

AN OVERVIEW OF DIGITAL MARKETING: NEED, CONCEPTS & PERSPECTIVES

Dr. Monirul Islam

*Assistant Professor of Marketing Management
Xavier Business School (XBS), St Xavier's University, Kolkata, India*

ABSTRACT

Digital Marketing is an act that involves continuous, meticulous digital efforts in promoting the product. This industry is emerging at a faster rate in developing economies and competition is also found to be severe. It is necessary for digital marketers to keep the sites updated with relevant and useful information to get the attention of information seekers or buyers. Formulation of strategies with relevant content, well-crafted advertising plan, spreading the drafted information through social media, email, identifying the searches made by prospective buyers with the help of search engines are the essential things to be followed to become a successful digital marketer. This is a conceptual paper that focuses on the need, basic concepts, and perspectives of digital marketing by any marketer in the industry. The author provides an insight into the steps involved in developing a digital marketing strategy. The paper envisages the essentials of a good digital advertisement plan which ought to be adopted by all sectors and industries in this present digital age.

Key Words: *Digital Marketing, content strategy, Social Marketing, prospective buyers*

Digital Marketing is an act that involves a lot of digital efforts in promoting the product. It is done through electronic media which includes different methods such as social media, search and email marketing. Both digital and traditional marketing have similarities in the objective of attracting customers and retaining them to their side to achieve maximum profits. In traditional buying decisions were taken after a long thought process. Of course, the items sought were of high value. In digital purchase instantaneous decision is taken and some sites are keeping the customer need fulfilment as the top priority. This industry is emerging at a faster rate in developing economies and competition is also found to be severe. Prospective buyers come to know about the sites through advertisements, social media, or word-of-mouth advertising. So it becomes necessary for digital marketers to keep the sites updated with relevant and useful information to get the attention of information seekers or buyers.

STEPS INVOLVED IN DIGITAL MARKETING:

1. Development of digital marketing strategy
2. Develop a content marketing strategy
- 3 Drafting of a digital advertising plan
4. Understanding social media marketing
5. Following email marketing practices

6. Designing search marketing strategy
7. Applying search engine clues to digital marketing
8. Converting prospects to buyers to achieve growth

1. DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGY

The job of marketing is to convert a prospect to customers, bring more customers to their marketing net, and retain the customers with strong loyalty benefits.

Awareness: Information about the existence of a company among the prospects is essential. This can be done by a method that is most suitable and favourable to the company. The marketer can select any of the modes such as digital advertising, search marketing, social media methods.

Engagement: Maintaining touch with the prospects. This is almost maintained by all online service providers. They must maintain live chat with the customers when doubt or problems arise in the course of the decision-making or buying process.

Subscribe: After receiving the information from the site whether it is valued or not valued by them, it becomes necessary for a marketer to collect the details to have the same in the list. He can make use of this contact information to give him any additions made to his product or service line.

Convert: Digital marketer must maintain constant touch with the prospects by providing them the information relating to new entrant offers and discounts, add on coupons, etc., This was experienced by many when OLA Cabs entered the market with the object of providing easy and convenient travel without heavy capital investment. Once the customers are acquired the investment in advertising will get reduced and satisfied customers become good advertisers for the product.

Excite: The marketer must make the buyer excited in one way or the other to retain the goodwill created at the first instant and must be maintained in the future also. The value received from the first transaction must motivate him to search for the same site again.

Advocate: The most satisfied customers to be identified and asked to speak about the satisfaction and benefits derived from the product offered and not seen in other competing products. This has to be picturized.

Promote: This can be due to several factors like incentives offered, the type of service offered, unique behaviour of customer engagement, etc., This is very important because unpaid advertisers are created and the positive behaviour exhibited by them is immeasurable.

Ascend: At this stage, a marketer would have invested time, money, and resources which would necessitate him to look for profit. A marketer has to keep the offers continuing and achieve sales to compensate the loss arising from offers and discounts given.

