



The Role of Digital Marketing in Enhancing International Business

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ABSTRACT

With the world shifting from analogue to digital, marketing activities are no exceptions to the transition. The increase in technology development has a great influence in digital marketing through social media and search engines. There is a large increase in internet use as such digital marketing has benefited more because it uses internet.

Digital marketing which is also known as Online marketing is the promotion of brand to connect with potential customers through the use of internet and other forms of digital communication which includes emails, social media, website-based adverts, text and multimedia messages.

Digital marketing refers to activities that a company uses in order to promote its products and services and improve its market share. The new technological trend has forced companies to change their marketing strategies from traditional to digital.

Smartphones and other digital devices make it easier for companies to market their products and services to their consumers. Studies have shown that most people prefer using their phones to online which has increased online shopping tremendously.

Key words: *Digital Marketing, Online Marketing, Social media, Search engines*

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing is one kind of marketing being broadly used to advertise goods and services to reach customers using digital channels. It extends beyond online marketing including channels that will not require the usage of Internet. It provides mobile phones (both SMS and MMS), social media marketing, banner advertising, search engine optimization marketing and several other types of digital media.

Through digital media, customers have access to information whenever and then for any place where they desire. With the use of digital media, consumers do not just depend on just what the company says regarding brand but additionally they are able to follow what the media, friends, peers, etc.

To look at the utilization of digital channels in marketing from a customer relationship viewpoint offers many assistances to a marketer. Brand communication could be persistent and personalized, and various options for a dialogue exist. The benefits of this include learning from and about customers, revealing certain requirements and interests, and being able to provide them with more personal service. From the customer context, the web has given chance to get up-to-date information with less effort to compare goods and services, and to get in touch with marketers. Moreover, in a very digital environment, customers increasingly use self-service and also have more choices to begin action (e.g. give feedback, check account balances, request and personalize marketing communication). From the customer context, perceived valuation on using digital channels and keep in touch with a marketer can come in several ways. It could be money, time, information, convenience, entertainment, assistance, social interactivity, prestige, or something else the customer enjoys. Building up a healthy relationship with a customer through digital platform can have a huge impact on business growth.

This report examines how marketers can use digital platforms to develop and strengthen customer relationships in automobile industry in Malawi.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the competitive markets, each firm tries to make the possible process to distribute its products and services, attracting new customers and maximize the best benefits from the market.

In accordance to this, the marketing process is considered one of the most important operations for any firm to compete on the market. According to Kotler (2010) each firm has to focus on four principal elements to make the marketing process more effective. These elements are product, price, promotion, and place.

In the past century, traditionally firms would do their marketing activities by using the available mediums such as newspaper, TV, radio, and field visits. These mediums were enough to cover a sample of consumers in the same country or regional place. Due to the role of globalization and the market

competition rising, the firms have started to convert from traditional to digital marketing. This is to deal with targeted consumers directly. Using digital mediums such as social media, websites, and emails technically allow the firms to engage with new markets.

The companies now have the necessary training to compete better both nationally and internationally thanks to digital marketing technologies. Utilizing the internet is one of the most crucial methods of communication that has allowed businesses to deliver and respect their customers by offering better goods and services (El-Gohary, 2012).

Digital marketing is a new industrial revolution in the 21st century, and with the globalization of the market, progress and development. Today, the Internet is an important commercial factor and has grown faster than any other communication technology and has transformed world markets more than any other media technology.

DEFINITION OF UNFAMILIAR TERMS

The word "digital marketing" refers to the integrated marketing services that are used to draw in, keep, and convert customers online.

Digital marketing makes use of a variety of platforms, including social media, Search Engine Optimization, content marketing, and online advertising, to link firms with consumers and track the effectiveness of marketing campaigns in real-time. 2014 (Lee Oden).

Digital marketing is a pretty broad notion. It combines all marketing techniques and uses electronic equipment to operate (i.e. online, on mobile and on-screen).

B2C Digital Marketing: B2C Digital Marketing refers to the abbreviation for "business to consumer." B2C digital marketing refers to the tactics and best practices marketers use to promote products and services to consumers.

There are different ways to advertise online such as content marketing, banner marketing, and blogging. Businesses use B2C digital marketing to reach their consumer audiences.

