Smart Channel for Home Based Startups in Oman - A Review

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ABSTRACT

The government authorities in the Sultanate of Oman is always promoting small startups which in turn will boost the economy of the country and help to grow the GDP. In this regard, there are many startups that have come forward in the past few years and they are doing good business. However, they are facing issues related to their marketing and common channel to showcase their products and services. This research paper reviews most of such startups and home-based businesses in the Muscat region. With the help of a questionnaire and interviews, it will also identify various innovative methods for digital marketing. The survey results containing at least 40 responses and all of them are in the favour of the implementation of such a smart channel for these home-based startups. Apart from surveys, authors also have conducted interviews of some potential business which has recently adopted digital media platform for their publicity. Finally, this paper provides recommendations for better implementation for such startups to provide more profits in near future.

Keywords: E-Business, Startups in Oman, Digital Marketing, E-Commerce

Introduction

It is well acknowledged that the importance of startups plays a critical part in the country's economic development. This study is based on home-based businesses, and it was conducted through interviews, questionnaires, and data collection. Home based startups are becoming very common especially among the youth who have multiple responsibilities in parallel. This scenario is becoming very famous in the Sultanate of Oman. The most common business includes, cake business, perfumes, boutiques, customized gifts, etc. Some of them are providing home delivery services as well. Most commonly these businesses are run through Social Media platform especially for their digital marketing.

Research Problem

Remote shopping, or in short, smart shopping is characterized by flexibility due to the large number of positives that may help the user enter through this application by typing the username and password or phone number after it, the idea of the application may be easy, but some customers may face access to my home Or, in short, the cake site, there may be a waste of the customer's time, or a lack of commitment to the customer's presence at the time specified for him, or a delay in ordering the order. The online shopping platform for companies on the Internet has many advantages as it makes it easy for an individual to enter the application at any time or place by typing the username and password, but most people face many problems, for example when buying a specific commodity, the sizes and quality of that may vary. The item you received is contrary to what he saw in the application, so it will be difficult for him to return the item that he bought.

Literature Review

We also know that emerging projects are part of the mega projects and are beneficial at the same time to the producing country, so that may be another income from which the stakeholder benefits, especially home projects where the Sultanate of Oman sought to stimulate entrepreneurship in all regions of the Sultanate, as Vision 2040 is part From the development that these startups will witness, As the 2040 plan focuses on developing the country's economy and revitalizing small and medium startups, as when we talk about the ecosystem in Oman, we find that half of Omani youth are unemployed, so some companies have employed them, but on the other hand, we find a deficit in employing

all workers in any A company, so startups may be the other solution that creates multiple opportunities for the unemployed, As for the growth field that has a role in entrepreneurship, it may be seen through competition between other countries for startups, for example some countries organize cooking courses for newcomers home startups, these courses may help them understand the field of cooking and start developing the product to attract many customers and Increase per capita income, Oman has also intensified its efforts to support startups, for example by announcing some products authorized by some social media activists, and the Oman National Business Center has launched an initiative to develop projects for local people and others. Whereas, one of the first successful and emerging companies in the Sultanate is the company (Genesis International), which was established by the young Omani Qais Al-Khanji in 2012 and which has a role in the infrastructure of Oman, where this company used solar energy technology, As for when we talk about food delivery service for any emerging company, it may be the electronic option developed in Amman by ordering food from any restaurant that delivers it to the customer's home, and this is a wonderful development that the restaurant owner and delivery man benefit from. Various payment methods are available such as credit card or Pay by cash. As this support provided by the Sultanate has a role in encouraging an increase in the spread of emerging companies, as some companies introduce a system that provides customers with different and new purchase systems, where all this development contributes to raising the economy of the individual and the country, producing individuals with experience in the field of individual businesses, intensifying development Competition among all startups in the Sultanate.

