



# The Impact of Social Media Advertising on the Buying Behaviour of Four-Wheelers

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## ABSTRACT :

This research examines the effect of social media promotion on purchasing behavior among consumers in the four-wheeler car market. With the acceleration in online growth, social media is now a crucial medium for auto brands to interact with potential buyers. The research examines how different aspects of social media promotion—visuals, influencer sponsorships, sponsored campaigns, and user interaction—impact consumer sentiments, brand awareness, and finally, purchase decisions. Information was gathered using surveys and interviews with potential automobile consumers and examined to determine patterns and correlations. The results indicate that social media marketing has a considerable impact on consumer awareness and choice, being a significant factor in the decision-making process. The research concludes by making suggestions for automobile marketers to maximise their social media strategies to efficiently influence consumer behaviour.

In the modern digital age, social media is not only for communicating with friends—it's now a strong means by which car manufacturers can reach and influence potential consumers. This study examines how social media advertisements influence the purchasing behaviours of individuals interested in four-wheelers. It examines how aspects such as compelling images, celebrity or influencer endorsements, reviews from customers, and targeted ads influence consumer decision-making. In its report, the study showcases through actual car buyer surveys and interviews how social media websites—most importantly, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube—are critical in driving interest, trust, and ultimately, purchase intent. The research provides insights on what works and what doesn't so that car brands can upgrade their digital marketing skills and get closer to today's tech-loving crowd.

Social media has been a game-changer for the automobile sector, particularly in terms of driving purchasing decisions. This study examines how social media marketing influences the thought process, research, and decision-making while purchasing a four-wheeler. From sponsored content and influencer ratings to customer reviews and promotional offers, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube influence opinions and generate interest in automobile brands. By gathering data from web surveys and consumer interviews, this research determines what kinds of social media approaches are most effective at causing engagement and driving sales. The study concludes that a carefully composed social media presence not only raises awareness but also has a direct impact on consumer trust, preference, and end-purchase decisions.

## Introduction

During the age of digital revolution, the emergence of social media has revolutionized the dynamics between consumers and brands, particularly in industries with high involvement like the automotive sector. With Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter becoming embedded in day-to-day activities, consumers are no longer mere recipients of messages—they are now active contributors, participating in activities associated with brands, offering views, and shaping others' opinions. Consequently, old advertising techniques are being fast replaced or supplemented by social media campaigns that are more dynamic, targeted, and interactive.

The vehicle industry, more so the four-wheeler category, has seen a significant change in marketing approaches to suit this digital transformation. Automobile companies and car dealerships now use social media networks to introduce new models, conduct promotional offers, post customer feedback, and engage influencers to establish brand image and trust. These platforms offer not only massive reach but also the ability to hone in on specific demographics, interests, and buyer stages, making them powerful tools in influencing consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions.

This study seeks to examine the impact of social media advertising on consumers' buying behavior for four-wheelers. It investigates the role of social media factors such as visual content, consumer interaction, online reviews, and influencer campaigns in shaping brand awareness, consumer trust, and ultimate purchase intention. By recognizing these trends, the study hopes to contribute meaningful insights into how marketers in the auto industry can create more efficient social media strategies in line with changing consumer needs

In addition, the research investigates how income level, age, and online behavior influence the effectiveness of social media marketing among various consumer segments. As competition in the auto industry increases, those brands that can successfully leverage the power of digital platforms will be more likely to gain notice, generate engagement, and turn prospects into loyal customers. This study thus adds to the expanding pool of information on the contribution of digital marketing towards molding contemporary consumer behavior in the motor vehicle sector.

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## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the total effect of social media advertisement on consumer buying habits in the four-wheeler vehicle sector.
- To determine the major components of social media advertising (like graphics, content, influencers, and engagement) affecting consumer perception and purchase decisions.
- To study how social media sites facilitate the creation of brand awareness, trust, and customer interest for four-wheeler vehicles.
- To assess the impact of targeted and customized ads on shaping consumer preferences and buying intention.
- To examine the impact of demographic characteristics (age, gender, income, and social media use) on the consumer reaction to social media advertising.
- To gain insight into the influence of peer influence, user reviews, and consumer-generated content on shaping consumer confidence and decision-making.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the past few years, the impact of social media on consumer behaviour has drawn considerable interest among marketers and researchers. Many studies have also brought attention to the increasing role of online media in influencing consumer choices, especially in high-involvement product categories like cars. Social media websites provide a distinct area where consumers search for information actively, interact with brands, and offer feedback, and thus are very important in the pre-purchase and decision phases of the buying process.