Brand Awareness: Brand awareness refers to the extent of consumer awareness (recall and recognition) of a brand and its related products.

Brand awareness of a brand and its related products are built through various forms of advertising. Brand awareness is essential in business marketing practices as it measures the ability of consumers to recall a brand. Brand awareness is a primary consideration in consumer behavior, advertising management, brand management, and strategy development. Consumers will not purchase unless they are aware of the product category and awareness of the brand within the category is present.

Brand Equity: Brand equity refers to the value of a brand name. The concept of brand equity is the better known the brand name, the more business the brand generates. A highly established brand name generates more business. Less recognized brand names generate less business. Consumers associate quality and brand. A recognized brand name tends to be a trusted name. With this concept, the equity is in the brand name.

Email Marketing: One of the oldest types of digital marketing, it is sending tailored or timed messages to the right audience. (KVRwebtech, 2015)

Social Media: It all comes down to managing a brand's reputation on various social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and others. Over the past few years, this kind has grown significantly in popularity, maturity, and complexity. (KVRwebtech, 2015)

Online Advertising: Contrast that with Pay Per Click (PPC), this entails the practice of placing advertisements on other websites. For instance, you may pay the proprietor of a well-known website to purchase a banner spot there. (KVRwebtech, 2015)

Text Messaging: In addition to the previously described online marketing elements, it is a common form of digital marketing. Particularly, the exponential global increase in smartphone use has increased reliance on them for rapid and reliable information. (KVRwebtech, 2015)

PPC (Pay per Click): Paid Search is a more popular name for it. Paid advertisements are often displayed throughout this process to the right of or above the so-called "organic" search results. The price will vary according to how competitive the term is that you're bidding on. (KVRwebtech, 2015)

Content Marketing: Content marketing refers to the creation and distribution of material online. For instance, content, blogs, videos, and social media posts. Content marketing is created to provide users with information, so it does not explicitly promote a brand.

Digital Marketing Campaigns: Digital marketing campaigns refer to online advertising. Digital marketing campaigns can include various types of advertising like PPC and content marketing. Marketers strategically plan marketing campaigns to engage with consumers, convert sales, drive traffic to websites, and increase revenue. Marketing campaigns are used to reach company/marketing goals and include one or more digital marketing channels for campaign success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Choua at all (2009), In recent years, businesses in various industries have used the Internet and Internet marketing to communicate with customers and stakeholders and generate money. Electronic commerce, goods, and services. In actuality, Internet marketing may be seen as a cutting-edge theory and a trade-like industry that involved the promotion of goods, services, information, and opinions via the Internet and other electronic media.

In order to achieve the objectives of contemporary marketing in electronic commerce, Internet marketing has been viewed as a key factor in the competitiveness of international players with regard to the impact of the Internet on business and the configuration of the foundation of the digital economy. Increased computing speed, quick information processing, improved search capabilities, elimination of pointless middlemen, and use of electronic work overshadow the exchange process, shorten transaction times, and raise transaction value.

E-commerce and marketing are becoming more valuable. In today's markets, the consumer is equated with an actual customer plus a virtual customer and Internet marketing on this axis, (El-Gohary, H. 2011).

The significance of online marketing Although there were numerous tools available at the outset of the Internet's commercialization, many of its essential business functions, including marketing, were mostly made up. But gradually, with the passage of time and various researches in this area, the capabilities and benefits of the Internet were genuinely identified. The benefits of internet marketing have been evaluated and categorized by various researchers. (Qiang and Chi, 2001).

The success of export marketing is greatly influenced by the Internet, one of today's most important phenomenon. The constraints to manufacturing and exporting enterprises employing this information technology phenomenon are also examined in this research in addition to the Internet's ninth roots in reducing marketing boundaries. This is accomplished by making use of relevant exporters, expertise, and research. After thoroughly examining the advantages of using the Internet, gathering and evaluating data, as well as identifying the obstacles to Internet use, we conclude that recommendations must be made. (Mathews, S., et al. 2015).