Hamdi Saad (2018) said that technological developments have made a change in habits, among which have changed the return of buying and shopping, which changed and turned into fast patterns, so marketers used portable electronic devices that are connected to the Internet, for example computers or smart devices from cell phones or those with credit cards to buy Through these devices and are from electronic stores, so marketers, especially the new ones, are more able to complete their transactions without taking the traditional considerations of shopping, for example in the traditional market. In which stores are opened, this matter requires effort and time for shopping, so many modern stores, centres and stores have developed electronic platforms in order to cater to the modern changes for shoppers, as the infrastructure has begun to develop in the electronic market through the availability of the Internet and the spread of devices that are connected to the Internet. The arrival of the product and provided the best brands and products desired and at prices less competitive with the base The traditional preventive, as electronic stores targeted all groups, especially youth groups of both sexes, as they are the age group who use modern technologies and own credit cards.E-commerce is a transaction carried out by individuals or companies through the process of selling and buying products over the Internet, so in order to build a successful company, whether small or medium, the individual who wants to establish a company must go a long way from learning and experiences, so individuals in electronic commerce must have Follow a business map to help them enter the world of e-commerce and to make a profit. Any individual who wants to establish a project or a start-up company must conduct a feasibility study, as the projects are built by research and also by collecting information about the project. The feasibility study determines for us the percentage of people accepting the idea of the project. Determine the points that distinguish our store from the rest of the stores in terms of delivery services or display products in an attractive way. When we want to create an online store, we must display the products and choose suitable products that make the individual want them and not go to other stores as the diversity of products will people want to shop for them because they include a diverse group. This in itself will make a profit, so we must offer products that have one or more interest. They are sold in other stores, but if the store has special products, any home-made products, they must go to customers in order to express their views about the most appropriate product. Bana Damrawi (2018) said that online shopping is a store in which there are many products and is easily purchased through a mobile phone or computer, as it is a search for a product by visiting the store's website, as it includes many goods Household items such as clothes, shoes, accessories and a lot of different products. E-shopping is one of the modern concepts. Many people who use websites should be cautious with these sites because of their problems and thefts. Today, electronic shopping is resorted to by many people. It is easy and has very many benefits for customers as it is It contributes to helping customers choose the products, they want to buy by getting to know the opinions of others and evaluating them about that commodity. It also saves a lot of time and effort as it contributes to saving the time it used to spend in the traditional market. The traditional markets also provide means of comfort to the buyer, as he chooses his commodity while he is in his status, as well as it reaches his home.

Research methodology

In this research, mixed methodology is used. And thus, both Quantitative and Qualitative methods of data collection is used. Authors have approached various home-based business owners in Muscat region to collect data by means of questionnaire and interviews. Later on, this data was analyzed, and conclusion was drawn from it.

Questionnaire analysis

Following figures shows the analysis of questionnaire.

1. Select Age Group (حدد الفئة العمرية)

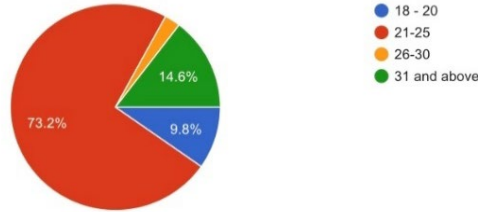41 responses

- 18 - 20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31 and above

Figure 1. Q.1

Fig. 1 represents and shows the ages of the participants in filling out the questionnaire for the project, the graph represents, in red color, that most of the participants are a group whose ages range from 21 to 25 years, while the lowest group of them are those whose ages range from 31 and over They represent the green color category, while the penultimate group is between the ages of 18 to 20 and they are in blue color, while the lesser group, which is symbolized in orange, is from the age of 26 to 30 years.

Home based start-ups should have mobile applications for their business? أن يكون لدى الشركات الناشئة في المنزل تطبيقات جوال لأعمالهم.
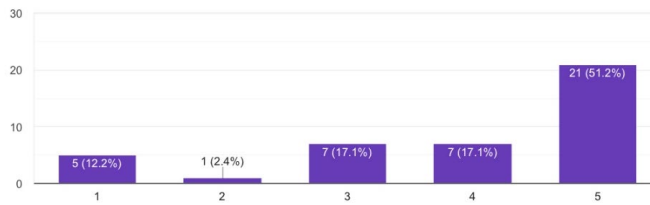
41 responses

Figure 2. Q.2

As for the second graph, it represents startups that can have applications on the phone. Most of the people nominated 51.2% agreeing to the existence or support of any home project with an application, then the majority nominated 17.1% on approval, then 12.2% and finally Supports the 2.4% category as the lowest category that does not agree to the existence of an application for emerging projects.

Using normal method of ordering on phone, we always face delays with these small businesses? باستخدام الطريقة العادية للطلب عبر الهاتف ، نواجه دائمًا تأخيرات مع هذه الشركات الصغيرة.
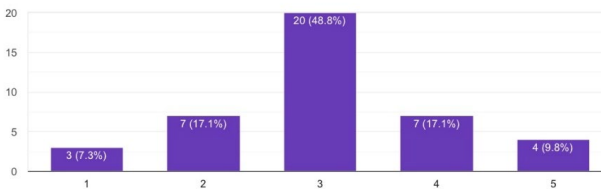
41 responses

Figure 3. Q.3

As for the second chart, it represents the normal way to request any product from startups that may cause some delays, as the majority chose the middle option No. 3, which is 48.8%, which is the most popular category, and the lowest rate was 17.1% of them agree Strongly, and some of them do not agree, as for the next-to-last group, it may be 9.8%, and they are the group that strongly agrees, while the last group may be 7.3%, and they are strongly opposed.

