

NEW TRENDS IN DIGITAL MEDIA & SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

Numerous methods exist for marketers to connect with and engage consumers through social media. Social media significantly impacts both people and businesses, and this essay explores the future of social media marketing in this context. Consumers, companies, and governmental organizations all anticipate the future of social media marketing. This article explores recent advancements in social media marketing, focusing on its importance, challenges, opportunities, and risks in the current intensely competitive global marketplace.

Keywords: - Social media marketing, Content, Promotion, Social media platforms

INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing is shifting from generic viral reach toward raw human authenticity, AI-driven operational workflows, and social-first search optimization. Brands now rely on AI for rapid creation, yet value genuine community bonds over synthetic perfection.

In numerous homes, modern technology such as social media has simplified the process for consumers to gather information about a product prior to their purchase. With the rise in social media users, it is vital for companies to utilize this emerging marketing avenue to connect with their clientele. "Social Media Marketing" refers to utilizing social media platforms to drive traffic to your website or to increase its visibility. The emphasis of numerous social media marketing campaigns is on creating engaging content that individuals would genuinely want to share across their social networks. Unlike purchased media, earned media is generated when a message circulates from individual to individual and appears to originate from a credible source instead of directly from the brand or company. Businesses and individuals can engage via social networking sites to create relationships and communities. It's similar to word of mouth in the digital realm or at the very least e-word of mouth. By employing advanced semantic analysis technology, marketers can identify buying signals like online inquiries and information exchanged by others. Due to their social networking features, mobile phones allow for quick access to the internet and social media platforms, rendering mobile phone usage an effective tool for social media marketing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The idea of using celebrities (in consumer markets) or well-known opinion leaders (in business markets), who have a high social value, to influence others is a well-known marketing strategy (Knoll and Matthes 2017). However, the omnipresence of social media has tremendously increased the accessibility and appeal of this approach. For example, Selena Gomez has over 144 million followers on Instagram and she engages with each of her posts. In 2018, the exposure of a single photo shared by her was valued at \$3.4 million (Maxim 2018). However, she comes at a high price: one post that Selena sponsors for a brand can cost upwards of \$800,000 (Mejia 2018). However, putting high valuations on mere on-line exposures or collecting Blikes for specific posts can be somewhat speculative, as academic research shows that acquiring Blikes on social media might have no effect on consumers' attitudes or behaviors (John et al. 2017; Mochon et al. 2017).

Moreover, Hennig Thureau et al. (2015), show that while garnering positive WOM has little to no effect on consumer preferences, negative WOM can have a negative effect on consumer preferences.

While celebrities like Selena Gomez are possible influencers for major brands, these traditional celebrities are so expensive that smaller brands have begun, and will continue to, capitalize on the popularity and success of what is referred to as Bmicro influencers, representing a new form of influencers. Micro-influencers are influencers who are not as well-known as celebrities, but who have strong and enthusiastic followings that are usually more targeted, amounting anywhere between a few thousand to hundreds of thousands of followers (Main 2017). In general, these types of influencers are considered to be more trustworthy and authentic than traditional celebrities, which is a major reason influencer marketing has grown increasingly appealing to brands (Enberg 2018). These individuals are often seen as credible experts in what they post about, encouraging others to want to view the content they create and engage with them.

Furthermore, using these influencers allows the brand via first-person narration (compared to ads), which is considered warmer and more personal, and was shown to be more effective in engaging consumers (Chang et al. 2019).

THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The fundamental objective of this study is to determine the problems that are associated with social media marketing, as well as the difficulties that are experienced and the probable solutions for these concerns.

Secondary objectives of the study: -

- 1) To investigate and gain a better understanding of the effect that social media marketing has on customers
- 2) To gain a better understanding of the difficulties and potential solutions associated with social media marketing

THE QUERY FOR THE RESEARCH

The most difficult aspect of social media marketing is coming up with a strategy for using the platform.

Take a critical look at your performance.

Increasing the size of your audience.

enhancing the level of participation from the audience

Developing a strategy that utilizes multiple channels.

Marketing via social media is considered by many to be of a lower priority than other tasks. Its purpose is to drive some additional traffic to your blog, but most businesses don't make any changes to their pages beyond enabling the auto-publishing tools offered by certain platforms. They are not experiencing the benefits of an actual social approach, despite the fact that it does not require a lot of effort on their part.

These social media marketing issues necessitate effortful effort. The good news is that you can enter the ring with your gloves up if you know what they are.

