

Are Digital Marketing Methods as Effective as Primary Marketing Tactics?

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ABSTRACT

With the introduction of the internet, we saw a rapid shift from traditional means of marketing, such as pamphlets and posters, to social media and internet ads. This report amalgamates both primary and secondary research to explore whether the current marketing strategies being used by companies are truly as effective as those of the past, especially during the evolution of technology.

Introduction:

The 21st century is witnessing a revolution of rapidly changing trends, and marketing must change as well to keep up with consumer preferences and tastes (Durmaz and Efendioglu, 2016; Todor 2016). Since the 1960's, the main means of marketing was through newspapers, posters, pamphlets and radio. However, with the evolving digital world and the rise of online platforms such as social media and search engine advertisements, traditional marketing has declined. (Eriksen, 2019). As our world becomes more digitally sophisticated, this research seeks to determine if the current marketing techniques employed by businesses are as effective as those employed in the past. It has been suggested that the enhanced convenience and efficiency of digital marketing make this strategy is easier for companies to follow, and hence, the shift can be viewed in a positive light. After having conducted a thorough literature review, it was challenging to find a conclusive result. This research paper aims to weigh a balanced argument by exploring various perspectives and sources. In contrast to the variety of information available in published articles, this paper differs. Most research focuses only on one side of the argument, rather than both, and many fail to make a coherent argument. This paper aims to target brands, companies, and advertisers who are struggling to catch up with ever-changing consumer preferences, and, towards the end of the paper, suggests recommendations for success. Moreover, while most papers chose to focus only on either the pros or cons of digital and traditional marketing respectively, this paper examines both sides.

Literature Review:

Based on the literature, we can draw the conclusion that companies that use technology well readily engage with clients while delivering products or services. Furthermore, digital marketing is vital for branding, generating awareness, and driving sales through compelling engagement, since attention-grabbing graphics are particularly effective on social media (Raju, n.d.). Through the convenience of two-way communication, the customer can also ask questions and offer suggestions regarding the goods and services for businesses. In addition, digital marketing tactics, especially social media, result in visibility with a diverse audience. (Todor, 2016; Onishi, 2011). It allows for the propagation of individual ideas and has a following, promoting more engagement between the business and the customer on a personal basis. On integrating secondary research, traditional marketing techniques, such as physical marketing material, local TV ads, or billboards, place the firm at the heart of the community and consumer base (Durmaz and Efendioglu, 2016; Yakup, 2019) . Consequently, the efforts to contact the target audience will appear more natural

and less corporate. Traditional marketing tactics allow business owners to meet potential consumers at conferences or trade exhibitions, which may also allow for customized marketing. (Dwivedi et al., 2020) Traditional marketing, however, presents numerous challenges that might be tough to overcome. As the number of touch points and options for marketing outreach grows, businesses may easily burn through cash on initiatives that offer nothing if they are not focused on ‘who’ and ‘how’ (Tater, 2016). Traditional marketing is sometimes less quantifiable than digital marketing. Digital media can track data at every

Methodology:

Mixed methods can be used in a single study to broaden and strengthen its reliability and relevance, provided these methods maintain integrated focus on the core research question (Yin, 2019). To evaluate secondary sources, I have consulted papers and recent studies produced by reputable business and marketing experts, as well as reports from university researchers, all of which have shown expert testimonial and opinion. A balance of both primary and secondary data for a thorough review of the topic at hand was used. To attain primary information, a survey was designed and then sent out to 90 consumers, asking the respondent to choose between various digital and traditional ads, and were subsequently asked to explain their consumer choices. By carrying out random sampling with respondents in ages 14-64, deeper insight was gained into the correlation between preferred marketing methods and age of the customer profile. Random sampling allowed me to gain the perspective of various ages, genders, and socio-economic backgrounds. A mix of qualitative and quantitative questions were asked. This allows for a more comprehensive picture from the use of both quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. Ethical concerns were avoided by ensuring that no personal identifiable information or specific responses were included from the survey. Furthermore, the variety of questions based both on visual examples of advertisements and personal testimonials of participants allowed for a comprehensive analysis. Moreover, the quantitative responses provide statistics to analyze the validity of the claims.

