



## AN ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR PATTERN IN KFC MARKETING STRATEGIES

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### ABSTRACT

This research explores the complex interactions between consumer decision-making and the marketing approaches of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). Utilizing a blend of qualitative and quantitative research methods, the study collects diverse data to uncover the various aspects that drive customer preferences and actions regarding KFC's promotional tactics. Drawing upon both theoretical frameworks and hands-on investigation, the paper identifies critical determinants of consumer activity, including psychological motivators, cultural and social contexts, and advertising influences. In addition, it assesses the impact of KFC's brand identity, market positioning, pricing models, and advertising campaigns on how consumers perceive and engage with the brand. By integrating data from structured surveys, interactive focus group discussions, and detailed market evaluation, this study presents in-depth findings on the intricate relationship between consumer behavior and KFC's strategic marketing efforts.

**Keywords:-** Consumer behavior, KFC, Marketing strategies, Psychological triggers, Socio-cultural influences, Branding, Product positioning, Pricing strategies, Promotional efforts.

### Introduction

A defining feature of quick-meal establishments is the speed at which food is served, coupled with minimal customer interaction. Commonly labeled as "fast food," this style of dining emphasizes convenience and efficiency. In recent years, however, the sector has been shifting toward the more polished term "quick service restaurant" (QSR) to modernize its image. Despite this rebranding effort, the public continues to casually refer to these places as fast food outlets.

Companies in the food industry are actively attempting to rebrand this segment with a new label. These dining outlets typically prepare large quantities of food ahead of time, storing them either chilled or reheated as needed when patrons place orders. A significant number of quick-service eateries operate under franchise systems or as part of major restaurant conglomerates, distributing standardized, pre-prepared ingredients to each location. In some cases, such establishments are limited to compact kiosks or small stalls with minimal seating arrangements. Regardless of these characteristics, the traditional perception remains widespread.

, Though commonly linked with today's fast-paced, tech-driven lifestyle, the concept of grabbing ready-to-eat food has existed since the earliest urban civilizations, albeit in culturally distinct forms. Ancient Roman towns, for instance, featured stalls offering items like bread and olives, while East Asian regions favored quick noodle dishes. In the Middle East, flatbreads and falafel are widespread staples. The evolution of the hamburger runs parallel to the development of fast food itself—being the cornerstone of some of the first fast-food venues in the United States. In 1921, a U.S. establishment called White Castle began selling hamburgers for just five cents each, a milestone many credit as the birth of the modern fast-food restaurant. Traditional street fare across the globe is characterized by simple recipes made from a few readily available ingredients that can be pre-cooked and served immediately. In contrast, contemporary commercial quick-service meals are typically produced in factories using uniform components, heavy processing, and mass production techniques. To keep costs down, such meals are packaged quickly in wrappers, cartons, or bags for rapid delivery. Most chains rely on centralized distribution centers where processed food items are prepared before being dispatched to individual outlets. These ingredients are then reheated or fried on-site—often using microwaves or deep fryers—to maintain consistency and minimize labor and equipment needs at each location. *Global Franchising:* Many of the world's most iconic quick-service concepts originated in the United States, where they remain incredibly popular. When expanding internationally, these global chains often adapt their menus slightly to cater to regional tastes. For instance, in India—where meat is often considered impure in Hindu tradition—menu options are tailored accordingly.

In India, McDonald's substitutes beef with lamb to accommodate cultural and religious sensitivities. Similarly, in countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, menus are often restricted to halal-certified items. However, these cultural adjustments have not silenced all criticism. Moreover, global fast-food giants do not dominate the market alone; in fact, they are not always the leading providers of quick meals around the world. Many homegrown and regional chains have developed in response to international competition, offering menu options that reflect local flavors and culinary traditions. In numerous developing countries, small, family-operated eateries remain the primary source of fast food. Although global brands usually charge higher prices in these markets, they appeal to wealthier customers who value aesthetics, hygiene, and a modern atmosphere more than the familiarity of local food spots. Part of what defines fast food is the way ingredients are selected and treated—to enhance flavor, maintain shelf life, or achieve a desired texture. Speed, uniformity, and affordability form the foundation of this dining model. Achieving these outcomes involves extensive food science, including additives and industrial processing methods that greatly alter the food's original form and often reduce its nutritional quality.