Understanding the obstacles, you will face throughout a social media campaign will go a long way toward assuring your success. But if you desire true ROI, you must be willing to invest effort in

separating yourself from the noise. This requires anticipating the hurdles you will meet so that you are not obliged to pursue the same basic route as everyone else.

Few companies effectively integrate social media into their marketing or lead generation strategies, despite the fact that the majority of companies have social media accounts. They do not recognize the advantages of each channel or prioritize the aspects that make it desirable. Then, when they're in the middle of a campaign and not seeing results, they criticize the efficacy of social media platforms instead of recognizing the real issue.

Organizations will be able to get better results if they are ready for the challenges of social media. You won't be stuck in mediocrity like brands who don't put much thought into social media.

5 BIGGEST SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING CHALLENGES

1. Designing a Social Media Marketing Strategy

Companies must first figure out how to create a social media marketing plan. Unless you have a clear strategy in place, you run the danger of executing an ineffective campaign on one of the various platforms available.

Research is the first step toward overcoming this challenge. You may learn a lot about your industry's best practices by seeing what your competitors are doing with their tactics. It's better to focus on the greatest social networking sites and post types rather than trying to imitate exactly what they're doing.

SMART goals can be developed if organizations have a clear picture of what they can achieve. Achieving your goals without first conducting adequate research will almost certainly result in frustration. Unlike a B2C cosmetics brand, a B2B data storage tool is unlikely to experience the same success on Instagram.

As the last step, make sure that your outcomes can be accurately measured. Many marketing professionals aren't taking advantage of the built-in data on most platforms. You can't develop SMART goals until you have a strategy for tracking your metrics.

In the end, if you can construct ads around your target demographic, rather than your product, you'll see a higher level of engagement. As a business, you should place a high value on taking a customer-centric approach to marketing.

A common error is for businesses to assume that customers are loyal because they like what they're getting. However, the real reason they're following your account is that they have an issue that needs to be solved and your brand is positioned to support them in doing just that.

2. Analyzing Your Performance

One of the most probable causes social media efforts fail is because they lack a strategy on how to use the data they collect. To commence, make certain you're tracking the appropriate metrics. "Likes" aren't as beneficial as new followers or shares when it comes to promoting an organization's brand. Your judgments will be influenced by the data you collect if you know what each measure implies for your campaign.

Utilizing the appropriate instruments is the simplest method for achieving this objective. While native analytics are excellent, they frequently do not collect all the necessary data. This is where Social Analytics from HubSpot comes in. The platform will monitor social mentions and standard statistics for an organization's social streams, and it will also permit you to automatically publish fresh material wherever you require it to be published.

The best thing about HubSpot's tool, though, is that it links data tracking to their customer relationship management (CRM) tool, so you can see how each of your leads is doing. This gives you more information and lets you see how people use your social media accounts at different points in the buyer's journey.

If you can break data into more manageable pieces, organizations will be able to find more direct correlations while looking for other insights. You wouldn't look at all your social media accounts in one feed, but when looking for insights, many marketers don't look at certain types of posts or topics. By splitting it up, you can see exactly what works on each platform without having to guess.

3. Growing Your Audience

At some point, every brand will have to deal with the challenge of attracting new customers.

In order to achieve this, there are numerous techniques and methods that can be used, but many brands resort to purchasing followers.

To increase your mailing list, you should avoid buying an audience. As a result, not only is the practice dishonest, but those customers lack a connection to or interest in your brand. Even though they don't care about solving the problem like your real customers, they won't respond to your posts.

Hub Spot, for example, frequently posts polls, questions, and surveys on Twitter in order to keep its active audience engaged and attract new followers.

Instead of wasting time and money trying to attract people who don't actually want to support your brand, focus on providing valuable and engaging content that entices those who do. Focusing on content for a more narrowly defined audience allows organizations to go into greater depth about a given topic, resulting in higher-quality content that keeps readers interested and encourages them to share it.

While you're giving them the information, they need to solve their problem, make an effort to converse with them as well. Customers enjoy hearing back from you. When they feel like they have a personal connection to your brand, they are more likely to engage with your social media pages.

4. Increasing Audience Engagement

It's one of the most difficult aspects of social media marketing to get people to interact with your brand even when you have a large following.

You need to know what your target audience likes and needs in order to best address this challenge. Content distribution becomes much easier once you've figured it out.

If you can't figure out what your target audience wants to change about their status, this becomes more difficult. You see, people are always on the lookout for ways to better themselves, even if they don't realise it. It's up to you as a social media marketer to show them how your product can help them achieve a better status. Unless you can demonstrate that their situation will improve, they'll prefer to remain where they are. This means that even if they win a free prize, they won't share your content because it won't help them rise in the eyes of their followers.

