

A STUDY OF CUSTOMER'S BEHAVIOR TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

Due to ample innovations and technological advancements, Social media has gaining popularity in each and every part of the world. People are nowadays connected to each other with the help of social websites such as facebook, twitter any many more apps available on the internet. So each and every organization is concentrating upon social media and using it as a marketing tool due to its wide reach and economic characteristic. Therefore, Prime objective of this research paper is to measure consumer behavior towards social media marketing and relationship between social media and consumer behavior with the help of 150 respondents as sample size. Statistical tool correlation and frequency distribution is used to analyze the results and correlation value depicts that there is positive relationship between Social media marketing and consumer behavior.

INTRODUCTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Sharing news, photos, experiences and opinions on social media and being affected by them represents a quite natural process for a great number of people. Through the years, social media studies and research have increased interest in the web. In fact, the Internet is studied as a source of data about society and culture.

Social media is characterized by invisible codes which enable a type of ubiquitous connectivity. All one needs is internet connection to interact with others and to share information. The most broadly agreed features of social media may be presented in three parts: i) Public nature (free access to content, e.g. Twitter) and private nature (access restrictions, e.g. Instagram); ii) Communication (for instance, rapid and effective, relational maintenance, enable users to create content – real or fake, and communities according to common interests and so on); iii) information flow (instantaneous and fluid, public or controlled, traceable - through location, connections, profile, tags, retweets, use of @ and so on).

Second and equally important is social media performance - usually measured by number of likes, views or retweets, for instance. Performance might be influenced by a popular user opinion or by a group of people with common interests within a community.

Social media such as Facebook, twitter and YouTube are dynamic tools that facilitate online relationships. It is a relatively low cost firm of marketing and allows organizations to engage in direct and end-user contact. Given the choices made available to consumers and the influential role of social media marketing, the brands and consumers have a changing role to play in the organization's strategy in that they now have an economic impact. Brands influence customer choice and these customers influence other customers. These changes of events affect purchases, which further affect future earning and long term organization sustainability.

So, after the introduction or emergence of social media, each and every organization started to perform their marketing activities on those social media websites which are frequently used by the people due to the advent of technological advancements and internet.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. It blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology and economics. It attempts to understand the decision-making processes of buyers, both individually and in groups. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics and behavioral variables in an attempt to understand people's wants. It also tries to assess influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends, reference groups, and society in general. In a consumer buying behavior, the customer plays three distinct roles of user, payer and buyer. Consumer behavior is very difficult to predict, even for experts in the field. It is influenced by internal conditions such as demographics, psychographics (lifestyle), personality, motivation, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. Psychological factors include an individual's motivation, perception, attitude and belief, while personal factors include income level, personality, age, occupation and lifestyle. Behavior can also be affected by external influences, such as culture, sub-culture, locality, royalty, ethnicity, and family, social class, past experience reference groups, lifestyle, and market mix factors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The advent of social media has created a new landscape which lays out a new grid of personal connections. Businesses see enormous opportunities and are eager to tap into the trend, whereas consumers are put back to the center in the business world because of social media. There are many studies explaining reasons to tap into social media and to help companies to gain a better position in the transition; yet a few intends to study from the perspective of consumers, let alone those in Finland. Oftentimes, consumers feel differently from what marketers think, for instance what "brand engagement" via social media looks like to consumers may not be quite what marketers think (Sniderman, 2012).

Internet and virtual communities have transformed consumers, societies, and corporations with wide spread access to information, better social networking and enhanced communication abilities (Kuruk and Krishnamurthy, 2007). Therefore social networks are defined to be websites which link millions of users from all over the world with same interests, views and hobbies. Blogs, YouTube, MySpace, Facebook are examples of social media that are popular among all level of consumers. (Sin, *et al.*, 2012)

The unique aspects of social media and its immense popularity have revolutionized marketing practices such as advertising and promotion. Social media has also influenced consumer behavior from information acquisition to post-purchase behavior such as dissatisfaction statements or behaviors about a product or a company. (Elisabeta,ivona,2014)

In the last few years can be noticed a great influence of the companies on online networks. Social media websites provide an opportunity for businesses to engage and interact with potential consumers, encourage an increased sense of intimacy with consumers, and build all important relationships with potential consumers. (Mersey, *et al.*, 2010)

Currently, e-commerce can be done through social media, and it enables to reach to more potential buyers. Due to the advantages of social media in connecting businesses directly to end-consumers, in a timely manner and at a low cost (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010), has been seen that a great influence on customer perceptions and behaviors and has been brought in the center of attention in different industries in the last few years.

