

# Digital Marketing

Dr. Yellaswamy Ambati

(Lecturer in Commerce, TS Model Junior College, Jangaon, Warangal, Telangana, India)

---

**Abstract:** Digital marketing is an umbrella term for the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, mainly on the Internet, but also including mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium. Digital marketing's development since the 1990s and 2000s has changed the way brands and businesses utilize technology for marketing. As digital platforms are increasingly incorporated into marketing plans and everyday life, and as people use digital devices instead of visiting physical shops, digital marketing campaigns are becoming more prevalent and efficient.

Digital marketing techniques such as Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), content marketing, influencer marketing, content automation, campaign marketing, data-driven marketing and e-commerce marketing, social media marketing, social media optimization, e-mail direct marketing, display advertising, e-books, and optical disks and games are becoming more common in our advancing technology. In fact, digital marketing now extends to non-Internet channels that provide digital media, such as mobile phones (SMS and MMS), call back, and on-hold mobile ring tones.

**Keywords:** Digital Marketing, Social Media, Internet, SMS, MMS, e-Commerce.

---

## I. INTRODUCTION

Today's era of Internet has opened a gate of vast variety of opportunities for businesses. Using social networks, one cannot only share a private picture of one's birthday but also earn customers for one's business and reach them conveniently. The speed and ease with which the digital media transmits information and help boost a business is amazing.

Digital Marketing is the term used for the targeted, measurable, and interactive marketing of products or services using digital technologies to reach the viewers, turn them into customers, and retain them. Digital marketing achieves targets of marketing a business through different online channels.

### Objectives

Objectives of the Digital Marketing are as follows:

1. To Study the History of Digital Marketing
2. To study the uses of Digital Marketing.
3. To study the Brand Awareness of Digital Marketing.
4. To study the Latest Developments, Strategies and Channels of Digital Marketing.
5. To study the Advantages and Limitations of Digital Marketing.

### History of Digital Marketing

The term *digital marketing* was first used in the 1990s, but digital marketing has roots in the mid-1980s, when the Soft Ad Group, now Channel Net, developed advertising campaigns for automobile companies: People sent in reader reply cards found in magazines and received in return floppy disks that contained multimedia content promoting various cars and free test drives. In 2000 a survey in the United Kingdom found that most retailers had not registered their own domain address.

Digital marketing became more sophisticated in the 2000s and the 2010s, when the proliferation of devices' capability to access digital media at almost any given time led to great growth. Statistics produced in 2012 and 2013 showed that digital marketing was still a growing field.

Digital marketing is often referred to as 'online marketing', 'internet marketing' or 'web marketing'. The term *digital marketing* has grown in popularity over time, particularly in certain countries. In the USA *online marketing* is still prevalent. In Italy, digital marketing is referred to as *web marketing*. In the UK and worldwide, however, *digital marketing* has become the most common term, especially after the year 2013.

Digital media growth is estimated at 4.5 trillion online ads served annually with digital media spend at 48% growth in 2010. An increasing portion of advertising stems from businesses employing Online Behavioural Advertising (OBA) to tailor advertising for internet users, but OBA raises concern of consumer privacy and data protection.

### Use of Digital Marketing

There are a number of ways brands can use digital marketing to benefit their marketing efforts. The use of digital marketing in the digital era not only allows for brands to market their products and services but also allows for online customer support through 24/7 services to make customer feel supported and valued. The use of social media interaction allows brands to receive both positive and negative feedback from their customers as well as determining what media platforms work well for them and has become an increased advantage for brands and businesses. It is now common for consumers to post feedback online through social media sources,

blogs and websites feedback on their experience with a product or brand. It has become increasingly popular for businesses to utilise and encourage these conversations through their social media channels to have direct contact with the customers and manage the feedback they receive appropriately.

Word of mouth communications and peer-to-peer dialogue often have a greater effect on customers, since they are not sent directly from the company and are therefore not planned. Customers are more likely to trust other customers' experiences. It is increasingly advantageous for companies to utilise social media platforms to connect with their customers and create these dialogues and discussions. The potential reach of social media is indicated by the fact that in 2015, each month the Facebook app had more than 126 million average unique users and YouTube had over 97 million average unique users.