It's unlikely that an infographic on laxatives will go viral unless it's amusing. An alternative approach to making the topic "cool" would be more effective because some people may be embarrassed to discuss it in public.

Your efforts will be bolstered if you start a dialogue in your posts. Even if you have to start the conversation, more people will come out of the woodwork if you ask questions or create polls that

elicit discussion. You're encouraging them to engage with you by liking and sharing their content.

Take a look at these 20 questions to fine-tune your buyer personas to better understand your target audience.

5. Creating a Cross-Channel Approach

You'll miss out on a lot of potential customers if you limit yourself to just one channel.

Social media managers who only focus on a single platform can develop tunnel vision and miss out on other opportunities. The places where your audience congregates shouldn't be overlooked even if you are speaking to them on their preferred platform.

It is possible to learn more about your target audience by utilizing multiple social media platforms. People have different preferences when it comes to different types of media. This information can help you better target your audience.

Each social media platform has a specific time of day and type of content that performs better than others. The best way to approach each channel is to establish workflows for publishing and sharing that are best suited to the parameters of that channel. Our research here will assist you in choosing the right time and subject matter for your posts.

These challenges must be faced if your social strategies are to succeed for the organization. There are far too many marketers who do the minimum and expect more.

To get the most out of your social media marketing, it's important to conquer the following obstacles.

Research Methods: In order to conduct this research, data were gathered from secondary sources such as books, journal articles, and websites.

Managerial and Practical Implications: Management in the organization will benefit from this study's findings by better appreciating the significance of social media marketing and anticipating its evolving trends in the future.

Theoretical Implication

Facebook is used by 68 percent of Americans, and YouTube by 73 percent, according to the Pew Research Center. Social media has evolved into a powerful marketing tool over the years. The social media landscape is evolving at a rapid pace, just like other forms of marketing. It's imperative that you stay up to date on the latest social media trends in order to stay relevant. The social media marketing strategy of an organization must also be future-proof. Each social media platform must be examined to see what works and what doesn't. This can assist organizations in making the most of their social media posts across all platforms.

THE FUTURE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Influencer Marketing

Social media has embraced influencer marketing in a big way. On Google Trends, it has even surpassed print marketing in terms of popularity. People with a large following on social media can collaborate with brands by leveraging their influence.

Featured image courtesy of Google Trends

Brands pay influencers to spread the word about their products to their respective followings. Brands, on the other hand, are on the lookout for trustworthy influencers with whom to work together in order to reach their intended audience.

It's important to note, however, that influencer marketing on social media isn't just for those with large fan bases. Big influencers are getting more and more expensive for small businesses as their fame grows.

As a result, the rise of micro-influencers has been observed.

There are fewer followers for micro-influencers than there are for big influencers, but their audiences are more engaging with them on social media. In addition, they charge a lot less for sponsored content than well-known influencers. SME collaboration with micro-influencers and brand promotion is now more affordable for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs).

Nano-influencers exist similarly to micro-influencers. This group of influencers has fewer than 10,000 followers. Although companies may not be able to reach a large audience, they can benefit from the nano-influencers' tightly knit audiences. Moreover, collaborating with these lesser influencers on social media platforms does not require a significant expense.

As they may be just beginning their influencer marketing travels, they may be looking for a secure alliance. It might be an excellent launching point for a long-term partnership with these social media influencers.

Given the number of false profiles on social media, however, locating trustworthy social media influencers can be difficult. Organizations must assess each social media profile and social media usage to determine whether or not it is authentic.

Organizations can avoid this problem by utilizing influencer discovery platforms. They can simplify the entire process of locating an influencer.

CHATBOTS AND AI

On social media, chatbots are a hot new trend. Social media has made it easier than ever for customers to get in touch with companies.

As a result, it is critical that brands respond as fast as possible to customer inquiries via social media. Chatbots can come to the rescue in instances where it is difficult to get a human to respond immediately.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the future of social media marketing since it allows you to converse with your customers. Numerous firms are making use of AI-powered chatbots on Facebook Messenger to market their products and even answer client complaints.

Collect. chat is a wonderful chatbot for businesses to use. Scheduling meetings and gathering leads on social media is a breeze with this chatbot. To develop this chatbot, you don't need any coding experience. It can be created using its drag-and-drop chatbot builder, which is simple to use. If you're a Mastercard user, you'll be able to talk to a chatbot about your finances.

To boost customer happiness, more organizations are turning to AI-powered customer support. It's useful for quick answers that don't necessitate human intervention.

