

Role of Social Media in Promotion of Small Business Enterprises

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Abstract – Today, we are in 21st century and people do not find time to come & interact with each other. Social media helps in connecting themselves with social networking sites through which now people can stay far and yet remain connected. Apart from this media like Facebook create a loyal connection between product and individual which leads to large advertising opportunities. Similarly, other social media like Blogs create a platform to post comment on any event which needs to be publicized also can be utilized as a promotional technique for customer's adoption as well as for promotions. Now users are acquiring followers & subscribers and directing them to your social networking page. These media has a competitive edge over other popular public media like Television because there is a time gap between social event occurrence and the time it is being broadcasted. This research paper emphasizes on the strategies which can take this viral marketing mode beyond the normal social media at present. As a result it can also help in building your community strong enough to make your marketing effective & initiative buying.

Keywords: Social Media, Promotion, Small Business, Enterprises, social networking, people, technique, customer's, etc.

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INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing refers to the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks. A corporate message spreads from user to user and presumably resonates because it appears to come from a trusted, third-party source, as opposed to the brand or company itself.[citation needed] Hence, this form of marketing is driven by word-of-mouth, meaning it results in earned media rather than paid media.

Apart from the utilization of social media for marketing practices by the big business organizations the emerging and small business enterprises may efficiently adopt this technology in order to promote their business practices (Banerjee and Ashwini Kumar BJ, 2013). In this context it is essential for an emerging business group to explore the various facets of online marketing before venturing (Scarborough *et al.*, 2009). The small business enterprises may inherit the approach of using multimedia as their marketing tool (Baines *et al.*, 2008). YouTube is found to be an effective online marketing tool in this aspect. In addition to this the small business organizations may

consider both offline and online advertisement of their respective products or services (Alrubaiee and Al-Nazer, 2010). Inclusion of Facebook page or the blog link in offline advertisement may also serve as a 'social proof' welcoming a huge pool of customers to look into the advertisement link (Allen, 2008). Identification of the potential customers helps in broadening the social circle of a business group. A better amount of recognition in the business market is also achieved (Akyol, 2013). Another strategy that is undertaken by the small business groups with respect to utilization of social media for marketing practices is the approach of message adaptation wherein the same message can be delivered to a large number of web addresses (Abdulezer, 2004). This approach may in turn create an impact on customer's mind enhancing the recognition factor of a particular product or service.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The impact of social media marketing on brand loyalty in the sub-continent is inconsistent in approach. Studies suggest that the introduction of social media marketing has helped in improving branding through focusing on customer experience.

Social media has enabled companies to incorporate unique techniques to build brand loyalty with the focused customers. However, it has also impacted both positively and negatively on the business or on product branding. For example, while social media enabled one-on-one conversation or captive communication, it has also offered endless opportunities to select from brands that are advertising online. Hence consumer dedication is diluted and often modified with the growing competition in the market (Partridge, 2011). Attractive promotional creative grabs attention and diverts the customer, or too many options puzzle the consumer. Thus it has both positive and negative impact on the brands.

Since the inception of Social networks in 1997, with the launching features of blogging and posting through web 2.0 named as six degrees.com. The basic purpose of this site was to facilitate people in terms of social connectivity via LinkedIn, My Space as well as advance mode of face book and other software's like Orkut, Google talk, Skype, Hangout and what-up etc. (Michael A. Stelzner 2010) stated that, "the decision to use online social networking technologies represents a social phenomenon that largely depends on the interactions" and concludes observing that "the driving forces behind online social networks are connections and community, and the usage is largely depended on subjective norm and social identity".

(Social Media in India 2010) defined that "Social media is a hybrid element of promotion mix because in traditional sense it enables companies to talk their customers while in a non-traditional sense it enables customers to talk directly to one another. The key factor behind the performance of Management is based as team work, while the progress of employee's depending upon leadership of the management.

However, the term management is not only consisting on firm level but also for Institutions, Economy and State levels respectively. With the help of social media people enjoying their lives smoothly and remain connect with their love-ones, as well as it provides salient pieces of information for different purposes, social media can be named as consumer generated media, new media and citizen media.