### **Brand awareness of Digital Marketing**

#### **a. Ease of access**

A key objective is engaging digital marketing customers and allowing them to interact with the brand through servicing and delivery of digital media. Information is easy to access at a fast rate through the use of digital communications. Users with access to the Internet can use many digital mediums, such as Facebook, YouTube, Forums, and Email etc. Through Digital communications it creates a Multi-communication channel where information can be quickly exchanged around the world by anyone without any regard to whom they are. Social segregation plays no part through social mediums due to lack of face to face communication and information being wide spread instead to a selective audience. This interactive nature allows consumers create conversation in which the targeted audience is able to ask questions about the brand and get familiar with it which traditional forms of Marketing may not offer.

#### **b. Competitive advantage**

By using Internet platforms, businesses can create competitive advantage through various means. To reach the maximum potential of digital marketing, firms use social media as its main tool to create a channel of information. Through this a business can create a system in which they are able to pinpoint behavioral patterns of clients and feedback on their needs. This means of content has shown to have a larger impingement on those who have a long-standing relationship with the firm and with consumers who are relatively active social media users. Relative to this, creating a social media page will further increase relation quality between new consumers and existing consumers as well as consistent brand reinforcement therefore improving brand awareness resulting in a possible rise for consumers up the Brand Awareness Pyramid. Although there may be inconsistency with product images; maintaining a successful social media presence requires a business to be consistent in interactions through creating a two way feed of information; firms consider their content based on the feedback received through this channel, this is a result of the environment being dynamic due to the global nature of the internet. Effective use of digital marketing can result in relatively lowered costs in relation to traditional means of marketing; Lowered external service costs, advertising costs, promotion costs, processing costs, interface design costs and control costs.

#### **c. Effectiveness**

Brand awareness has been proven to work with more effectiveness in countries that are high in uncertainty avoidance, also these countries that have uncertainty avoidance; social media marketing works effectively. Yet brands must be careful not to be excessive on the use of this type of marketing, as well as solely relying on it as it may have implications that could negatively harness their image. Brands that represent themselves in an anthropomorphizing manner are more likely to succeed in situations where a brand is marketing to this demographic. "Since social media use can enhance the knowledge of the brand and thus decrease the uncertainty, it is possible that people with high uncertainty avoidance, such as the French, will particularly appreciate the high social media interaction with an anthropomorphized brand." Moreover, digital platform provides an ease to the brand and its customers to interact directly and exchange their motives virtually.

### **Latest developments, strategies and channels of Digital Marketing**

One of the major changes that occurred in traditional marketing was the "emergence of digital marketing" (Patrutiu Baltas, Loredana, 2015), this led to the reinvention of marketing strategies in order to adapt to this major change in traditional marketing (Patrutiu Baltas, Loredana, 2015). As digital marketing is dependent on technology which is ever-evolving and fast-changing, the same features should be expected from digital marketing developments and strategies. This portion is an attempt to qualify or segregate the notable highlights existing and being used as of press time.

- a. **Segmentation:** more focus has been placed on segmentation within digital marketing, in order to target specific markets in both business-to-business and business-to-consumer sectors.
- b. **Influencer marketing:** Important nodes are identified within related communities, known as influencers. This is becoming an important concept in digital targeting. It is possible to reach influencers via paid advertising, such as Facebook Advertising or Google Ad words campaigns, or through sophisticated SCRM (social customer relationship management) software, such as SAP C4C,

Microsoft Dynamics, Sage CRM and Sales force CRM. Many universities now focus, at Masters Level, on engagement strategies for influencers.

- c. **Online behavioural advertising** is the practice of collecting information about a user's online activity over time, "on a particular device and across different, unrelated websites, in order to deliver advertisements tailored to that user's interests and preferences.
- d. **Collaborative Environment:** A collaborative environment can be set up between the organization, the technology service provider, and the digital agencies to optimize effort, resource sharing, reusability and communications. Additionally, organizations are inviting their customers to help them better understand how to service them. This source of data is called User Generated Content. Much of this is acquired via company websites where the organization invites people to share ideas that are then evaluated by other users of the site. The most popular ideas are evaluated and implemented in some form. Using this method of acquiring data and developing new products can foster the organizations relationship with their customer as well as spawn ideas that would otherwise be overlooked. UGC is low-cost advertising as it is directly from the consumers and can save advertising costs for the organisation.
- e. **Data-driven advertising:** Users generate a lot of data in every step they take on the path of customer journey and Brands can now use that data to activate their known audience with data-driven programmatic media buying. Without exposing customers' privacy, users' Data can be collected from digital channels (e.g.: when customer visits a website, reads an e-mail, or launches and interact with brand's mobile app), brands can also collect data from real world customer interactions, such as brick and mortar stores visits and from CRM and Sales engines datasets. Also known as People-based marketing or addressable media, Data-driven advertising is empowering brands to find their loyal customers in their audience and deliver in real time a much more personal communication, highly relevant to each customer's moment and actions.
- f. **Game advertising:** Game ads are advertisements that exist within computer or video games. One of the most common examples of in-game advertising is billboards appearing in sports games. In-game ads also might appear as brand-name products like guns, cars, or clothing that exist as gaming status symbols.

