Role of Social Media in Enhancing the Product Marketing Process

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ABSTRACT

When customers want to know more about a product, they turn to social media and browse about the product details and scroll reviews because that's the only place where they'll find other people talking about its quality. Positive and negative reviews will help them to decide whether to purchase that product or not. Social media marketing is the form of marketing where social media websites and social networking sites are used to promote a company's products and services through advertisement of that products and services. This marketing technique is used to promote a product or service through social media platforms by connecting with customers here we call them audience and helping them to understand company's brand better.

There are 4.66 billion internet users in the world today which is about 58.98% of the total population of the world i.e. 7.9 billion. Thus, marketers must not miss out their chance of marketing on these digital forums where they can reach all the maximum number of potential buyers compared with print or television media marketing by posting an ad and making their ads reach out to their potential audience through these social media advertisements.

Keywords – Reviews, Online Marketing, Users, Social Media.

INTRODUCTION

Social Media Marketing is the marketing technique used to promote company's products or services through social media platforms by connecting with audience (consumers). Social media marketing encompasses of social networks, consumer's online brand-related activities (COBRA) and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) to successfully advertise about the products and services in online platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, etc. Nowadays social media platform plays a vital role in the field of advertisement, where so many diverse consumers avail their services. This technique is pivotal as it provides opportunity to gather or attract large number of consumers in a short period of time. Social connectivity platforms like Facebook and Instagram allows advertisers to know about taste, preference and perception of their consumers regarding the products or services in the form of likes and dislikes.

Stratified kinds of Social Media Platforms to deliver advertisements are:

- Image sharing of products can be done through Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, etc.
- Social Networking Sites comprises Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, etc.
- Microblogging encompasses of Twitter, Tumblr.
- Video sharing can be executed through YouTube, Facebook Live, Periscope, Vimeo.

COBRA in literature is defined as a "set of brand-related online activities on the part of the consumer that vary in the degree to which the consumer interacts with social media and engages in the consumption, contribution, and creation of media content (Schivinski, Christodoulides, &Dabrowski, 2016).To validate the COBRAs framework, Schivinski, Christodoulides, and Dabrowski developed a survey instrument to measure the consumer's engagement with brand-related social-media content, based on three dimensions (i.e., consumption, contribution, and creation) established by Muntinga, Moorman, and Smit (2011). Examples of the application of COBRAs follows:

Consumption: when consumers see a picture or watch a YouTube video displaying a specific brand e.g., Harley Davidson or Coca-Cola. Doing so, consumers are consuming brand-related media;
Contribution: when consumers engage with online brand-related media by commenting on a post or "Liking" a piece of content, they are moving from the stage of "observer" to a "media contributor";
Creation: when consumers decide to upload a picture of a brand or product on Facebook, they are creating brand-related content.

Electronic word-of-mouth communication (eWOM) is any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual or former customers about a product or company which is made available to multiples of people and/or institutions and is spread over the internet (Cheung et al, 2010).

eWOM includes blogs, online reviews, social media posts and messages posted on online groups.

Elements in Social Media Platforms are:

- Facebook - Video ads, Canvas ads
- Instagram - Instagram Story ads, Shoppable Instagram posts
- Twitter - Video ads, Promoted Tweets
- LinkedIn - Sponsored Content
- YouTube - Bumper ads
- Pinterest - Promoted Pins
- Snapchat - On-demand Geofilters
- Tumblr - Sponsored Posts

LITERATURE REVIEW

Advertising is a term used to describe a non- personal communication between marketers and consumers. Where manufacturing corporate sector disseminate their useful information to mass audience with the help of television, radio, newspaper, pamphlets, social networking sites, banners and posters, etc.

Advertising refers to "the means of providing the most persuasive possible selling message to the right prospects at the lowest possible cost". **Kotler and Armstrong (2003)**, provide an alternative definition: "Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, television or radio by an identified sponsor".

Digital marketing has become popular in every section of society and it plays a crucial role in businesses and companies can enhance their marketing strategies, tactics, tools and techniques through digital marketing. Companies can use the Internet to deliver promotional marketing messages to consumers. It includes social media marketing, display advertising such as web banner advertising, email marketing, search engine marketing, and mobile advertising. Online advertising involves both a publisher, who integrates advertisements into its online content, and an advertiser, who provides the advertisements to be displayed on the publisher's content. Other potential participants include advertising agencies that help to generate and place the ad copy, an ad server who technologically delivers the ad and tracks statistics, and advertising affiliates who do independent promotional work for the advertiser.

Leon, Sebastian, (2014). Consumers are able to search for the information they need and share their own experiences about products or services with other consumers. This fact (sharing opinions with others regarding previous experiences with products or services) is one of the reasons why social media influences purchasing decisions Consumers are also buying based on recommendations from social media.

eMarketer, (2013). Firms have increasingly adopted social media for various marketing activities such as branding, market research, customer relationship management, service provision, and sales promotion alongside various studies that are putting forward evidence of the positive implications of deploying social media in marketing strategies. Shopper marketing can join forces with shoppers to improve products, create clear messages, identify promoters, and serve as a connection to in-store activities, thus demonstrating the importance of social media within a retailer's marketing plan. Advancements within social media sites have created consumer communities that are defining new ways in which companies and customers can interact with one another to share information on brand products.

Walker, (2009). The size of the network is primarily a reflection of the active participation of the audience, as consumer-generated media represents that vast majority of all content. For consumers the true value of a network is measured by the frequency of engagement of the participants. For marketers, endorsement by consumers in the form of friending /following /subscribing validates their efforts and activates a viral distribution of their brand across channels.

Albors Ramos, & Hervas, (2008). The Internet- and online-based social media have changed consumer consumption habits by providing consumers with new ways of looking for, assessing, choosing, and buying goods and services.

Boyd & Ellison, (2007). Social media involves activities where people create content, share it, bookmark it and network at a phenomenal rate. On the other hand social networking sites are a place where in one forms communities of interest to connect to others. Social networking sites utilize social media technology to connect with people and build relationships. Social networking sites allow individuals to construct their profile within a bounded system, share with other users and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

➢ To study the effect of social media in promotion of products and services offered by companies.
➢ To study the importance of social media in digital marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. In it we study the various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying research problem along with the logic behind them.

The point of research of this study is to find out the different aspects of social media and its effect on product marketing. The reason of this study is to establish facts and reach new conclusions from the topic, "social media marketing".

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Through this study we have analyzed that if companies, firms, organization or an individual seller will adopt the analytical use of online promotion techniques for the advertisement of their products and services they want to render they can reach to the height of success. Their selling margin increases with the increase in number of consumer. They will be able to gather larger number consumers and show them their valuable goods and services in an effective and efficient way. They can promote their products at international level. Their business will not only reach up to some number of consumers but also to the whole world. Right product at the right time to the right person will satisfy the customer and as we all know customer satisfaction is the main purpose of every organization.

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