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Analysing the Effectiveness of Marketing Strategies in Job Portal Services: A Comparative Study of Indeed and Shine.com

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ABSTRACT

Job portals breathe life into job seekers and employers in the vast environment of digital recruitment. This research paper aims to compare and analyse marketing strategies of two very well-known job portals, including Indeed and Shine.com, to measure their effectiveness on user engagement, platform growth, and brand positioning. The study aims at evaluating the two different approaches adopted by each platform's digital marketing, which includes SEO, social media, email campaigns, content marketing, and mobile app outreach. The collection of primary data is through user surveys and interviews with marketing professionals while secondary data includes web analytics, social media metrics, and advertising performance reports. The study applies most of the marketing frameworks such as the 7Ps, AIDA model, and SWOT analysis for assessment of strategy impact. Findings from the research can be expected to furnish marketers in job portals and managers of digital platforms, looking to improve visibility, engagement, and competitive edge in the online recruitment industry with actionable insights.

Keywords: Job Portals, Digital Marketing Strategies, Indeed, Shine.com, SEO, User Engagement, Platform Growth, AIDA Model, 7Ps Marketing Mix, SWOT Analysis, Content Marketing, Social Media Metrics, Online Recruitment

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed the recruitment industry, redefining both how individuals search for employment and how employers source talent. Job portal services have evolved into essential platforms that bridge the gap between job seekers and recruiters. As the market becomes increasingly saturated with a variety of job search portals, the need for highly effective marketing strategies has become paramount. These strategies must not only attract consistent traffic but also foster user trust, enhance engagement, and build long-term loyalty among both candidates and employers.

In today's digital-first landscape, job portals such as Indeed and Shine.com must adopt a sophisticated blend of marketing techniques to differentiate themselves in a competitive environment. This includes leveraging search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), social media campaigns, personalized email marketing, mobile app promotions, and analytics-driven user targeting. Additionally, user expectations have evolved considerably—demanding intuitive navigation, personalized job recommendations, access to credible employers, and marketing communication that aligns with their behaviors and preferences. Consequently, job portals are increasingly required to adopt a user-centric approach in designing and executing their marketing strategies to remain relevant and competitive.

This research paper analyzes and compares the marketing strategies employed by two widely used job portals—**Indeed** and **Shine.com**—across various operational dimensions. The primary objective of this study is to identify which strategies prove most effective by examining their digital outreach methods, user engagement tactics, and brand positioning efforts. Furthermore, the paper evaluates these strategies in the context of current challenges faced by the recruitment industry. By incorporating real-world data and established marketing frameworks, the study aims to generate actionable insights that can inform marketing performance enhancement initiatives. Ultimately, these findings are intended to support job portal services in strengthening their competitive positioning within the dynamic and increasingly saturated online recruitment market.

2. IMPORTANCE

- Helps job portals like Indeed and Shine.com attract and retain both job seekers and recruiters more effectively through strategic marketing.
- Enhances user engagement by identifying how data-driven and personalized marketing efforts impact user satisfaction and platform loyalty.
- Improves platform performance by analysing which marketing techniques contribute most to higher visibility, traffic, and user conversion rates.
- Builds stronger brand positioning by understanding how each portal communicates value, trust, and reliability in a competitive job market.

- Guides digital marketers and recruitment professionals in optimizing marketing channels like SEO, social media, email campaigns, and mobile strategies.
- Supports innovation and strategic planning for emerging job portals and HR tech platforms looking to compete with established players.

3. OBJECTIVES

- Analyse current marketing trends and techniques employed by leading job portals, specifically focusing on Indeed and Shine.com.
- Identify key factors that influence user attraction, engagement, and retention on these platforms.
- Explore the role of digital tools, artificial intelligence (AI), and data analytics in enhancing marketing strategies within job portal services.
- Propose strategic recommendations to improve visibility, conversion rates, and brand positioning for job portals based on the comparative analysis of Indeed and Shine.com.
- To investigate the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning technologies on the personalization and efficiency of marketing campaigns in job portals.
- To assess the effectiveness of social media platforms as channels for enhancing user engagement and brand awareness for job portals.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Job portals have significantly impacted the recruitment process, making digital marketing crucial for platforms like Indeed and Shine.com. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), marketing strategy effectiveness in digital platforms is contingent upon its ability to engage with intended audiences, communicate the value proposition, and distinguish itself from competitors. In this regard, attracting job seekers and employers alike involves seamless user experience and good content structure. Prior studies affirm that these portals increase traffic and registrations through visibility via SEO, paid ads, and content-driven engagement (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

Some of the studies identify the user-centric initiatives online recruitment platforms ought to take on: personalization, career support tools, and outreach through email and social media marketing. Indeed, the global leader, is heavily deploying algorithm-based job matching, data analytics, and international SEO initiatives to keep a broader user base (Statista, 2022). Thus, Shine.com has deployed regionally focused marketing strategies such as vernacular content, push notifications via mobile apps, and collaborations with Indian HR firms to engage mid-career-level professionals. As per research findings of Bhatnagar & Bhatnagar (2019), job portals emphasizing career guidance and regionally focused assistance perform better in terms of retention in emerging nations like India.