*Shifts and Opposition:* Over the past decade, advocacy groups such as the Center for Science in the Public Interest—known for its longstanding critiques of the fast food industry—have intensified their campaigns. These concerns have fueled the rise of the Slow Food movement, a global initiative pushing back against the dominance of industrialized food practices. Focused on celebrating traditional recipes and sustainable farming, this movement challenges the norms of fast food and promotes a deeper appreciation for regional gastronomy. One of its central aims is to encourage the public to value healthier, environmentally conscious eating with greater flavor depth and cultural authenticity.

Several major quick-service brands are broadening their offerings by introducing options such as fresh fruits and salads. However, some critics argue that these additions are more about improving public image than genuinely addressing pressing issues like global health and environmental sustainability. In fact, McDonald's announced in March 2006 that all its menu items would carry nutritional labeling—an effort seen by some as an attempt to appear more health-conscious. The widespread appeal of fast food can be attributed to various factors. A key reason is that these companies capitalize on bulk purchasing and streamlined food preparation, allowing them to deliver meals at low prices. For someone in a rush, far from home, or simply craving familiarity, the predictability and accessibility of such food can offer a sense of comfort.

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## INDIAN FAST FOOD INDUSTRY- OVERVIEW

During the mid-1990s, numerous global fast-food giants entered the Indian market, eager to tap into the country's rapidly growing quick-service restaurant sector. However, building brand recognition proved to be a major hurdle. Adapting to local traditions and winning over Indian consumers was no easy feat. McDonald's, one of the world's largest fast-food companies, first showed interest in India around 1990, when its executives began conducting preliminary visits to explore the market.

By 1994, McDonald's had sent a team of its global suppliers to India with the aim of identifying potential collaborators. The primary goal was to engage with local farmers and lay the groundwork for a reliable supply chain. Eventually, a partnership was forged with Amit Jaitia's Hardcastle Restaurants Pvt. Ltd., leading to a 50-50 joint venture with McDonald's. Another significant collaboration took place in Delhi, where McDonald's entered into a joint venture with Vikram Bakshi, a businessman from a prominent real estate background. Their agreement was finalized in April 1995.

Following a strategic long-term franchise partnership with players in the fertilizer and chemical sectors, the Domino's Pizza brand officially launched its operations in India. Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) made its Indian debut a year prior by opening its first outlet in New Delhi. Pizza Hut entered the Indian food service landscape in 1996, establishing its inaugural restaurant in Bangalore. Domino's faced competition from both local contenders such as Nirula's and Pizza Corner, as well as international names like Pizza Hut and Wimpy's—all while McDonald's was also carving out its presence in the Indian market. Despite significant efforts, Domino's struggled to popularize its home delivery service in the early stages. The brand also wrestled with a key marketing dilemma: Should pizza be positioned as a quick bite or a full-fledged meal? Additionally, the company had to strike a delicate balance—how far could they adapt pizza to suit Indian palates without compromising its original appeal by making it overly spicy or soggy?

### *McDonald's Strategy Through the Indian Lens*

To gain a foothold in the Indian market, McDonald's had to significantly revamp its offerings to align with local preferences and cultural sensitivities. For the first time globally, the brand replaced beef with lamb (commonly referred to as mutton in India) in its burgers. It also crafted a menu that featured unique items not found in any other McDonald's outlet worldwide—complete with creative, culturally resonant names like the "McAloo" and the "Maharaja Mac." The company adopted a cautious and culturally aware strategy. It took great care in curating its food selection, eliminating beef entirely from its Indian menu and introducing a clear separation between vegetarian and non-vegetarian kitchen staff and processes. India became the first country where McDonald's introduced burgers made with a blend of five different vegetables. Additionally, the brand pioneered innovations such as the eggless mayonnaise veggie burger and the lamb-based patty sandwich tailored specifically for Indian consumers.

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## NEED FOR STUDY

Understanding and responding to the expectations of both customers and business partners is vital for any organization's success. Insights drawn from this feedback can be leveraged to refine offerings, align with market demands, and attract new clientele—benefiting both loyal patrons and prospective buyers. The arrival of Western-style quick-service eateries in India has sparked a noticeable surge in fast-food consumption, especially in metropolitan centers.