According to Jackson and DeCormier (1999) "they discovered that communication via email provides marketers with convenient communication with customers to build a strong relationship". Wreden (1999) defined email as the "killer Internet platform" due to the accuracy with which email can be easily tracked and targeted. Businesses use email as an invaluable tool because they can send large numbers of emails with low marketing costs, and feature increased response rates and customer loyalty.

Yang, Min, and Garza-Baker (2018) revealed that email marketing campaigns reflect on organizational performance and are critically reflected in areas like user registration form design and database quality as well as industrial areas. This study demonstrates the benefits and impacts of email 10 promotion and will reinforce structured findings to recognize the endless limits of mail marketing and digital advertising use.

Lohse, Bellman, and Johnson (2000) define email marketing as one of the initial forms of a digital marketing email as the most specialized method. Honda & Martin (2002) mentioned that Email addresses of the target audience can be directly acquired from the customers as marketing- permission or it Can be taken up and rented or purchased from the email address vendors (Honda & Martin, 2002).

Carlton (2009) Illustrate that the benefits of Email marketing include cheaper communication and time saving, it helps to build a strong relationship with customers because the campaign life cycle is short in other words, Email marketing provides the customers useful information and gets them immediate feedback about the marketing campaign effectiveness.

Al-Gohary (2009) also mentioned that email marketing is used for direct marketing for a commercial business communication to a group of individuals who use e-mail just like sharing a customer's information and providing personal information. "Personalized emails can be sent at an ideal time which is called email marketing campaign, and there is another form of email marketing called Email newsletters, it is an email communication sent out to the users to inform them of the latest news or updates about your services or product".

According to Verhoef (2003) said that "customer retention refers to the continuous contact between the customer and the from time to time. Company uses digital marketing to find out the traffic on their websites and the prospective business proposals. It also helps them advertise their products to get potential buyers".

Todor (2016) said that digital marketing is very cost-effective which mean, it is very cheap as compare to other marketing channels, for example, if the firm wants to sell a single product using traditional marketing, it will hire an employee as a marketing executive offering him a handsome salary. In digital marketing, the firm sells the product online. They simply create a campaign of google AdWords, and then they put a daily budget, they can advertise with even a 5\$ per day without any marketing executive, or any newspaper which is considerably expensive."

David C. Edelman (2010) mentions that when the business firm creates any product and displays it via digital channel, they are able to see and evaluate everything at the right time. Assume the user clicks on the advertisement or if he purchases something, the firm can see it instantly which is not possible in traditional marketing or other marketing channels. Besides, in digital marketing, the firm can track the evaluation of the traffic of websites, and the clients they receive. It also shows the time clients spent surfing on the websites blogs, and the most important thing is tracking the progress of sales instantly.

According to Gordon, at all (1998) marketing effectiveness refers to the quality of how marketers go to market to optimize their investment to achieve good short and long-term results related to Marketing ROI and Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI).

FJ Mulhern (2010) explained that in digital marketing with the online methods, firms can precisely target exactly whom they want to see their offer, their website or their business, when and where they want, also they can choose country or demographics. but in traditional marketing they can't target who is going to see your advertisements. For example, the billboard ads, it is impossible to know who is going to see it. In digital marketing firms have large consumers at a lesser price as compared to the traditional marketing.

They can reach thousands of people. It depends on how they create, manage and optimize their campaign, furthermore, using the online method firms can treat, pause or stop the campaigns whenever they want, from anywhere, without wasting money to get the results or to measure if it's going right or wrong, but anything that we do in traditional marketing, there is a huge delay in terms of time that makes it very costly."

KT Smith (2011) digital marketing can make programs and offers that can be personalized or customized depending on preferences and the response of the customers and Business profiles. To increase its worth advertisement campaigns become more targeted to maximize these three variables - ad relevance, privacy, and efficiency which can influence decisions and opinions to increase the number of customers, the average transaction size, and to increment the frequency of transactions per customer to generate more revenue."

Internet marketing capabilities increase the company's capability to create other inner ability among the company, that in turn have a positive effect on the international market growth of the company. A study of Peter et al. (2014) explained through the world with digital changing to an increasingly vital source of competitive benefit in marketing. The findings of research shown that filling talent gaps set the organizational design and executing actionable metrics were the larger development opportunities for firms among sectors.