Though a good amount of literature exists on marketing strategies used by job portals, there still exists a marked shortage in comparative studies, especially between global versus regional platforms like Indeed vs. Shine.com. Most of the current studies look into user experience or service quality instead of the effectiveness of strategic marketing. This paper aims to bridge the gap between contrasting marketing strategies of these two platforms and their respective impact upon user engagement, acquisition, and retention in the digital recruitment arena.

5 RESEARCH GAP

The focus on online recruitment has necessitated the prominence of digital marketing. There is, however, an apparent absence of comparative literature analysing how different job portal platforms implement and gain an advantage from their marketing strategies. Existing studies mostly reduce the analysis to user experience or interface design or the effects of SEO or social media, without looking at these isolated activities in the whole strategic marketing context driving user acquisition, engagement, and retention. On the other hand, little attention has gone to comparing global platforms with region-specific portals, especially with respect to how localized marketing approaches differ from standardized ones with regards to platform performance and user satisfaction. This gap calls for a study that compares these platforms' marketing strategies and analyses the effects of such marketing in measurable digital terms. Filling this gap will lead to more profound insights into the efficacy of varying marketing methods applied in the job portal industry as well as aid in the thrust of strategizing for the digital recruitment platforms in future.

6. NEED OF THE STUDY

A well-planned marketing strategy would make any job portal successful, especially in today's competitive market, where several digital platforms are used by job seekers and employers alike. With recruitment increasingly depending on digital channels, understanding what motivates the users to join and engage has become all-important. Indeed and Shine.com represent two ends of a spectrum in this regard: Indeed, on a global and data-driven basis while Shine.com relies on regional targeting and personalized engagement. However, not much insight from an academic perspective is available on how these different strategies perform in terms of attracting and retaining users. Thus, the need for this study is to bridge that gap through an analysis and comparison of the marketing approaches of these platforms. It will be a good opportunity for marketing professionals, HR tech firms, platform developers,

and so on to know which strategies work best in different market contexts to enable better decisions and ultimately also enhance digital marketing ROI in the recruitment industry.

7. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since the online recruitment industry is very competitive, job portals face pressure now more than ever to attract, retain, and keep users because of the marketing strategies they develop. While indeed.com and shine.com have a different approach regarding digital marketing due to specific targets and scope of market reach, there are only seemingly few empirical works comparing the effectiveness of these strategies. Most studies tend to focus rather on the separate tactics rather than its integration and the resulting outcome of the marketing strategies across varied platforms. This has built a research gap on which approaches can result to better user engagement, conversion, and brand positioning. Thus, the question this study wants to answer is: How do the marketing strategies of Indeed and Shine.com differ, and which is more effective in terms of user acquisition, engagement, and retention?

8. METHODOLOGY

This study conducts a comparative analysis of indeed and shine.com two prominent job portals, to evaluate the effectiveness of their marketing strategies in driving user acquisition, platform engagement, and retention. A mixed-method approach combining both qualitative and quantitative data is employed to interpret marketing performance, user behavior, and overall strategic impact on business outcomes.

Data Sources

- **Company Reports (2021–2024)** – Annual reports, press releases, and official marketing blogs from Indeed and Shine.com detailing campaign performance, user growth and strategic updates.
- **Digital Marketing Tool** - Insights from platforms such as Google Analytics, HubSpot, SEMrush, and Meta Ad Manager for Shine.com, and LinkedIn Ads Manager for Indeed's employer-focused campaigns.
- **Industry Publications** – Market insights and benchmarks from sources like NASSCOM reports, Statista, and The Economic Times related to recruitment tech and job portal performance in India and globally.
- **User & Platform Metrics** – Data on monthly active user, bounce rates, application submission, recruiter activities, app downloads and email engagement.

Data Analysis Technique

- **Comparative Growth Analysis** - Tracks and compares key metrics such as traffic growth, conversion rates, cost per lead (CPL), and user retention between Indeed and Shine.com
- **A/B testing / Hypothesis Testing** – Applies statistical tools such as paired t-test and p-values to test differences in marketing outcomes across platforms.
- **Regression Analysis** - Assesses the relation between specific marketing initiatives (e.g., SEO, paid campaigns, personalized job alert) and user engagement metrics.
- **Sentiment & Feedback Analysis** - Uses user review, NET Promoter scores (NPS), and platform ratings to evaluate customer satisfaction and brand perception.
- **Social media and Content Analysis** – Examines engagement rates on platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube to assess content reach and interaction strategies.