Zaiden, N.A., Muda, M., & Hashim, N.H. (2021): This study examined how customer brand engagement on social media influences brand loyalty among Malaysian local car brands. It found a significant positive relationship, suggesting that active online interactions enhance consumer loyalty.

Kumar, A. & Raju, K.V. (2013): Consumer behaviors in the Indian automotive industry were researched in the study, and it was concluded that social media advertisements greatly impact brand switching and ultimate buying decisions

Social media, as a hybrid component of the promotion mix, according to Mangold and Faulds (2009), enables companies to communicate with customers and customers to communicate with each other. Two-way communication is instrumental in establishing trust and brand sincerity, which are essential when buying a four-wheeler, usually a high-investment and emotionally driven choice. Moreover, research by Kotler & Keller (2016) highlights how consumer behavior nowadays is increasingly determined by digital touchpoints, and brands need to shift their tactics accordingly to gain market competitiveness.

A study by Duffett (2015) determined that social media advertising, where strategically executed, directly influences purchase intention among consumers, particularly those from younger ages. Visual aesthetic, interactive information, and celebrity endorsements play pivotal roles in accelerating consumer engagement. In the same vein, research by Shareef et al. (2019) established that advertisements that are tailored according to the consumer using personalization tools on sites such as Facebook and Instagram prove more effective at changing customers' attitudes and boosting conversions. The sites enable motor companies to pre-target individuals based on likes, behaviour, and interests, enhancing the strength and effectiveness of promotional messages.

Within the automobile marketing arena, social media advertising is effective in using immersive storytelling, launch promotions, test-drive initiatives, and consumer-generated content that all play important roles in shaping consumer decision-making. According to a study conducted by Jothi and Nonlamellar (2019), automobile consumers would be more willing to consider purchasing from a company that has a vibrant and lively social media presence. In addition, peer reviews and online reviews further shape consumer confidence, according to Cheung & Thadani (2012), who stated that e-word-of-mouth plays a very important role in influencing purchase choices in the current digital era.

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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### *4.1 Research Design*

This research uses a mixed-method approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods to effectively investigate the effects of social media marketing on four-wheelers' buying behaviors. The aim is to analyze consumer attitudes, decision-making, and the effects of online marketing techniques in the auto industry. To do this, a systematic review methodology is used to pool available literature, augmented by primary data collection to gain an understanding of real-world consumer behavior. The systematic review provides a rigorous and systematic analysis of previous studies by systematically searching, selecting, and appraising relevant literature to generate evidence-based information on the research question. The search strategy is to visit scholarly databases like Google Scholar, utilizing keywords such as "social media advertising," "automotive purchasing behaviour," and "consumer decision-making in four-wheelers." The inclusion criteria for the review are peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings in the English language dealing with the impact of social media marketing on the purchase decision of automobiles. Studies that are not related to the effect of social media on four-wheeler buying behaviour, and also non-peer-reviewed resources.

### *4.2 Data Collection Methods*

#### **a. Primary Data**

Primary data is gathered using a systematic, Google Form-based questionnaire for people who use social media websites and have bought or are planning to buy four-wheelers. The questionnaire comprises closed-ended and Likert-scale questions to provide quantifiable information on the frequency of social media usage, social media platforms of preference (e.g., Instagram, YouTube, Facebook), the impact of social media advertising, influencer sponsorships, and online reviews, and those influencing trust and buying decisions. The population of interest is working professionals, students, and digital consumers in the age group of 18–45 years, randomly selected using convenience sampling to facilitate effective data collection. The questionnaire is sent out through social networking sites and instant messaging apps to achieve a representative sample of respondents so that the research can obtain realistic information about how social media advertising influences their automobile buying behavior.

#### **b. Secondary Data**

Secondary data is obtained from reputable academic and industry publications to offer a solid theoretical and contextual basis for the research. These cover peer-reviewed research publications and marketing journals, as well as industry reports from reputable bodies. Moreover, information from articles and research papers of authors about understanding the influence of social media advertising while buying four-wheelers is used to bring in the latest trends and industry experts' views on the role of social media in the automobile sector. Secondary sources are used to authenticate primary findings, recognize research gaps in what has already been done, and provide a larger context of market forces and customer trends in the four-wheeler market.

