marketers were able to own huge online customer data. Companies could collect and update the data of customer needs and can identify their priorities and interests so that the marketers could adopt methods improve their business.

2. What is Digital Marketing?

With the increasing number of Internet users, customers began searching products and making decisions about their needs online. First, instead consulting salesperson, which had made a new face for the marketing strategy. Marketing of products and services in nowadays is not narrowed to shop only. But, a big world of online marketing is present. Digital marketing had made customer base wider than ever before.

Traditional sources and marketing strategy had only a few number of customers. Before marketing products and services through online, the customers who were aware about these are only few in number. But today, due to the easy availability of a huge customer base, internet marketing helps the business pitch more customers than traditional methods. In other words digital marketing has a great role in the profit of a business.

Marketing can be considered as an activity which is related to promoting the services of a business or selling products to customers. The types of marketing include door-to-door approach, pamphlet newspaper ads, exhibitions or a stall in an expo. By marketing through all these mediums the business tries to promote or enhance their product or service. But an important point to be noted down is that the number of customers is consistent.

Social media marketing is a type of digital marketing which is a common method adopted by many marketers. Digital Marketing can be a good choice of Marketing strategy due to its wide availability and cost-effective nature. The initial step in Digital Marketing is creating a social presence on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Google and other channels.

A lot of people use social media now a days. The Covid-19 pandemic had made the number of Internet users rise. The continuous lockdowns and shut downs had made everyone sit under the house roof. So the traditional marketing methods like door-to-door approach, a newspaper ads, exhibition etc have less to do with the promotion or selling of products and services. During the Covid-19 pandemic the scope of Digital Marketing is the only technique the business firms can adapt to save their business.

3. Methodology

The types of Digital Marketing techniques may include:

1. Search Engine Optimization
2. Content Marketing
3. Social Media Marketing
4. E-mail Marketing
5. Pay per click
6. Affiliate Marketing
7. Video advertising
8. Native advertising

3.1 Search Engine Optimization

Search Engine Optimization in short is called SEO. It is used by companies to improve the usability of business websites and content of common search queries. In other words this type of Digital Marketing is utilized by marketers to optimize and improve the quality of content that appears as a result of different SEO marketing techniques helps the digital marketers to study the content of a particular website and makes it easier for search engines to show that particular website in top of the search page.

3.2 Content Marketing

Almost all the marketers have their own personalized contents broad-centred blogs, articles, journals, e-book, podcasts, videos, images, updates and so on. Content Marketing is an important aspect of digital marketing. It is a technique that provides only valuable and informative contents to respective audience. Content is usually published in website and promoted through social media, email etc.

For instance, if you are selling IOT based software, then you can give information about Internet Of Things. So, when the people who lands on their page, through different marketing channels becomes your target audience.

It is an approach in which a healthy relationship is built with the audience through different types of marketing channels. It is also important to provide high quality contents to the target audience regularly and provide updates on the contents.

3.3 Social Media Marketing

The primary goal of social media marketing is providing brand awareness to the customers, the main top social media platform are Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. They are mostly chosen by the social media marketing teams.

More than 2.4 billion people are currently active on Facebook alone so without much effort the marketers can reach a huge base of customers. Another advantage of social media marketing is that, its cost-effective nature. The cost of marketing products and services on social media is very less as compared to other digital marketing technique. The organizations and companies need not have to spend any money on this type of marketing.

3.4 E-mail Marketing

Email marketing can also be considered as on effective method of digital marketing. Email marketing helps the marketers to get in touch with the interested customers of the brand. This type of marketing can also be considered as a cheap and oldest methods of reaching out to customers. This type of mail include subscription mail, follow-up mail when a person buys a product from a website or particular brand, broadcast mails with offers in different hotels, restaurants, resorts etc.

3.5 Pay per click

The pay per click method helps in reaching the users through internet by a number of digital platforms through paid ads. It is a method which can boost the number of visits on your webpage. The paid ads are differently highlighted from other sites. Whenever the customer clicks the ads the marketers have to pay the corresponding companies. Also, if the ppc campaign is successful, the search engine charges less on every click.