Developing the concept of Social media as an effective marketing tool: Barutcu (2013) examined that for the last 40 years, there is a radical change in the ways a business is conducted by an organization to develop brand loyalty and customer retention so that the business can be enlarged in the market. However, Bensalah (2013) viewed that with the introduction of the e-commerce and internet, there is an immense effect on the business operation and marketing strategy. Chen (2013) mentioned that the technology of social media is speeding up in the market and will have an impact in a similar way on the growth of the business. Some of the companies that are based on the technology driven are eBay, Microsoft, Google and Amazon. Social media

marketing has become an effective tool for developing business in India through online sites and helps in building the brand loyalty from the perceptions of the consumers. It is considered as one of the important concept of marketing as per the thoughts of Clark (2013) and helps in generating business faster and in an easier way. Customers prefer social networking since it helps them to collect important information or to share them with their friends and relatives that enhance the business (Dorenda-Zaborowicz, 2012).

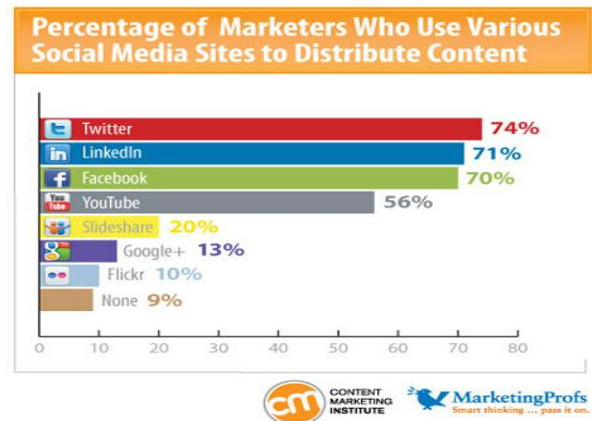


Fig 1: Concept of Social media as an effective marketing tool (Source: Edward 2010)

Social media marketing as a tool for better communication with the targeted customers: As per the concept of Hawkins (2013), social media marketing has made a drastic change in the ways people communicate today. Social media marketing is a term used for referring the web-based communication that turns it into a collective dialogue. Holzner (2009) stated that social media can be developed through various forms like weblogs, internet forums, magazines, social blogs, wikis, videos or social bookmarking. While Jakada (2014) argued that for developing social media marketing as an effective tool for communication, social sites like twitter, face book, Skype, MySpace or orkut are the relevant aspects.

This form of the communication helps to communicate with various people or groups that help to develop the business effectively sharing the information and feedback of the customer and will help to develop brand loyalty. Among the development of the concept in various countries, India also follows the concept of developing the business through social media marketing that has an impact on its brand loyalty. Social media will help to keep the contacts with the potential customers of the respective organizations and will develop social interaction through social communication. Khare *et al.* (2014) mentioned that through the use of online sites for sharing information with the customers, there is an increase in the communication medium that tends to have an impact on the brand loyalty.

Social media marketing in India has developed broadly keeping the people connected worldwide for the promotions of the brand of the organizations through effective communication skills. The media helps the public to communicate and influences them to retain a better position in respect of the brands. Social media marketing acts like promoting a brand in front of the customers keeping a healthy relation between a brand and the public through the online environment (Krishen *et al.* 2015). Social media monitors the conversations regarding the competitors, industry and the products reaching the customers through the ways of communicating using social web regarding the offers of the company products and services. Social media is making a transformation in the ways an organization communicates with its customers delivering the needs and quality service and building the brand loyalty. In the following dissertation, the same has been developed keeping India in to considerations.

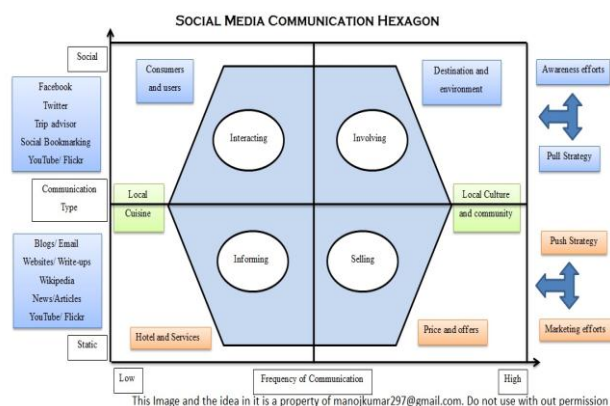


Fig 2: Social media marketing as a tool for better communication (Source: Lakshmanasamy, 2012)