Over the past decade, McDonald's has experienced significant growth across India. Rather than focusing exclusively on establishing a strong family-oriented image, the brand has prioritized the aggressive sale of its most sought-after items at competitive prices. Prior studies suggest that among younger demographics, McDonald's consistently ranks as the most preferred fast-food brand. Yet, despite nearly ten years of operations, the company's

marketing efforts have remained relatively minimal. Presently, the brand is shifting gears—channeling more resources into promotional campaigns and exploring expansion into other sectors.

This study aims to evaluate that shift. *Phase one* of the survey will gather data on consumers' background information, how often they dine at KFC, their in-store activities, and how they compare KFC to rivals like McDonald's. The objective is to assess KFC's current positioning and offer suggestions for enhancing its menu with more satisfying options. *Phase two* involves categorizing target customers based on variables such as location, timing of visits, preferences, behaviors, product choices, and customer interaction levels.

Dining out tends to be a lively, engaging experience—and this research intends to capture that sentiment while analyzing consumer behavior in today's evolving fast-food landscape.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

Approximately one-third of urban Indians include fast food in their breakfast routines, with cleanliness and hygiene being the most important factors influencing their choice of brand. Compared to their American and European peers, Asians visit fast food outlets more frequently. Fast food consumption in India has now reached a significant high point. According to a recent online survey conducted by ACNielsen, a global leader in market research, over 70% of urban Indians order takeaway food at least once per month. Among Indian adults, 37% consume fast food on a weekly basis. This places India within the top ten countries worldwide for fast food consumption frequency, out of 28 nations surveyed. However, expansion plans for KFC in Mumbai have encountered resistance. On May 11, 2006, Kentucky Fried Chicken opened a new branch in Mumbai but faced protests related to allegations of animal cruelty. Demonstrators gathered in the Bandra area of western Mumbai prior to the restaurant's launch, voicing concerns over KFC's treatment of chickens. The animal rights organization PETA, which spearheaded the protests, accused KFC's suppliers of keeping birds in overcrowded and inhumane conditions. Jaya Simha, PETA's campaign and legal affairs coordinator, stated to IANS that as the largest purchaser of chicken, KFC is consequently responsible for the highest number of birds slaughtered.

"We would appreciate it if everyone could reduce their meat consumption slightly. At the very least, KFC should ensure that chickens are treated humanely until the time of slaughter," stated Simha.

As of Thursday, KFC—the largest chicken-focused fast-food chain globally—revealed plans to launch up to 28 new outlets across India by the close of 2006.

Sandeep Kohli, Managing Director for the Indian subcontinent at Yum! Restaurants International (YRI), shared, "From what we've seen so far, our customers have consistently enjoyed positive experiences with us." KFC is Yum! Restaurants International's flagship brand.

Regardless of geographic distance, Kohli affirmed that the company aims to keep expanding its footprint. He projected the total number of KFC outlets in India to reach between 25 and 28 by year-end.

Since first entering the Indian market in Bangalore in 1995, KFC has opened fifteen locations. Currently, there are eleven branches across major cities including Bangalore, Delhi, Pune, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, and Hyderabad.

Kohli highlighted that each KFC in India serves roughly 2,000 patrons daily, noting that opening a store in Mumbai marks a significant milestone in enhancing the brand's presence nationwide.

Addressing the delay in establishing a Mumbai outlet, Kohli explained that the company has always prioritized securing prime locations within each city's financial hub.

"We've been patiently searching for the ideal site all along," he added.

Indian operations contribute to a segment of Yum! Brands' \$13.2 billion global revenue and are regarded as a vital, high-potential market for future growth.