### *4.3 Ethical Considerations*

The study follows rigorous ethical standards to safeguard participants' rights and the validity of the study. Participants are given adequate information regarding the study's purpose, procedures, and rights prior to participation. Informed consent is sought from all respondents to the survey, with a focus on voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any point without penalty. To maintain anonymity, personal identifiers are stripped from the data, and pseudonyms are employed in analysis and reporting. Data is stored securely to preclude unauthorized access, as stipulated by the applicable data protection policy. Confidentiality is maintained through the presentation of results in aggregate form to prohibit the identification of individual participants. These ethical steps seek to preserve trust and transparency while providing valuable contributions to understanding the impact of social media advertising on four-wheeler buying behavior, which is useful for marketers, automotive companies, and researchers.

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## EVOLUTION OF CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR (FOUR-WHEELERS) AFTER THE RISE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

The transition in customer behavior in the four-wheeler segment has also been heavily influenced by the growth of digital platforms, particularly social media. As internet usage and technology increased, customers started increasing their dependency on digital touchpoints for research, reviews, comparison, and decision-making. This development has impacted the way automobile brands communicate, market, and form bonds with prospective buyers. The subsequent stages depict how consumer purchasing habits changed along with strategic adjustments in social media marketing in the automobile industry.

**Phase 1: Digital Discovery (Early 1990s - Early 2000s)**

## Consumer Behaviour:

- Internet use by car buyers was mainly for fundamental research, i.e., looking up manufacturer sites or auto blogs.
- Online car buying was not trusted because people were afraid of security issues and there wasn't enough online car information.
- People continued visiting showrooms but became interested in digital catalogues.

## Business Strategies:

- Automotive brands launched simple websites to provide specs and contact info.
- Early SEO strategies were employed to show up in search engines when customers looked for cars.
- Offline advertising was the main focus, with digital as an add-on.

**Phase 2: E-Commerce Growth & Early social media (Early 2000s – Mid-2010s)**

## Consumer Behaviour:

- Increased reliance on online sources made customers use online reviews and ratings to make assessments about cars.
- Forums, initial YouTube car reviews, and sites such as Facebook and Twitter guided opinions.
- Customers started comparing features, prices, and brands on the internet before they reached dealerships.

## Business Strategies:

- Automobile companies began interacting on social media with product releases, photos, and interactive updates.
- YouTube videos and Facebook Pages were used as a means to present new models and customer reviews.
- Online campaigns reach audiences based on interest, behaviour, and location.

**Phase 3: Social and Mobile Supremacy (Mid-2010s - Early 2020s)**

## Consumer Behaviour:

- Buyers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, embraced a mobile-first culture, researching and even booking test drives through smartphones.
- Influencer and peer ratings on sites like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook heavily impacted automobile choices.
- Consumers demanded customised ads and instant feedback on questions posted on social sites.

## Business Strategies:

- Automobile companies started collaborating with auto influencers and placing paid adverts to reach special buyer groups.
- Instagram Stories, YouTube car vlogs, and Facebook Live launches became mainstream.
- Chatbots and mobile apps were launched to aid in vehicle discovery and customer support.

**Phase 4: Immersive and Autonomous Commerce (Early 2020s - Current, 2025)**

## Consumer Behaviour:

- AI-based tools (e.g., virtual assistants or chatbot advisors) are used by car buyers to compare cars, receive immediate suggestions, and arrange for test drives.
- AR/VR walkthroughs enable users to explore car interiors, colours, and functionalities in a virtual environment before heading to a showroom.
- Customers expect openness, quickness, and ethical brand values such as sustainability and design innovations in automobiles.

## Business Strategies:

- Brands use AI-driven ads to deliver hyper-personalised social content based on user behaviour and preferences.
- AR car demos, virtual showrooms, and interactive 360° tours are being shared on social media to reach tech-conscious consumers.
- Companies concentrate on real-time interaction, rapid response systems, and hassle-free booking facilities directly through platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp.