The new digital era has enabled brands to selectively target their customers that may potentially be interested in their brand or based on previous browsing interests. Businesses can now use social media to select the age range, location, gender and interests of whom they would like their targeted post to be seen by. Furthermore, based on a customer's recent search history they can be 'followed' on the internet so they see advertisements from similar brands, products and services,<sup>[32]</sup> This allows businesses to target the specific customers that they know and feel will most benefit from their product or service, something that had limited capabilities up until the digital era.

#### Channels

- Digital marketing is facilitated by multiple channels, As an advertiser one's core objective is to find channels which result in maximum two-way communication and a better overall ROI for the brand. There are multiple online marketing channels available namely;
- Affiliate marketing - Affiliate marketing is perceived to not be considered a safe, reliable and easy means of marketing through online platform. This is due to a lack of reliability in terms of affiliates that can produce the demanded number of new customers. As a result of this risk and bad affiliates it leaves the brand prone to exploitation in terms of claiming commission that isn't honestly acquired. Legal means may offer some protection against this, yet there are limitations in recovering any losses or investment. Despite this, affiliate marketing allows the brand to market towards smaller publishers, and websites with smaller traffic. Brands that choose to use this marketing often should beware of such risks involved and look to associate with affiliates in which rules are laid down between the parties involved to assure and minimize the risk involved.
- Display advertising
- Email marketing - Email marketing in comparison to other forms of digital marketing is considered cheap; it is also a way to rapidly communicate a message such as their value proposition to existing or potential customers. Yet this channel of communication may be perceived by recipients to be bothersome and irritating especially to new or potential customers, therefore the success of email marketing is reliant on the language and visual appeal applied. In terms of visual appeal, there are indications that using graphics/visuals that are relevant to the message which is attempting to be sent, yet less visual graphics to be applied with initial emails are more effective in-turn creating a relatively personal feel to the email. In terms of language, the style is the main factor in determining how captivating the email is. Using casual tone invokes a warmer and gentle and inviting feel to the email in comparison to a formal style. For combinations; it's suggested that to maximize effectiveness; using no

graphics/visual alongside casual language. In contrast using no visual appeal and a formal language style is seen as the least effective method.

- Search marketing
- Social Media Marketing - The term 'Digital Marketing' has a number of marketing facets as it supports different channels used in and among these, comes the Social Media. When we use social media channels ( Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Google+, etc.) to market a product or service, the strategy is called Social Media Marketing. It is a procedure wherein strategies are made and executed to draw in traffic for a website or to gain attention of buyers over the web using different social media platforms.
- Social Networking
- Game advertising - In-Game advertising is defined as "inclusion of products or brands within a digital game." The game allows brands or products to place ads within their game, either in a subtle manner or in the form of an advertisement banner. There are many factors that exist in whether brands are successful in their advertising of their brand/product, these being: Type of game, technical platform, 3-D and 4-D technology, game genre, congruity of brand and game, prominence of advertising within the game. Individual factors consist of attitudes towards placement advertisements, game involvement, product involvement, flow or entertainment. The attitude towards the advertising also takes into account not only the message shown but also the attitude towards the game. Dependent of how enjoyable the game is will determine how the brand is perceived, meaning if the game isn't very enjoyable the consumer may subconsciously have a negative attitude towards the brand/product being advertised. In terms of Integrated Marketing Communication "integration of advertising in digital games into the general advertising, communication, and marketing strategy of the firm" is an important as it results in a more clarity about the brand/product and creates a larger overall effect.