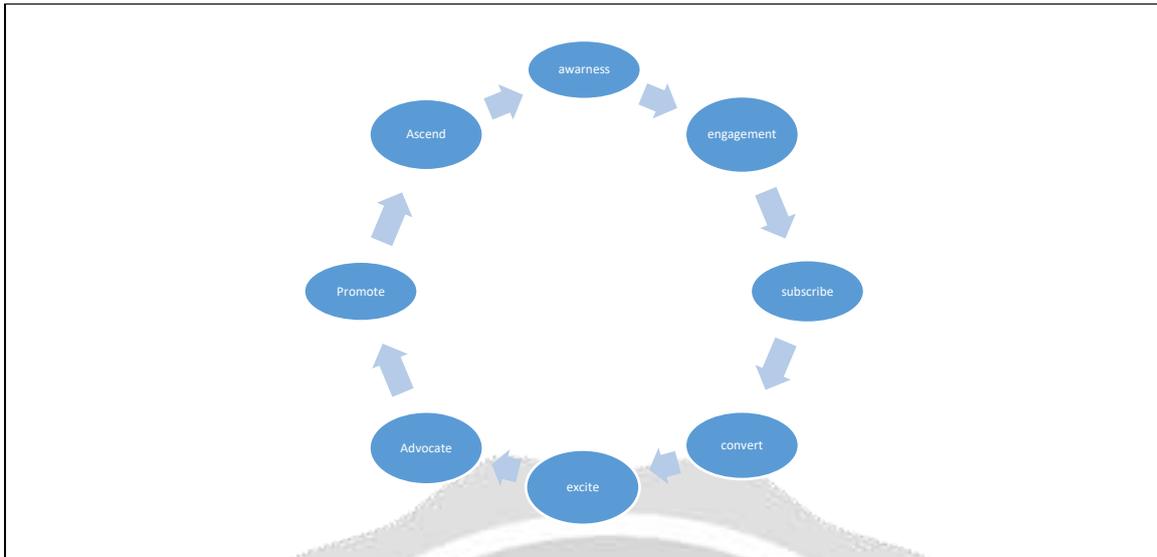


Fig.1- Steps involved in developing a digital marketing strategy
Source- Author compilation

2. DEVELOP A CONTENT MARKETING STRATEGY:

A marketer should not miss out on the prospects just because the needed information is not provided. By providing the right information at the time when it is needed will take a digital marketer a long way. All prospects go through the following three processes to become a customer.

Awareness: The prospect must get aware that there is a problem nothing but the existence of a need and must feel that the company has a solution which is the product or service satisfying the need felt by him.

Evaluation: Referring to various sites and evaluating the various options keeping in mind the need and fulfilment of the same

Conversion: Aim of the marketer to convert a suspect or prospect to a customer or buyer.

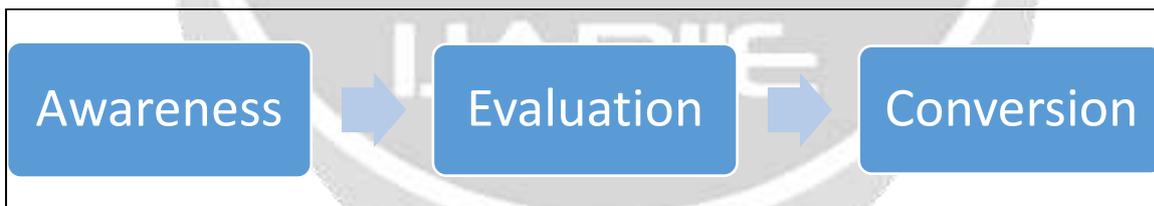


Fig.2- Points to be kept in mind by a marketer while designing a content marketing strategy
Source- Author compilation

Content at all levels is needed. Prospects completely unaware of a company's product. At this stage, it becomes necessary for the marketer to entertain, educate or inspire the prospects through blogs, social media updates, photographs, audio-video podcasts, or through print magazines. The main aim of this stage is to make the prospect to be aware of their problem and the solution offered. Once they reach this stage the marketer has to convert them to lead magnets. Lead magnets are fully aware of the problem and solution in a detailed manner and ready to make purchases provided the benefits are better than other companies.

Perfect content marketing is intent-based: Digital marketers must understand the existing intent and anticipating future intent and then creating a content strategy fulfilling the gaps found in existence.

It must be ascension-focused: To remove the fear of difference in the perceived image of a product and then purchased product free trials can be offered by the marketer if possible or customer care must be strengthened to overcome the resistance existing in the minds of prospects.

Content marketing can be cross-channel: Digital marketer can publish the content in more than one channel to have a wider reach and better retention in the minds of prospects

3. DRAFTING OF A DIGITAL ADVERTISING PLAN:

The main aim of the digital advertising plan is to push the prospects to the stage of customers. To launch an advertisement plant there are paid and unpaid platforms. Facebook, Google, YouTube, Linked In, and Twitter are some of the paid advertisement platforms. But it becomes necessary for a digital marketer to know about the hang-out place of his customers. But based on the business Insider survey Facebook and Google are the top sources of paid channels. An advertising plan is to be drafted keeping in mind the following three concepts: Awareness, Evaluation, and conversion

ESSENTIALS OF A GOOD DIGITAL ADVERTISEMENT PLAN:

Business is built around product and advertisement is around good offers, prompt delivery, safe payment mode, etc. Ad copy must have relevant content in a good form, creative, trustworthiness of ad. Sometimes the above-mentioned factors may not bring the desired results. So targeting with the following two principles to be followed. 1.Be as specific as possible,2. Frame the right message for the target audience.

Identification of avatars: Avatar can be an entrepreneur, stay-at-home mothers, consultants, students, etc. Avatar is a person who is interested in the ad created by a digital marketer.