Implications of social media marketing in developing customer relationship management: Macarthy (2013) opined that in this new era of the field of media, the pattern of managing the customer relationship is considered like playing a pinball where the companies will serve as the marketing ball. The concept of brand loyalty is important in social media marketing since the advertising of the marketers and the promotional budgets are lowered and are an easier way to hold up someone in buying a product rather convincing a new customer to buy it.

The conception developed regarding customer relationship management is an important topic to the marketers along with the brands of the company since they survive in order to keep the potential customers from moving to another opposing brand.

Partridge (2011) defined the term CRM as a process that helps in profiling the prospects developing a clear understanding of the needs and then developing a relationship with the customers by supplying them with

their required needs of the products and a planned customer service in a better form.

While Powell *et al.* (2011) evaluated that Social media marketing along with customer relationship management is one of the important business strategies that is developed to keep the customers engaged with the help of social media and keeps an aim to build brand loyalty and trust. With the use of internet along with the social media, it becomes easier to communicate directly with the customers.

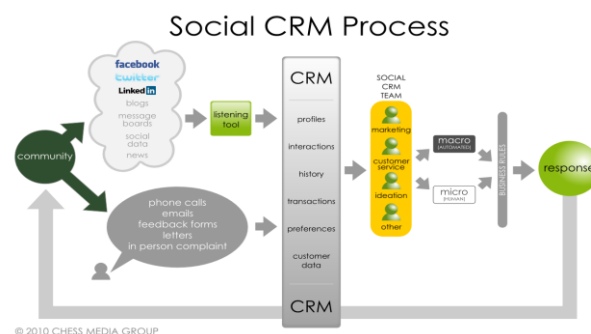


Fig 3: social media marketing in developing customer relationship management (Source: Scott, 2011)

Impact of social media marketing on brand perceptions: Social media marketers face challenges nowadays in the development of various techniques of communication to reach the targeted audience of the organization. Smith (2011) postulates that the concept of marketing strategy developed by social media is important in high involvement of the customers where feedback, information and the testimonials derived from the trusted sources work as a vital role in developing the buying decisions. Brand perception depends on the way how the potential customers look after the brand depending on the service pattern. Sumitha (2012) defined that the sites of social media as a service provided on web based allows the individuals to develop a profile of the public in a closed system. It helps to develop the ways so that the public can communicate with others sharing the information.

The social media sites include blogs and face book. Tuten (2012) mentioned that most of the time people spend their time on the social sites socializing with others and they visit such sites sharing the information and their comments. Human beings get inspired by others and they take time in order to develop the purchasing decisions. Such people help in shaping the brand perceptions. Such a group of people arte conceived on individual's decisions, behavior and evaluations.



Fig 4: Impact of social media marketing on brand perceptions (Source: Sumitha 2012)

The consumers rely on such people for gathering product information thus highlighting the fact developed by Zarrella (2009), that decision-making is mainly influenced by other people's behavior. The views and the feedbacks of others are the facts on which the consumer depends before purchasing a product or adopting a service, thus developing the concept of brand perception through social media. The information that is disseminated by other people on the social sites is defined as word of mouth (WOM) as stated by Zimmerman (2013). WOM is termed as a promotion of a product through unpaid form where a satisfied customer shares their views about a product with others focusing on the positive experiences thus developing the brand perception. Thus the following study will develop the concept of brand perceptions in context to social media as an effective tool in developing a product of a company in the market of India.

CONCLUSION:

Social platforms each have an ecosystem of their own. Creating a basic social media presence is easy enough, getting your community to actually do something is more difficult. Make sure your site is included in local business directories in order to help ensure that consumers find you when they need you. Customizing messages across sites help the message spread but it keeps users from receiving multiple identical communications. By giving exclusive coupons to your social community, you're rewarding and reminding them that you is not only a brand to engage with, but also to buy from. Taking advantage of these strategies can help you build your community, make your marketing more effective, and incentivize buying.

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