#### **Online PR**

- Video advertising - This type of advertising in terms of digital/online means are advertisements that play on online videos e.g. YouTube videos. This type of marketing has seen an increase in popularity over time. Online Video Advertising usually consists of three types: Pre-Roll advertisements which play before the video is watched, Mid-Roll advertisements which play during the video, or Post-Roll advertisements which play after the video is watched. Post-roll advertisements were shown to have better brand recognition in relation to the other types, where-as "ad-context congruity/incongruity plays an important role in reinforcing ad memorability". Due to selective attention from viewers, there is the likelihood that the message may not be received. The main advantage of video advertising is that it disrupts the viewing experience of the video and therefore there is a difficulty in attempting to avoid them. How a consumer interacts with online video advertising can come down to three stages: Pre attention, attention, and behavioural decision. These online advertisements give the brand/business options and choices. These consist of length, position, adjacent video content which all directly affect the effectiveness of the produced advertisement time, therefore manipulating these variables will yield different results. Length of the advertisement has shown to affect memorability where-as longer duration resulted in increased brand recognition. This type of advertising, due to its nature of interruption of the viewer, it is likely that the consumer may feel as if their experience is being interrupted or invaded, creating negative perception of the brand. These advertisements are also available to be shared by the viewers, adding to the attractiveness of this platform. Sharing these videos can be equated to the online version of word by mouth marketing, extending number of people reached. Sharing videos creates six different outcomes: these being "pleasure, affection, inclusion, escape, relaxation, and control". As well, videos that have entertainment value are more likely to be shared, yet pleasure is the strongest motivator to pass videos on. Creating a 'viral' trend from mass amount of a brands advertisement can maximize the outcome of an online video advert whether it be positive or a negative outcome.

It is important for a firm to reach out to consumers and create a two-way communication model, as digital marketing allows consumers to give back feed back to the firm on a community based site or straight directly to the firm via email. Firms should seek this long term communication relationship by using multiple forms of channels and using promotional strategies related to their target consumer as well as word-of mouth marketing.

#### **Multi-channel communications**

Push and pull message technologies can be used in conjunction.

#### **Self-regulation**

The ICC Code has integrated rules that apply to marketing communications using digital interactive media throughout the guidelines. There is also an entirely updated section dealing with issues specific to digital interactive media techniques and platforms. Code self-regulation on use of digital interactive media includes:

- Clear and transparent mechanisms to enable consumers to choose not to have their data collected for advertising or marketing purposes;
- Clear indication that a social network site is commercial and is under the control or influence of a marketer;
- Limits are set so that marketers communicate directly only when there are reasonable grounds to believe that the consumer has an interest in what is being offered;
- Respect for the rules and standards of acceptable commercial behavior in social networks and the posting of marketing messages only when the forum or site has clearly indicated its willingness to receive them;
- Special attention and protection for children.

#### **Advantages and limitations of Digital Marketing**

- The whole idea of digital marketing can be a very important aspect in the overall communication between the consumer and the organisation. This is due to digital marketing being able to reach vast numbers of potential consumers at one time.
- Another advantage of digital marketing is that consumers are exposed to the brand and the product that is being advertised directly. To clarify the advertisement is easy to access as well it can be accessed any time any place.
- However, with digital marketing there are some setbacks to this type of strategy. One major setback that is identified is that Digital marketing is highly dependent on the internet. This can be considered as a setback because the internet may not be accessible in certain areas or consumers may have poor internet connection.
- As well as digital marketing being highly dependent on the Internet is that it is subject to a lot of clutter, so it marketers may find it hard to make their advertisements stand out, as well as get consumers to start conversations about an organisations brand image or products.
- As digital marketing continues to grow and develop, brands take great advantage of using technology and the Internet as a successful way to communicate with its clients and allows them to increase the reach of who they can interact with and how they go about doing so,. There are however disadvantages that are not commonly looked into due to how much a business relies on it. It is important for marketers to take into consideration both advantages and disadvantages of digital marketing when considering their marketing strategy and business goals.
- An advantage of digital marketing is that the reach is so large that there are no limitations on the geographical reach it can have. This allows companies to become international and expand their customer reach to other countries other than the country it is based or originates from.
- As mentioned earlier, technology and the internet allows for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week service for customers as well as enabling them to shop online at any hour of that day or night, not just when the shops are over and across the whole world. This is a huge advantage for retailers to utilise it and direct customers from the store to its online store. It has also opened up an opportunity for companies to only be online based rather than having an outlet or store due to the popularity and capabilities of digital marketing.
- Another advantage is that digital marketing is easy to be measured allowing businesses to know the reach that their marketing is making, whether the digital marketing is working or not and the amount of activity and conversation that is involved.
- With brands using the Internet space to reach their target customers; digital marketing has become a beneficial career option as well. At present, companies are more into hiring individuals familiar in implementing digital marketing strategies and this has led the stream to become a preferred choice amongst individuals inspiring institutes to come up and offer professional courses in Digital Marketing.
- A disadvantage of digital advertising is the large amount of competing goods and services that are also using the same digital marketing strategies. For example, when someone searches for a specific product from a specific company online, if a similar company uses targeted advertising online then they can appear on the customer's home page, allowing the customer to look at alternative options for a cheaper price or better quality of the same product or a quicker way of finding what they want online.
- Some companies can be portrayed by customers negatively as some consumers lack trust online due to the amount of advertising that appears on websites and social media that can be considered frauds. This can affect their image and reputation and make them out to look like a dishonest brand.
- Another disadvantage is that even an individual or small group of people can harm image of an established brand. For instance *Doppelganger* is a term that is used to disapprove an image about a certain brand that is spread by anti-brand activists, bloggers, and opinion leaders. The word *Doppelganger* is a combination of two German words *Doppler* (double) and *Ganger* (walker), thus it means double walker or as in English it is said alter ego. Generally brand creates images for