The results indicated that relationship marketing affects both customer satisfaction and trust process. Customer satisfaction, independent variable, affected customer loyalty. Even car sales in Russia according to Gusev, et al (2018). needed a leeway for international market.

Afrina Yasmin et al. (2015) in their article has stated that marketers are faced with new challenges and opportunities within this digital age. Digital marketing is the utilization of electronic media by the marketers to promote the products or services into the market. The main objective of digital marketing is attracting customers and allowing them to interact with the brand through digital media.

This article focuses on the importance of digital marketing for both marketers and consumers. The article examined the effect of digital marketing on the firm's sales. Additionally, the differences between traditional marketing and digital marketing in this paper are presented. This study has described various forms of digital marketing, effectiveness of it and the impact it has on firm's sales.

Rajiv Kaushik (2016) in his article digital marketing is rising in India with fast pace. Many Indian companies are using digital marketing for competitive advantage. Success of marketing campaign cannot be solely achieved by digital marketing only.

Rather for success of any marketing campaign it should fully harness the capabilities of various marketing techniques available within both the traditional and modern marketing. Startups who use digital marketing many times got failed. This study shows precautions to be taken for effective implementation of digital marketing to reap tremendous potential to increase in sales.

Santanu, et al (2016) has explained in their article the world has transitioned into a digital environment. For today's businesses, it is imperative to have a website and use the web as a means to interact with their customers.

There are some successful traditional marketing strategies, particularly if you are reaching a largely local audience, but it is important to take advantage of digital marketing so as to keep up in today's world. Digital marketing is also known as Internet marketing, but their actual processes differ, as digital marketing is considered more targeted, measurable and interactive.

It includes Internet marketing techniques, such as search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM) and link building. It also extends to non-Internet channels that provide digital media, such as short messaging service (SMS), multimedia messaging service (MMS), call-back and on-hold mobile ring tones, e-books, optical disks and games. Digital marketing is a new end 21st century tool of marketing.

Yakup and Ibrahim (2016) this study tries to explain digital marketing periods and advantages, experienced transition and difference between traditional and digital marketing.

Abstract-Lately, with the information technology improvements and broad band internet service spreading, speed of access to shopping sites get high. Because of these changes, companies unavoidably entered to digital environment.

Thus, while communication rules change, field and definition of marketing changes too. With the development of IT technologies, traditional marketing methods leave sits place to digital day by day. Companies which follow technology can easily communicate with customers interactively while providing products or services.

Like in the traditional marketing, in digital marketing, building well communication with customers, deter mining their needs and requests are crucial. While companies using digital marketing make difference with dual communication, others who don't get involved in this race, become distanced from competition gradually.

The biggest advantage of digital marketing is reaching the target audience in right way with using social media and search engines.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a case study approach to investigate the current phenomenon in the organization. According to (Yin, 1994), a case study approach is an appropriate methodology when one wishes to answer the study's research question from the perspective of current practice, versus theoretical reasoning.

Mustaffa & Potter (2009), wrote that a case study can help the researcher gain in-depth knowledge and understanding of what is going on within an organization. According to Lockesh (1984), descriptive research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena and whenever possible to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered.

Questions about the causes of a phenomenon or why it happens are not addressed by descriptive research. Randomized and quasi-experimental studies are the best ways to find the answers to these types of issues. Yet, information from descriptive studies can be utilized to look at how different variables are correlated with one another. The results of correlational analyses might help separate variables that could be crucial in understanding a phenomenon from those that are not, even while they do not provide proof of causality. Descriptive research is so frequently used to develop hypotheses that need to be verified using more exacting methodologies.

To respond to the kinds of questions that drive descriptive research, a range of data collection techniques may be used either individually or in combination. Surveys, interviews, observations, case studies, and others are some of the most popular techniques.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Creswell (2012) defines a research design as a plan which exhibits the way data gathering shall be done, when it is gathered and where it is gathered. It is a roadmap for researching with ultimate control of various factors.

These kinds of factors are those that may influence the validity of findings. A research design is the determination of the overall ways to deal with a research problem (Kumar, 2010).