More than 12,300 KFC restaurants in 80+ countries serve eight million customers every day. It is one of YRI's five brands, along with Taco Bell, Long John Silver's, Pizza Hut, and A&W. As reported by the IANS news agency

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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study focused on tracking KFC's growth in the Indian market and analyzing the challenges it encountered. The research centered on understanding customer behavior, product preferences, and other distinct factors related to KFC's operations in Bangalore. An examination of KFC's advertising approach, emotional appeal, experiential elements, brand positioning, and overall identity was conducted. A questionnaire was designed to explore various factors that could influence consumer buying decisions (the report includes a sample survey). Statistical decisions were made based on sampling methods. For the first phase, 200 respondents were selected, while the second phase involved 270 participants. The estimated timeline for completing the research was eight weeks. Sources of data collection included:

- Primary data, collected directly from consumers through surveys.
- Secondary data, obtained from reliable sources such as corporate reports, previous market research studies, published materials, and online databases. Phase I of the study was conducted outside of McDonald's and KFC outlets, while Phase II took place inside KFC restaurants to create a natural environment for the research. The investigation was carried out in the Rajouri Garden area and Sector 18 in Noida.



Phase I involves selecting a random sample, and Phase II involves surveying people who have purchased these products.

### Objectives

- By polling customers who have recently eaten at these restaurants
- Not included in the sample was the group's leader.
- Collecting and arranging all pertinent information Interpretation and analysis of data Extrapolation of statistical sample findings

### Display offindings

The non-probability sampling method was used since our target audience did not own a database or **ANALYSIS**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS**

### SEX PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

sampling frame that could be easily accessed and used to randomly choose sample items. Hence, we opted for a random sampling procedure. One hundred people were polled at two different KFC restaurants in Phase I: Noida Sector 18 and City Square Mall, Rajouri Garden. Similarly to how a hundred individuals were polled at two separate McDonald's locations in Noida, one in Sector 18 and the other in Center Stage Mall. Customers were interviewed using a structured questionnaire while they were leaving these establishments after their dinner.

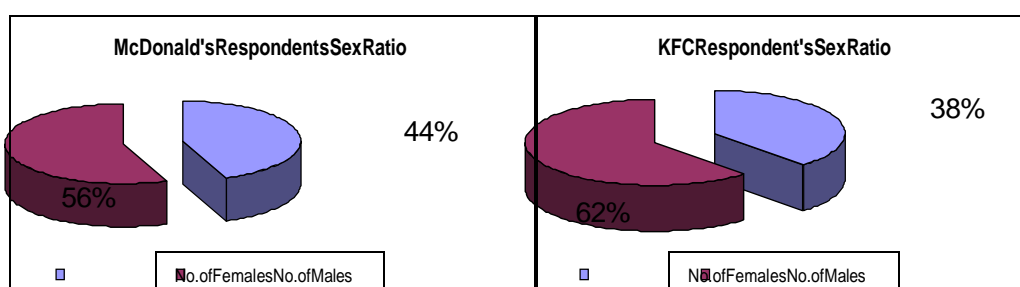


Figure 1.1a

Figure 1.1b

Compared to McDonald's, which has a more equitable distribution of customers, KFC has a male bias.

### AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

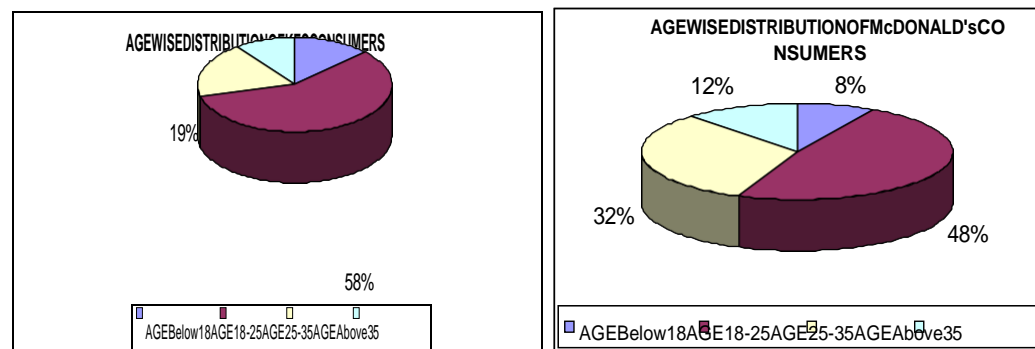


Figure 1.2a

Figure 1.2b

Young adults (defined as those between the ages of 18 and 25) make up the largest demographic of respondents at both KFC and McDonald's. The second demographic for both fast food chains consists of people aged 25 to 35. One thing to keep in mind is that, unlike KFC, a large portion of these age groups are also bringing children to McDonald's, and the children often end up making all the decisions.