English Dictionary (2013) as the "methods for advertising products, services, or brands using the Internet, by attracting the interest of groups of people who discuss them, make suggestions about them, etc. online". In addition, Hersant (2011) revealed that social media marketing is about "targeting specific customers and engaging them with something that is direct, memorable and meaningful to them".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the consumer behavior towards social media marketing.
- To measure the awareness of social media marketing in the consumers of Punjab.
- To analyze the co-relation between Social media marketing & consumer behavior.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is to assess the overall customer behavior, response of customers with regard to the social media marketing strategies adopted by the organizations.

This study is restricted to 3 districts of Punjab which are Mansa, Bathinda and Patiala. The factors to measure the attitude toward social media marketing are Trust in Information from personal sources, reactions to online advertisements, Experience using social media, Log in pattern, Time spent per Login session, frequently used websites & concern for privacy.

SAMPLING DESIGN

In the present study data was collected from 150 customers by using Convenience sampling technique. The locale of the study was restricted to three districts of Punjab named as Mansa, Bathinda and Patiala.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Research involves getting primary and secondary data. As an essential part of the study, the primary data (first-hand information for this study) were collected from 150 customers with the help of a questionnaire from the respondents belonging to different age groups. The sample group includes college students, housewives, financially independent ladies & working men. The contact method was personal approach.

Secondary data was collected from journals, reports, books, records, magazines and internet.

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Frequency distribution test has been used for Studying consumer behavior & to check the awareness among the customers. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistical tool has been used for finding the correlation between social media marketing & consumer behavior.

In order to collect information about “customer behavior towards social media marketing” 150 questionnaires were distributed to consumers. The responses are tabulated, analyzed and explained below:

- Most frequently visited social media website

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentage
Facebook	70	47%
Twitter	15	10%
Linkedin	15	10%
Youtube	50	33%
Total	150	100%

Table depicts that highest people (47%) uses facebook to interact with people and then youtube which is used by 33% respondents.

- Information experience

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentage
Good	100	66%
Bad	30	20%
Worst	20	14%
Total	150	100%

Table 2 shows that 66% respondents found that the experience regarding social media website's regarding providing information was good and 20% customers feel bad and 14 % said it was worst.

- Reasons of visiting social websites

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentage
Entertainment	75	50%
Information	30	20%
Business	30	20%
Time spending	15	10%
Total	150	100%

Table 3 depicts that most people uses social websites for entertainment purposes and least used it for time spending.

- Categories of ads most frequently seen

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentage
Facebook ads	70	47%
You tube videos	30	20%
E mails	30	20%
Text messages	20	13%
Total	150	100%

Table 4 shows that Mostly ads seen by people are on facebook walls whilw some people said that they got notifications through you tube videos and emails.

- Reasons for following brands on social media

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentage
Exclusive deals/offers	70	47%
Interesting or entertainment content	50	33%
Suggested by friends	30	20%
Total	150	100%

Table 5 explores the various reasons of following brands on social media which resultant to most people because of exclusive deals and some people follow because of suggestions by friends.

- Positive reaction to online ads

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	60	40%
Agree	30	20%
Neutral	15	10%
Disagree	30	20%

Strongly disagree	15	10%
Total	150	100%

Table 6 represents the feedback of customers that how they feel regarding social media advertisement, in which 40 % people said they have positive reaction towards online ads while 10% are completely in opposite direction.

- Factor affects customer behavior most

Particulars	Number of respondents	Percentage
Trust	60	40%
Privacy	30	20%
Log in time/pattern	30	20%
Convenient content	30	20%
Total	150	100%

Table 7 explains the Trust factor mostly affect the behavior of consumer and 20 % customer said that privacy must be there and 20 % customers gone for convenient content, log in time and pattern of social media websites.

CORRELATION MATRIX

	Social Media Marketing	Consumer Behavior
Social Media Marketing	1	
Consumer Behavior	0.71	1

From the above data analysis by determining the Pearson correlation coefficient, we can interpret that, there is positive correlation between social media marketing & consumer behavior.

FINDINGS

From the above data analysis by applying Statistical technique correlation analysis it can be stated that there is positive correlation between Social media marketing & consumer behavior. The correlation value 0.71 is near to 1 which depicts the positivity in the relationship. In addition, frequency distribution technique was used to measure the consumer behavior and awareness regarding social media marketing, which depicts that customers are aware regarding various social media marketing strategies.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has the following limitations:

The study of customer behavior towards social media marketing is a very vast subject consisting of a number of dimensions. Only a few dimensions / aspects were studied in this study.

Only 150 customers have been selected and studied due to limited time & resources.

The sampling technique was convenient sampling because of knowledge of social websites was necessary for responses. Hence, the conclusion drawn is specific and cannot be generalized.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the research is to analyze the “Customer behavior towards social media marketing” which is found to be positive and all objectives are satisfied with the collected data. Social media is an effective tool of marketing nowadays due to usage of internet by large population and positively related with consumer purchase reaction. So each and every organization is establishing itself virtually to cater the needs customer in most convenient manner. Frequency of spreading the message is also very fast and economical via social media.

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