Results:

After having surveyed 90 participants ages 14-64, a comprehensive conclusion can be drawn. One of the most notable outcomes was that 60% of viewers did not think that a newspaper advert for fast food was effective, and 59% rated the advert 0/5 (0 being ‘This advertisement is not effective’, and 5 being, ‘this advertisement is extremely effective’). However, when presented with a search engine advertisement for a similar fast-food product, an overwhelming 89% of participants responded that they would like to buy the product/service. The following data can be seen in the figures below:

Would you buy the product based on the Search Engine advert below?

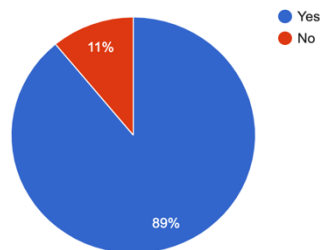


Fig. 1

How effective is the newspaper ad presented?

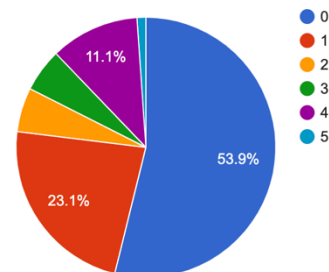


Fig. 2

Furthermore, when asked to rank which of the following means of advertisement affected their buying choices, with the options of posters, radio, video ads such as YouTube ads and Social media ads and ads on search engines (E.g., Google Ads). 56% respondents ranked social media and search engine advertisements first. Radio is the least likely to affect buying decisions; only 7% of respondents ranked this option first, whereas 57% ranked this option last.

When participants were asked the last time they purchased a product via social media, 34% responded that they had done so within the last month. Approximately 17.8% had done so within the last 2 days, and 25% reported having never purchased a product through social media. This can be represented on the chart below:

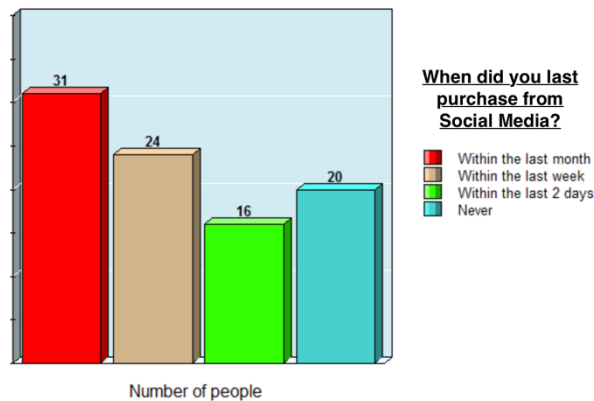


Fig. 3

Discussion:

Most respondents preferred a social media advertisement and found it more engaging compared to an advertisement for a similar product via a newspaper. This response allows one to infer that social media or online search engine promotion is more effective. Majority of the respondents preferred to shop online. Most responded that it was more 'efficient'. However, an important point to note was that age played a factor in affecting consumer choices. Almost 55% of those who preferred physical shopping over online shopping were ages 50+. This may be because of the gap in digital literacy between generations. When asked about the usage of social media to purchase, it can be inferred that most customers prefer the usage of social media as a purchasing platform, lieu to the visual pleasure and the prompt, personalized business to consumer connection. It is possible that the survey distributed could have falsified responses, which can hinder the validity of the overall analysis. However, the mean response would remain relatively similar, allowing for an approximate result.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, after having conducted data analysis on original survey responses as well as a literature review, it is evident that there is a consumer preference towards the various facets of digital marketing. Social media and web advertisements are rapidly growing platforms wherein consumers can connect, purchase, and interact, thereby boosting sales. Furthermore, after having thoroughly analyzed the results of the research, it is recommended that businesses that rely on mostly traditional marketing tactics should consider small steps to implement digital marketing to further increase their reach and consumer engagement.

Acknowledgements

Thank you for the guidance of Mr. Cody Dodd in the development of this research paper, as well as team Lumiere for providing me with the opportunity and resources throughout my journey as a Lumiere Scholar.

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