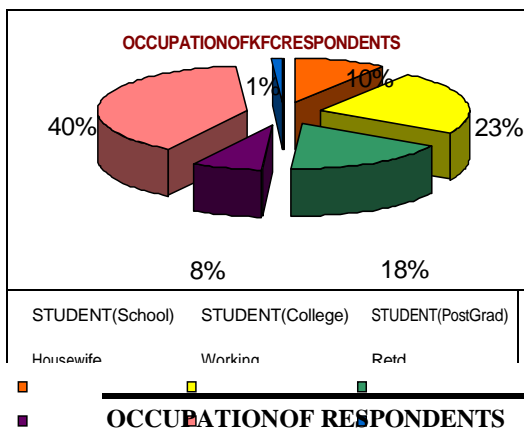


Figure 1.3a

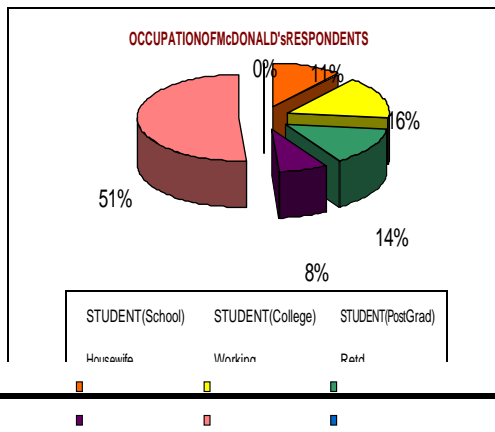


Figure 1.3b

McDonald's has dominance in the working segment primarily driven by families. KFC clearly is the preferred choice of youth & young adults.

#### NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE GROUP

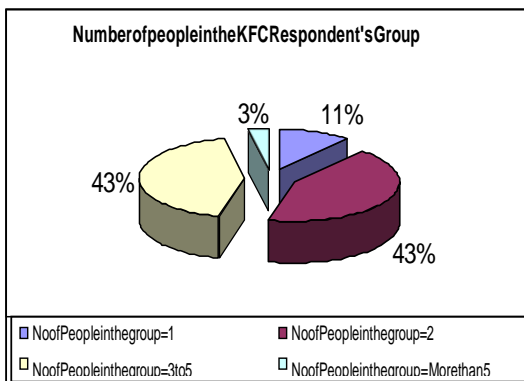


Figure 1.5a

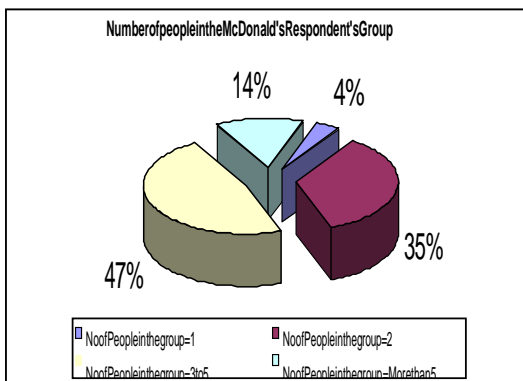
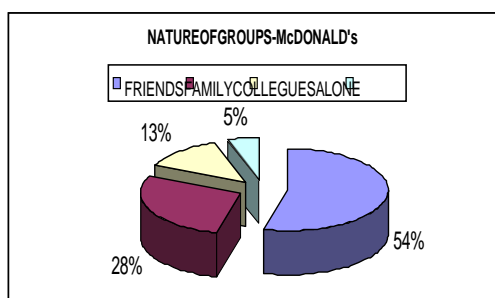
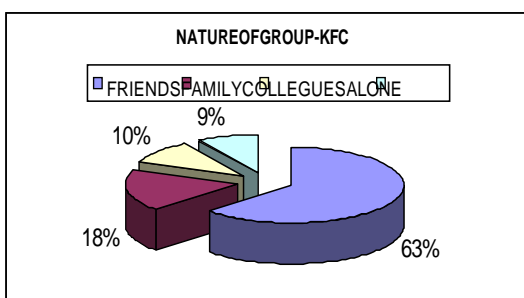


Figure 1.5b

Large families show a preference for McDonald's whereas KFC has more nucleus audience profile. Apart from single combos and bucket we also have duet meals.