As a result, the customers are able to get their issues resolved quickly. There has been a lot of progress in AI, and chatbots may be confidently expected to be here to stay.

EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY

There has been an increase in the number of phoney influencers since the introduction of influencer marketing. In order to gain a following and become a legitimate influencer, some people pretend to have relationships with brands.

To determine the credibility of influencers, brands must devote a significant amount of time and resources to studying their social media profiles and the content they post. Employee advocacy will rise in a time when it is difficult to trust influencers.

It's possible for your staff to spread the word about your company on social media. Encourage your staff to use social media to spread the word about your company. One approach to do this is to provide them with some social media content that they may share with their followers. Another option is to provide them with a reason to help spread the word about your brand via social media.

On the internet, there are several ways to get your staff talking about your company. Drum Up is one such tool that organizations can make use of. There's no better way to keep workers up-to-date on corporate news than by using this platform. The social media posts can be scheduled with a single click, allowing your employees to help spread the word about your brand.

Using this platform, you can also add an industry news feed to keep your personnel up to date on the newest industry developments. Workers can be reliable sources of information for a company. If you can get them to promote your brand on social media, you'll be more likely to get noticed. If this tendency continues, social media marketing and influencer marketing could be in jeopardy.

DRIVING SALES THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

When it comes to generating interaction and sales, social media has long been utilized. However, the latter has become a strong trend. Sales can be made on social media by providing brands with the essential tools for promotion. The buyer journey can be charted using advanced tracking techniques such as the Facebook Pixel. It's also important to keep posting high-quality content on a regular basis in order to achieve this goal.

So, what are your options here?

The use of tools like Hub Spot, which streamlines social network publication, is an excellent way to streamline your efforts. Your campaigns can be published straight on social media. It's also possible to schedule your posts in advance so that they'll appear exactly when you want them to. Using the service, you can also monitor and engage with your audience's social mentions. You can use this to boost sales. 55% of consumers who found a product on social media later purchased it, according to Kleiner Perkins. Facebook is the most popular social media network for discovering new products. In addition to Instagram and Pinterest, this fad is taking on fast. The featured image is courtesy of Kleiner Perkins.

As a result, you can use these social media sites to produce continuous revenue. Sales pitches are no longer essential. In order to get your target customers to buy from you, you can use social media. Your social media marketing strategy should include paid social media promotions for your products.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGAGEMENT

On social media, engagement has always been an extremely important factor. On the other hand, with the recent adjustment in Facebook's algorithm that places a greater emphasis on meaningful interactions, its significance has increased even further. This indicates that information that initiates authentic interactions has been more valued in recent times. If you want to increase the organic reach of your website, the information you publish needs to be really engaging. This means that it should also be fascinating and enticing to the people you are trying to reach. It is not sufficient to just request that people like, share, and comment on your posts that are published on social media. You need to adjust your strategy and move away from using approaches that are designed to entice people into engaging with you. Authentic content will be essential to the success of social media marketing in the

years to come.

THE RISE OF GROUPS

For the first time, groups on Facebook have added live video content, narrative updates, and business page involvement. Because of Facebook's recent algorithmic adjustments, Groups have risen to prominence as the preferred method of connecting with your target audience on the social media platform.

You can use Groups to gather feedback on your items, but you can also use them to drive more interest. Instagram influencers have started making their profiles private in the same way. To avoid the Instagram algorithm's effects, this is done.

An influencer named Sonny made all of his memes accounts private and discovered that the growth rate was far better than when he left them open.

"Close Friends" is another option on Instagram Stories. This allows brands to share their stories with a small group of individuals in order to give them a behind-the-scenes glimpse. People may even feel more privileged if they can only see these Stories as part of an elite club. Social media marketing's growth and development will be shaped by such segmentation patterns for the foreseeable future.

TRANSPARENCY

There were numerous privacy scandals involving major social media sites like Facebook in 2018. Customers' personal information is likewise protected by the GDPR, which came into force on May 25, 2018.

Only 55% of customers believe, according to Sprout Social, that firms are open and honest on social media. However, only 15% of respondents said they were open and honest.

IMAGE VIA SPROUT SOCIAL

Brands need to do a lot more to become more transparent on social media, according to this striking statistic. It is also expected that millennials want companies on social media to be the most open. As a result, you'll need to step up your game by owning up to your errors or at the very least, responding to them honestly.

The same survey indicated that the most popular wish of consumers is for brands to be open and honest with them. Business practices, corporate principles, and product change all fall under this umbrella term. As a result, you should be open about the adjustments you make to your products and give a glimpse into the workings of your business. With images, videos, and live Q&A sessions, you can do so.