3.6 Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing is an important aspect of Digital Marketing technique. The objective of this type of marketing is to earn a share of profit. Whenever a customer purchases a product or services of a company. Then the affiliate marketers earn a particular amount of share of profit. The affiliate marketers or influencers promote a service or product of other companies and get a commission whenever a purchase is made many reputed companies like Amazon and Flipkart have affiliate marketers, who are highly paid when the websites sell their products. Affiliate marketing has 4 key elements. They are

- *The merchant
- *The publisher
- *The customer and
- *The network.

3.7 Video advertising

Video advertising is a method which plays advertisements as online videos, egs, YouTube videos. We are all familiar with video advertisements in YouTube. The popularity of this type of advertisements has grown over time. Online video advertising usually consists of three types:- Pre-roll ads, Mid-roll ads and post-roll ads. Pre-roll ads are played before the video is watched, Mid-roll

ads are played during the video and Post-roll ads is played after watching video. This method of advertisement makes an interrupt in the viewing experience of the customers. But it can have both good and bad effects or some customers get irritated.

3.8 Native advertising

We are all familiar with certain ads on Facebook and Instagram that actually does not look like ads. Such types of advertisements are called native ads. These are paid contents with different look and feel. This method is also an effective method when used on websites, social media sites, newsletters, e-books and so on.

4. Impact of covid-19 in increasing digital marketing trends

We had seen many digital marketing methods and drawbacks of traditional marketing strategies. The rapid outbreak and spread of covid-19 pandemic had made the life of people miserable and bring to a standstills. It was the right time to invest more on digital marketing. Whether, it is online ads, social media blogs, etc when the target audience is spending more amount of time online everyday .Most of the companies are searching and adopting new ways and technologies to network and bring more people together online and promote their services and products through digital marketing .

The Hootsuite study says more than half of the people on earth, now use social media and the number is still growing. The data from GlobalwebIndex says that each single users use almost nine different social media platforms. So, the companies came to understand that the best way to search their target audience was through online. Digital media platform like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc help in checking reviews, find new products, discover new brands and so on.

During the covid-19 pandemic, the people's buying habits had moved online, as retail shops had closed. The covid-19 pandemic had accelerated the growth of digital marketing trends. The pandemic had made internet as the lifeline for most of the business. When the coronavirus had hit, digital transformation accelerated overnight. Also, the customer expectation had gone beyond limits. So, it was the duty of the business firms to ensure their customer's trust.

When people were forced to stay at home during the spread of coronavirus, they started doing things differently. When it had changed everything online the customer expectation had also changed. The customers expected more from brands and their online shopping. If the expectation of a particular person is not met by a particular brand, then that person can choose from many other different brands as the competition is fierce. It had placed a heavy burden on the shoulder on each business companies. They should offer good quality products and always keep their brand promise to their customers.

Social media platforms are no longer just a way to catch up with friends and share photos, but also a perfect place for brands and services to promote and sell goods. The 'Status of Social Commerce 2021' had reported that 97% of younger generation use social media as their top shopping choice. The 'Charged Retail' study reported that the online sale had increased by 10 billion dollars in July 2021 as the customers like to shop from home rather visiting a retail store even at the end of lockdown. The 'GlobalData research' reported that 90% of the top ten leading ecommerce sites like Amazon, Flipkart, Alibaba had increased their sales with double-digit revenue growth. Instagram had newly launched the shopping in reels experience and several shops. While Facebook and TikTok had hosted livestream shopping events.

The retail chain 'Primark' lost one billion dollars during the pandemic as they had not adopted the ecommerce model. While their customers were always welcoming an online shop, Primark stated that the cost of setting up an online store is very high. Many stores had faced closure as they were not ready to adopt the change.

CONCLUSION

In the post-covid world also it is the duty of the brands to keep their customers as the first priority. The competition is very fierce and difficult in today's world, in-order to keep up first in the race, the



companies should be always stay updated and active. Digital marketers are always aware that they should offer something other than text content. Memes, podcasts, video contents have gained more interest among people. Digital marketers also know that their customer preference always changes on what is happening in the world. So, it is the digital marketer's duty to satisfy the consumer needs and requirements.

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