#### NATURE OF GROUPS



The proportion of customers who visit McDonald's and KFC with friends is highest, followed by families. In contrast, 10% more people plan to bring their families to McDonald's than KFC, and 9% more people plan to bring their friends to KFC.



## FINDING

A numerical study highlights the best-selling items, key influences on customer buying behavior, and how these elements align with international consumption trends. Surveys indicate that convenience, perceived affordability, and taste are primary reasons why patrons in the Finding area favor KFC's popular fried chicken. Promotional strategies such as discounts and meal bundles significantly sway purchasing decisions.

- Consumers are strongly impacted by marketing initiatives. Special offers and price reductions encourage buying, thereby boosting sales. Pricing models tailored to the Finding market—like value meals and family-sized portions—appeal to budget-conscious customers. Leveraging digital and social media campaigns enhances brand awareness, customer engagement, and loyalty.
- Eating habits are shaped by cultural traditions and values. Customers value KFC's efforts to customize its menu with local flavors and to accommodate dietary restrictions. The brand's reputation in the community is shaped by factors including hygiene standards, cultural respect, and product quality.
- Detailed interviews provide deeper insights into the reasons behind consumer choices and preferences. The restaurant's reliability, accessibility, and.... The qualitative findings emphasize the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to align with personal tastes and cultural norms. Suggested actions include advocating for environmentally sustainable initiatives, expanding healthier menu options, and optimizing digital channels for more precise and effective promotional campaigns.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of consumer behavior in KFC's marketing strategies reveals a complex interplay of marketing, demographic, cultural, and psychographic factors. KFC's ability to understand and respond to these elements ensures that it remains relevant and connects deeply with its target market, helping to attract and retain a loyal customer base. Demographic insights indicate that KFC appeals to a diverse audience spanning various age groups, genders, social backgrounds, and regions worldwide. Thanks to its broad presence, KFC can effectively tailor its products and promotional efforts to specific consumer segments. Moreover, KFC demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness in adapting to evolving customer preferences, which reinforces its strong market resonance.

The analysis of diverse demographic segments highlights the importance of understanding consumer motivations and preferences. Through creative menu development, marketing strategies, and brand communication, KFC effectively connects with various psychological drivers such as convenience-seeking, indulgent cravings, social dining experiences, and budget-minded choices. Cultural influences play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior toward KFC. By incorporating local flavors, customs, and dietary habits, KFC positions itself as a culturally relevant dining option across different global markets. This cultural awareness enables the brand to build strong emotional connections with customers, fostering loyalty and encouraging brand advocacy. Economic conditions also significantly affect consumer decisions in the fast-food sector. In periods of financial uncertainty, KFC's ability to offer affordable meal choices without compromising quality resonates with price-sensitive consumers. The brand's strategic pricing models, promotional offers, and continuous menu innovation reinforce its value proposition, supporting sustained consumer appeal.

are amplified even further when customers have great experiences, which lead to repeat purchases and favourable word-of-mouth referrals. Understanding, engaging, and delighting KFC's varied consumer base is emphasised by the brand's examination of consumer behavioural patterns in marketing initiatives. Maintaining its position as a dominant force in the fast-food sector, KFC is well- positioned for continued growth and success as it faithfully follows changing consumer tastes, cultural subtleties, and market dynamics.

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**Web Sites**

it stay relevant in competitive areas. At the heart of ✓ [www.kfc.com](http://www.kfc.com) KFC's customer interaction initiatives are marketing ✓ [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) methods. With a combination of traditional and ✓ [www.ask.com](http://www.ask.com) digital platforms, KFC reaches and engages its ✓ [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) target audience through powerful advertising

**Magazines**

campaigns and engaging social media activities. ✓ India Today Brand affinity and attention are successfully ✓ Business Today generated by KFC through the use of humour, ✓ The week nostalgia, and cultural resonance. A key ✓ Outlook Express differentiation in KFC's competitive landscape is

**Newspapers**

customer experience. To increase customer ✓ The Times of India happiness and loyalty, KFC prioritises service ✓ The Hindustan Times quality, menu diversity, cleanliness, and ✓ The Economic Times convenience. The reach and impact of KFC's brand