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**RESULT AND DISCUSSION****a) Social Media Advertising Influence on Buying Decisions**

A majority of the respondents admitted that social media advertisements played an important part in their awareness and consideration phase while purchasing a four-wheeler. Websites like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook became powerful sources for car content. Video reviews, reels, influencer promotions, and sponsored content from car brands made a strong impact on consumer minds.

The respondents indicated that they frequently compared cars, viewed test drive videos, and scanned user-generated social media postings prior to visiting showrooms. This serves to indicate how the use of social media closes the gap in information, particularly among tech-savvy and young users who are likely to do research digitally prior to physical interaction with the product.

### b) Key Factors Driving Engagement with Automotive Ads

The three most significant drivers of engagement were:

- Visual Appeal: Good-quality images and videos of cars garnered more interest.
- Influencer Endorsements: Reliable auto vloggers or influencers had a strong influence on consumer interest.
- Interactive Content: Polls, stories, Q&A sessions, and live product demonstrations generated deeper engagement.

Consumers enjoyed content that offered real-world usage, fuel efficiency, and model comparisons, reflecting a strong preference for informative and relatable ads over purely promotional ones.

### c) Demographic Insights

The findings also revealed demographic differences:

- Youth consumers (18–35 years) were significantly impacted by social media advertisements, especially YouTube and Instagram.
- Middle-class populations were price-conscious but were enthusiastically active with deals and EMI promotions on sites such as Facebook.
- Urban consumers were largely dependent on social media ratings and influencer views, while rural/semi-urban consumers still regarded word-of-mouth, although digital influence was increasing.

### d) Challenges in Social Media Advertising Effectiveness

Although most respondents said social media advertising had an impact on their choices, some issues were raised:

- Information Overload: Advert density was so high that it caused confusion or loss of interest.
- Suspicion of Sponsored Content: A few users were distrustful of paid influencers or overly produced content.
- Privacy Issues: Targeted advertisements made some users uneasy about how their information was being used.

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## 7. CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchasing behavior in the four-wheeler automobile industry. As digital technologies become more pervasive in daily life, social media sites have become central to communication, commerce, and consumer choice. The research examined some factors behind consumer reactions to online ads, such as engagement, trust, quality of content, presence of influencers, and perceived brand worth.

The main study, which gathered feedback from 203 participants using a systematic Google Forms survey, generated meaningful findings on the influence of social media platforms on consumer attitudes and behaviors. The research indicates that social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube exert great influence and reach in shaping automotive buying decisions. Visuals, influencer opinions, and interactive advertisements were found to improve consumer awareness, preference formation, and ultimately purchase intention.

Additionally, research highlighted demographic differences, reporting younger consumers (mostly in the age group 18–35 years) more often using and getting influenced through social media advertising materials. Personalized ads, company narratives, as well as users' creation stories, further took center stage for building trust between the brands and the people while establishing an emotional connection. Strategically, this dissertation emphasizes the need for automotive marketers to invest in data-driven and consumer-focused social media advertising strategies. Companies should pay attention to emphasizing not only the features of their products but also fostering community, trust, and long-term relationships through real and engaging content.

In the future, this dissertation opens the door to further research on the long-term impact of new social media technologies, like immersive virtual showrooms or AI-powered personalized advertisements, on automotive purchase behavior. The results have important practical implications for automotive marketers and manufacturers, calling them to sharpen their digital efforts to match changing consumer expectations. Finally, this research reiterates the revolutionary power of social media marketing in changing the car market, providing a base for further investigation and innovation in building significant relationships between consumers and brands in an increasingly interconnected world.

The research findings confirm that social media websites like YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook are not merely places where people meet socially anymore; they have turned into effective brand communication tools, consumer engagement venues, and purchasing stimuli. The research indicated that consumers often depended on online content, like car reviews, celebrity endorsements, and user-generated word-of-mouth testimony, to shape opinions, compare vehicles, and seal purchasing decisions. These websites are not just sources of information but also environments that give emotional and social validation, especially via interactive and visual content.

Finally, the study affirms that social media advertising is an important factor in molding the contemporary consumer's purchasing process for four-wheelers. Its capacity to inform, influence, and persuade—when done strategically—can greatly improve brand visibility and sales conversion. Yet ad fatigue, information overload, and data privacy issues need to be addressed with care. As digital ecosystems keep on changing, so do the strategies used by auto brands to stay relevant, responsive, and resilient in competitive market conditions.