A research design also called a research strategy, is a plan to answer a set of questions McCombes (2019). It is a framework that includes the methods and procedures to collect, analyze, and interpret data. In other words, the research design describes how the researcher will investigate the central problem of the research and is, thus part of the [research proposal](#).

The design of this research influences the type of data to be gathered and, consequently, its results. Depending on the type, which we will explain below, research design also defines all other constituent parts of a study, such as variables, hypotheses, experiments, methodology, and statistical analysis (Creswell et al., 2018).

A research design strategically combines related parts of the study which are the methods of the research as well as the procedures for the collection and analysis of the information needed so that the research problem can be addressed effectively.

There are two approaches to research, known as, quantitative research approach and the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is concerned with the qualitative phenomenon, it is descriptive and aims to find out about things that can't be quantified like feelings and attitudes, whereas quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is an applicable phenomenon that can be expressed in terms of quantity. For this study, the researcher has chosen a quantitative approach that involves the use of descriptive statistics generated with frequency tables, charts, and graphs.

The purpose of quantitative research was to learn about a particular group of people, known as a sample population. Using scientific inquiry, quantitative research relies on data that are observed or measured to examine questions about the sample population.

The results of quantitative research specify an explanation into what is and are not important, or influencing, a particular population. Quantitative research also provides answers to questions about the frequency of a phenomenon, or the magnitude to which the phenomenon affects the sample.

ANALYSIS

Digital marketing channels such as search engines, emails, websites, social media are used to connect with current and prospective customers through the use of internet. Digital marketing helps to reach a larger audience and target prospects who are more likely to buy from the organization compared to the traditional marketing methods.

To evaluate the commercial success of the organizations on conventional sales through digital marketing.

It is believed that customers believe in the information provided to them through digital channels such as Facebook, twitter and LinkedIn pertain to products and services offered by the company.

Respondents also agreed that customers do receive special attention through social media interactions which is a form of digital marketing compared to the traditional marketing channels.

Digital marketing platforms also provides customers with alternative choices to the products and services being offered as they are able to compare the products and services in order to satisfy their needs.

Digital marketing channels makes it easier to collect orders from customers. With transparency in the product specifications and pricing, it is easy to develop customer loyalty with the use of digital marketing channels compared to the traditional channels of marketing.

To evaluate the audience reach out through digital marketing tools

Digital adverts reach out to a large number of audience compared to the traditional marketing campaigns which reach a limited number.

One of the major challenges of marketing is the geographical position of the customers. Reaching them all at once with traditional marketing channels is not possible, however with digital marketing geographical hassles are completely removed.

Digital marketing helps to make the advert contents available to the public at any time. Unlike the traditional marketing campaigns, one a marketing activity is done its done. Those who were not available are likely to miss out on the content. Digital marketing helps in getting the company's content go viral and increase the website traffic.

To establish customer engagement through digital marketing tools

Compared to the traditional way of marketing, digital marketing is said to be cheaper to conduct both locally and internationally. With technology it is easier now to run an advert across the world digitally than with traditional marketing channels.

The adverts on digital marketing platform goes beyond the targeted area as such increase customer base and reduce advertising costs for the company.

To ascertain cost effectiveness of digital marketing in an organization.

Customer data management is one of the essential element is customer relationship management at an organization. Digital marketing channels provides tools that help in recording customer data online.

The effectiveness of digital marketing is easily measured with real time results, as such the company is able to tell if the activities are bringing in desired results or not.

Competition is high on both local and international market; digital marketing channels helps companies to have an equal opportunity to show case their products and services to prospective customers are a reduced cost. It would be difficult for small businesses to conduct marketing activities at an international level compared to multinational companies, however with the world of internet around us, small businesses have the opportunity to use internet to advertise their products across the international markets.

MAJOR FINDINGS***Role of Digital Advertising in Profit Maximization***

With the quick extension of smartphones, marketing on mobile phones is the most contemporary method for data and information dispersal that is additionally the fundamental communication channel.

Smartphones have transformed into the principal part of our life that more than 90 percent of adults in India reliably include their cell phones in close proximity.

In today's time, having digital marketing ability to target mobile customers and getting ready for them towards achieving better improvement and faster augmentation is quite important.