Transparency on social media increases consumer confidence. Gaining a customer's confidence can lead to increased revenue. As a result, in the world of social media marketing, openness is the name of the game.

STORIES

Snapchat was where stories first began. But this feature was quickly added to Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. People can make a lot of different kinds of content with these mostly vertical Stories, which usually last for 24 hours.

Every day, about 500 million people watch Instagram Stories. In the same way, you can see Facebook stories on Messenger and on Facebook on your computer.

They are very interesting, and millennials are interested in them because they can interact with them. As many as 60% of them check out Stories on Instagram, 53% on Snapchat, and 48% on Facebook. Image via VidMob. Because they get so much attention, they have become a popular way for brands to market themselves. Also, they are easy to make and don't need a lot of editing afterward. But the main reason they are so popular is that they don't take too long to watch. This makes it easy for people to watch them while they're on the go.

Even LinkedIn has recently joined the Stories trend. This goes to show how well they work. So, it's safe to say that Stories will be a big part of social media marketing in the future.

LIVE VIDEOS

Live video content is another popular trend on social media. Live videos were launched first on YouTube in 2008 and then on Facebook in 2016. Even Instagram added this feature later on. A study conducted by Brandlive noted that about 95% of marketers were planning to add live videos to their social media marketing strategies. There are a lot of things you can do through live videos such as launching new products. You can even demonstrate your products and create how-to live videos. This can help your audience get acquainted with the product better too. Tastemade, for example, used Facebook Live to create a how-to video for their products. A live video gives your audience the opportunity to interact with you in real-time and clear their doubts.

This can help generate additional engagement and make the interaction exciting for them too.

You can even give your brand a more human touch by creating Q&A live video sessions. These add a human element and allow the consumers to get their doubts solved during the video itself by talking to you. Sephora frequently does Q&A live videos on Facebook to generate engagement and resolve their customers' queries.

Image via Facebook

The rising importance of video marketing cannot be ignored and is definitely a trend that will define the future of social media marketing.

IMPORTANCE OF MESSAGING

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AUGMENTED REALITY

It is possible that we are currently utilizing AR without even realizing it when we use the filters on

social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat. It's possible to change your face's appearance and take pictures and videos with it. Even during video calls, Facebook Messenger allows for the use of AR.

AR hasn't yet been utilized to promote items, although this could change in the future. Try on branded glasses and buy them straight now, for example.

Instagram has already implemented these functionalities, and we can expect to see other firms do the same.

Medium is where I got this image.

AR is not only entertaining to play with and experiment with but it can also be used in real life. As a result, it's an effective marketing technique. Such AR advertising has already been introduced by Facebook as a way to make purchasing on Facebook even more interesting to its users. It's possible that this will become a new trend in social media marketing in the years to come.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The use of social media in marketing is only going to increase in the future. AI-powered chatbots, augmented reality, and social commerce is becoming increasingly popular among marketers, and you should follow their lead and use social media to generate leads and sales. To stay relevant in the ever-changing world of social media marketing, however, it is essential to comprehend and utilize the new features of different social networks. 61 percent of companies expect to boost their Instagram marketing spending in 2021, making Instagram the next significant social media channel to watch.

There will be no shortage of social media marketing opportunities on Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Although TikTok has received a lot of attention, it is yet to become a popular alternative for marketers. Because so many people do not have social media accounts, it is impossible for social media to totally replace traditional forms of marketing. Many people on social media don't interact with brands or others. Social media marketing, on the other hand, is expected to grow in importance as more people use it.

The biggest social media marketing trends in the future will be:

Artificial intelligence (AI) and chatbots (chatbots), employee advocacy (employee advocacy), live videos (live videos), augmented reality (AR)

User-generated content (UGC) can be encouraged through remixing, and brands can participate in current viral conversations.

Marketing through memes and conversation

UGC will continue to grow in the future.

It'll be all about laser-focused advertising for brands.

Niche social media networks are expected to fare quite well.

For consumers, content providers, and marketers alike, Instagram will continue to be a go-to platform.

In the future, the scope of social commerce will widen.

The use of social media, artificial intelligence, and chatbots for customer support will continue.

The popularity of online video will continue to grow.

The use of various social media networks is currently experiencing significant growth. More than 80%

of the 4.66 billion people on the earth who have access to the internet are active users of social networking sites, and it is anticipated that this percentage will continue to rise. A few years ago, we were content only to receive likes from friends and family members; today, we exchange advice and expertise, advertise services, buy things, and so on.

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