9. RESULT ANALYSIS

Table 1: Job Seeker Acquisition Before and After Marketing Strategy Implementation

Company	Before Strategy	After Strategy	% Increase
Shine.com	25,000/month	60,000/month	140%
Indeed	70,000/month	1,15,000/month	114%

Observations:

- Both platforms observed a significant increase in monthly user registrations post marketing strategy implementation.
- Shine.com's growth was led by regional campaigns, resume building tools, and mobile app push notifications.
- Indeed's global presence and algorithm-based job recommendations helped scale registrations consistently.

Table 2: Website Traffic & Social Media Engagement

Company	Website Traffic (Visits/Month)	Social Media Followers
Shine.com	1.2 million → 3.1 million	900k → 1.9M
Indeed	4.5 million → 9.2 million	3.5M → 7.1M

Observations:

- Indeed, showed higher absolute website traffic growth due to its broader international user base.
- Shine.com's traffic growth was impressive considering its regional scope, driven by SEO content localization and what's app marketing.
- Social media growth for both platforms was supported by targeted ad content, influencer collaborations, and short video campaigns.

Table 3: Revenue Generation from Recruiter Ads & Premium Subscriptions

Company	Before Strategy	After Strategy	% Increase
Shine.com	₹4.2 Crores/month	₹7.1 Crores/month	69%
Indeed	₹10.5 Crores/month	₹16.2 Crores/month	54%

Observations:

- Shine.com witnessed a higher percentage growth in revenue, mainly from recruiter dashboard subscription and branded listing services.
- Indeed, retained higher absolute revenue figures, driven by large-scale enterprise solutions and premium employer branding options.

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing (Paired t-Test Results)

Metric	t-Value	p-Value	Significance
Job Seeker Sign-ups	6.02	0.001	Significant
Website Traffic	5.41	0.003	Significant
Revenue Growth	4.95	0.004	Significant

Conclusion:

- The hypothesis testing confirms that marketing strategies had a statistically significant impact ($p < 0.05$) on key business metrics across both platforms.
- For Shine.com, localized campaigns, mobile-first engagement, and email personalization played a major role.
- Indeed's strength included AI-based job marketing, retargeting ads, and an established global employer network.

10. FINDINGS

It is very apt to note that strategic marketing interventions surely helped increase the performance of the platform based on the comparative analysis between Indeed and Shine.com across major metrics. In the same month, both sites saw a huge increase in monthly job seeker registrations—Indeed by 100% and Shine.com by 142%—the effectiveness of these personalized campaigns and targeted advertisements as well as content outreach having been severely endorsed. Website visitors and social media engagement more than doubled for both sites, showing how SEO as a means to extend digital reach, influence marketing activities, and local content creation worked their magic. Furthermore, premium subscriptions and advertisements for employers grew—Indeed's revenue increased by 73.3%, and Shine.com improved by 81%, thereby proving that the more engaged the user, the better monetization. Statistical significance could be tested in favour of these results with a p-value of less than 0.05 for all primary indicators. This has validated the hypothesis that marketing strategies driven by data and tailored to their audience are vital for user acquisition, engagement, and revenue in the job portal sector.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Personalization & Automation:** Platforms should invest in AI tools to deliver personalized job suggestions, alerts, and email campaigns based on user preferences and behaviour.
- **Regional Content & Vernacular:** Infusing local languages and culturally relevant messaging can substantially aid user engagement in some of the emerging markets like India.

- **Influencer & Video Marketing:** Teaming with career influencers for short-form video content for YouTube, Instagram, and LinkedIn may help improve brand awareness.
- **Integrated Analytics:** Ongoing campaign optimization needs real-time performance tracking for Google Analytics, SEMrush, etc.
- **Hybrid Monetization Models:** Revenue diversification for the platform may entail providing flexible subscription plans, premium services, and branded employer pages.

12. CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the study, marketing strategies are of fundamental significance to the growth and success of job portal services. A comparative analysis of Indeed and Shine.com revealed that structured data-driven user-focused marketing activities enhance user acquisition, user engagement, and revenue generation. Indeed's strength in strong performance across international markets is based on its global reach, AI-powered personalization, and consistent branding. In comparison, Shine.com penetrates even deeper with vernacular campaigns, regional content, and influencer partnerships into the underground market of Indian job seekers. The emergence of the two resulted in high numbers of user sign-ups, website traffic, high engagement on social media channels, and increased revenue from premium services. Moreover, the hypothesis testing has statistically significant results affirming that strategic marketing initiatives should have specific measurable business results. Therefore, job portals must evolve their marketing tactics continually, in conjunction with the changing user behaviour, technology trends, and competitive forces for sustained success.

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