itself to emotionally appeal to their customers. However some would disagree with this image and make alterations to this image and present in funny or cynical way, hence distorting the brand image, hence creating a Doppelganger image, blog or content (Rindfleisch, 2016).

- Two other practical limitations can be seen in the case of digital marketing. One, digital marketing is useful for specific categories of products, meaning only consumer goods can be propagated through digital channels. Industrial goods and pharmaceutical products cannot be marketed through digital channels. Secondly, digital marketing disseminates only the information to the prospects most of whom do not have the purchasing authority/power. And hence the reflection of digital marketing into real sales volume is sceptical.

## II. CONCLUSION

The research and practice of digital marketing is improving with the advancement of technology. The advancement in technology fosters multifaceted opportunities and at the same time poses unprecedented challenges for the marketers. Marketers make use of Digital Portfolio as a platform to promote a professional brand by defining the product in a manner that adds credibility. Research highlights that B2B buyers dislike cold emails and calls, hence, Digital marketing allows enough provisions for finding the right people through its streamlined search engine and connections. In the present era, buyers expect knowledge that offers potential solution to their product related problems. The strong visibility of the organization or the brand through digital marketing allows the consumers to develop perceived knowledge about the brand. By the spread of word of mouth and getting recommendations from their connections assist the users in making active decisions about purchasing.

## III. REFERENCE

- [1] Archambault, A and Grudin, J. (2012) A longitudinal study of facebook, linkedin & twitter use. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 4(2), pp. 2741-2750.
- [2] Aronson, K.R and Webster, N. (2007) A model for creating engaged land-grant universities: Penn State's engagement ladder model. *Innovative Higher Education*, 31(5), pp.265-277.
- [3] Bae, J.Y; Kim, S; Cho, H.S; Lee, I.Y; Ha, D.S and Lee, S.G. (2013) A CMOS wideband highly linear low-noise amplifier for digital TV applications. *Broadcast Engineering*, 61(10), pp.3700-3711.
- [4] Chen, L; Piché, R; Kuusniemi, H and Chen, R. (2014) Adaptive mobile tracking in unknown non-line-of-sight conditions with application to digital TV networks. *EURASIP Journal on Advances in Signal Processing*, 20(1), pp.1-10.
- [5] Cheston, C.C; Flickinger, T.E and Chisolm, M.S. (2013) Social media use in medical education: a systematic review. *Academic Medicine*, 88(6), pp.893-901.
- [6] Dabbagh, N and Kitsantas, A. (2012) Personal Learning Environments, social media, and self-regulated learning: A natural formula for connecting formal and informal learning. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 15(1), pp.3-8.
- [7] Deymers, J. (2016) The Top 10 Benefits of Content Marketing [online]. Available from: <http://www.inc.com/jayson-demers/the-top-10-benefits-of-content-marketing.html> [Accessed on 8 April 2016].
- [8] Doherty, R; Wrigley, C; Matthews, J.H and Bucolo, S. (2015) Climbing the design ladder: Step by step. *Industrial Distribution*, 7(2), pp.60-82.
- [9] Ellis, K. (2014) Television's transition to the internet: Disability accessibility and broadband-based TV in Australia. *Media International Australia, Incorporating Culture & Policy*, 15(3), pp.53-62.
- [10] Evans, D. (2012) Research and Markets; Social Media Marketing: An hour a day. *Marketing Weekly News*, 30(6), pp.271-284.
- [11] Heymann-Reder, D. (2012) *Social Media Marketing*. New York: Addison-Wesley Verlag.
- [12] Jarboe, G. (2011) Research and Markets; YouTube and Video Marketing: An Hour a Day. *Marketing Weekly News*, 10(3), pp.12-35.