Identification of hooks: Each benefit designed for a prospective buyer is defined as the hook. This will be designed based on a. feel.b. Status c. proof/results d. speed and automation

Creation of ad copy: Segmented message for each avatar with one hook to be created If this is inserted in a grid a marketer can find out how many ad designs to be created.

Preparation of Ad Creative can be done either by the marketer or by an outsider:

Setting up of ads and compilation of results: The digital marketer having gained knowledge on avatar, hook, and segmented messages, the addition of ad creative it is time to create the final ad copy

In digital advertising, it is better to invite new people to the website, get them to opt-in, and persuade them to buy.



Fig.3- Steps in drafting a digital advertising plan

Source- Author compilation

4. UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING:

To develop a successful social media strategy four things to be kept in mind. They are social listening, social influencing, social networking, and social selling.

Social Listening: This helps in understanding the needs of prospects. Based on the needs when ads are created, promoted through social media the gain resulting from it will be more. The possibility of ads getting the

attention of prospects will also be more. It also helps in getting feedback based on which corrections or improvements can be done to serve the target audience in a better way. While designing a service cell has to align itself with the needs of a prospect to meet the requirements of a prospect or a customer in a better way. Steps involved in this stage are:

Social influencing: As the marketers have been listening, it becomes easy for them to get the attitudes, opinions, and behaviour of them. At this stage, goals must be to boost the site traffic and increased awareness of products and offers.

Social Networking: Creating goodwill and turning that opportunity into a profitable partnership are goals achievable through networking.

Social skilling: Getting the prospects to your site must be the result of social skilling.

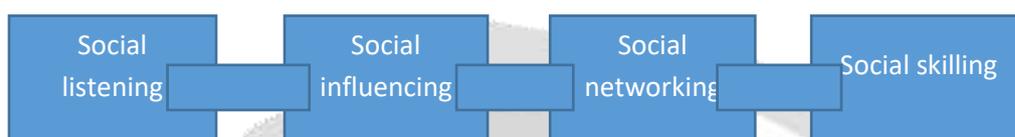


Fig.4- Steps to understand social media marketing

Source- Author compilation

5. FOLLOWING EMAIL MARKETING PRACTICES:

E-mail marketing can be used for retention, acquisition, branding, traffic, engagement, direct sales, and referral. The goal of an email is to assist or induce a person's behaviour by giving them information about the new arrival or changes made in the marketing of a product from seller's end mail can be used to provide customer service, (transactional) to maintain a continued relationship with customers (relational or to generate sales. (Promotional). Before concluding a transaction seller may have to contact the customer for different reasons such as order confirmation, shipping notices, and purchase receipts which are dealt with directly in traditional marketing. Where customers are separated physically from sellers it becomes necessary to correspond with them electronically.

Relational emails: welcoming new subscribers is essential to increase sales. It is done to introduce them to a wide variety of brands, new arrivals, the new line of products, etc. The same can be done through webinar, survey, and contest announcement

Promotional mails: Generating valuable content and sending the same to existing customers as well as to new subscribers is one of the essential requirements to boost sales. The valuable content can be new product releases, trial offers, upgrade offers, and the issue of discounts and coupons.

6. DESIGNING SEARCH MARKETING STRATEGY:

People search for messages mostly from mobiles. Web pages must be easily accessible. The web page of one's must be better than the other to attract the attention of searchers. This is a wonderful development in the field of digital marketing which assists the seller in understanding the needs of prospective customers and the purpose behind their search.

Web crawlers are commonly referred to search engine bots or spiders. Google is a dominant force in search and one of the most popular search engines worldwide. Other search engines available to prospective buyers are Bing, Yahoo, Baidu and Yandex. It becomes necessary of the business owners or marketers to understand the working of search engines.





Fig.5- Steps in search engine optimisation

Source- Author compilation

Search engine sends its spiders out to crawl the web.

The spiders take notes on the titles, keywords, description tags, navigation to learn what the site is about. This is the place where the marketer has to focus and deliver the content in the best possible manner.

The spiders consolidate their findings to determine where to serve the customers on the web. If a marketer or owner has succeeded in the second step success is definitely to his side.

7. APPLYING SEARCH ENGINE CLUES TO DIGITAL MARKETING:

Though customers are separated from sellers physically it does not act as a barrier for growth in digital marketing. The gap is removed with the help of search engines. The information collected using engines must be viewed seriously by a marketer and remove the problems faced by a customer at the time of the search. Here the data collected using search engines must be analysed thoroughly. Two types of metrics are used to process the data. 1. Key Metrics and Drill down metrics.

8. CONVERTING PROSPECTS TO BUYERS TO ACHIEVE GROWTH

Identification of goals, gathering data, analysing the collected data, creating a hypothesis, application of tests, and analysis of results are the continuous steps to be followed by a marketer to achieve constant growth. This is necessary as long as a man is in business

There is no boundary to what one can achieve in the digital business world. Technical and commercial skills to be developed to face the emerging challenges. Recent advancements in the field of technology help the marketer to understand and mimic human conversation and human behaviour

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