Role of Digital Marketing in Targeting & Conversions

One motivation behind the role of digital in branding & marketing is that it has control over other marketing channels is the power of digital strategies to coordinate with exact target audiences and guarantee result-driven engagements. Digital Marketing guarantees the commitment that your customers want to get while associating with your business.

How you oversee such commitment will decide the success of your marketing strategy. Facilitating your customers with genuine commitment can give you learn what your prospects require. This will give you a chance to build up the required trust with your audiences when your business begins to develop.

The next role of digital marketing in branding is that it plays along with immaculate targeting is conversions. Organizations measure achievement by the rate of traffic getting converted users, subscribers, leads, endorsers, arrangements, and deals.

Digital Marketing is More Cost-Effective Than the Traditional Marketing

Independent ventures without any advantages and capitalization locate a predominant and monetarily wise advertising channel in digital advertising. Around 98% of the respondents on the cost effectiveness of Digital Marketing claim that the it is considerably cost saving to run advert via the digital methods of marketing and advertising than using the traditional marketing campaigns.

Digital Marketing Gives Fair Opportunities to All Kinds of Businesses

All types of businesses who choose to use online branding and advertising have an equal opportunity thanks to digital marketing. It is not like before, when the majority of large corporations and multinationals were the only ones who understood digital marketing.

At the moment, both well-established and newer small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can benefit from and use digital marketing. Small and medium-sized enterprises and new companies now have the advantage of performing online lead generation and advertising. The ability of digital media marketing to engage with various clients without the use of call centers is by far its most obvious benefit when considering its function.

Comparatively speaking, digital marketing's lead generation and conversion rates are much better than other methods.

SUGGESTIONS

For a business to improve on its digital marketing it has to consider the following factors but not limited to;

Leverage Cross-Channel Marketing

As consumers spend more time online, online marketing has increased. We're all getting more display ads, ads popping up in our social feeds and cluttered email inboxes. Add direct mail marketing to your marketing strategy and break through the clutter. Leverage the interest you've generated through your digital channels by retargeting through direct mail, and drive response.

Increasing the Site's Speed

Despite common misconceptions, site speed is relevant to more than just SEO — it's also directly related to conversion rates (CVR). Improving site speed will surely improve CVR across channels, the better it is, the lower your cost per click. Site speed is important for all digital marketing, but of paramount importance for mobile.

Updating the Website Regularly

One-way businesses can improve their digital marketing is by updating their website. Ensuring the website is mobile-friendly and regularly updating the landing page with up-to-date information can help drive more conversions and sales online. If a new car is released, they should include all the improved features for prospective customers to appreciate.

User Behavior Analysis

A user-centric marketing approach is a way for long-term success. It requires analyzing user behavior on your website and specific landing pages. Tools like Google Analytics and Crazy Egg can provide actual data on important user behavior metrics, like session duration, site-wide navigation, events, actions, etc. You can use this data to customize your campaigns for improved results.

Focus on Conversational Marketing

Facebook Messenger chatbots allow brands to build meaningful engagements with their consumers and market to them on a one-on-one level. The flexibility of chatbots allows you to personify your brand and lets users interact with your brand in a fun, easy and useful manner. Chatbots will enable you to give and gather information, support inquiries, book appointments, buy products, and as a gift guide.

Share Your Social Responsibilities

Talking about what you are doing for the community on social media is a great way to grow your social content. If you're delivering meals to a local hospital or shelter, let your customers know that you willingly give back what you earn to the benefit of the community.

CONCLUSION

Both B2B and B2C organizations can profitably use a variety of digital marketing channels. To reach their marketing objectives, businesses must put the newest digital marketing strategies that work for their type of organization into practice.

Digital marketing techniques including SEO, paid advertising, SEM, content marketing, e-commerce SEO, automation marketing, social media marketing, etc. have evolved into standard procedures for B2B and B2C organizations. The simplicity with which outcomes can be tracked and observed in digital marketing is one of the benefits of conducting your marketing via digital means.

Online marketing doesn't require expensive market research because it makes it simple to track client response rates, evaluate the success of your advertising goals, and more. The lead generations and conversions related to Digital Marketing is comparatively way better than different other methods of marketing and advertising

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