The smart application can provide a way for the customer to view all the products on their phone before purchase and hence it can give better choice for the selection process? يمكن أن يوفر التطبيق الذكي طريقة للعميل لعرض جميع المنتجات على هواتفهم قبل الشراء ، وبالتالي يمكن أن يوفر خيارًا أفضل لعملية الاختيار.
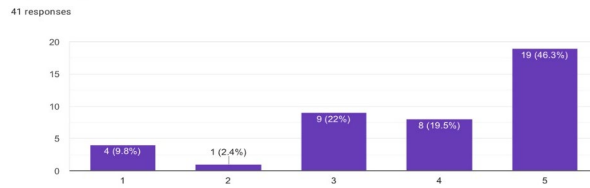
41 responses

Figure 4. Q.4

Above figure is displaying all products on their phones before purchasing, which is a suitable method for the selection process. They also strongly agree, as for the latter type, they vehemently rejected that at 9.8%, while the latter were 2.4%, and they were also slightly opposed.

Online ordering and communication channel of the small industries helps them to grow faster and increases their speed of transaction. تساعد قنوات الطلب والاتصال عبر الإنترنت للصناعات الصغيرة على النمو بشكل أسرع وتزيد من سرعة معاملاتها
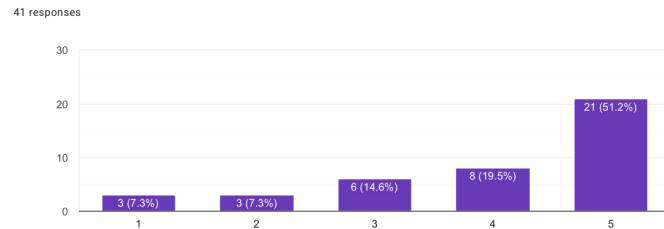
41 responses

Figure 5. Q.5

Fig 5 is about the application and communication channels via the Internet that help in promoting emerging companies, as the majority chose 51.2%, and they are a group who strongly agree, as for the next category, it represents 19.5% of those who strongly agree to it, as for the next group, it is the neutral category, and they represent 14.6%, And finally, they are strongly opposed to a rate of 7.3% for both numbers.

Special offers and discounts can be a part of small businesses for their product promotions. يمكن أن تكون العروض والخصومات الخاصة جزءًا من الشركات الصغيرة لترويج منتجاتها.
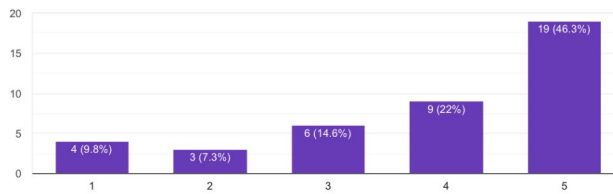
41 responses

Figure 6. Q.6

Fig 6, represent the offers and discounts that startups produce for clients, the majority chose to agree strongly, with a rate of 46.3%, As for the following category, it may represent 22% of its approval, as for the neutral category, it was 14.6%, As for the group that was 9.8% and 7.3%, they are strongly opposed to.

Any other suggestions for further improvements ? أي اقتراحات أخرى لمزيد من التحسينات؟

13 responses

Figure 7. Q.7

The above figure represents and open-ended question in which 13 responses were received. Some people said that they had no suggestions, while the second group wished me success and continued to develop the project in a better way, As for the third group, she asked me to provide different types of offers, As for the fourth category, you asked me to make the application easy to use for adults and children, As for the fifth category, I suggested facilitating the process of delivering the product quickly, neatly and beautifully.

Interview analysis

Interview 1:

As for the first interview, authors conducted an interview with an owner of a start-up (perfume company) named NIYA, He was asked: For start-ups at home to have mobile applications for their business, and his answer was that if I thought about the application, it is a great and good idea because it is a very professional idea and it is possible for any customer to choose and shop all perfumes through the application and then send The request and said that he has the desire to obtain a special application for the perfume company as it is expected that this application will facilitate the processes of promoting, selling and buying the product ,with ease, and in return it will facilitate the buyer to enter the application and choose any type of perfume options and then complete the process Purchase the order, either by e-mail or through the application basket.

As for the second question, it was about using the normal method of ordering by phone, we always face delays with these small companies, He answered that he sells perfume products through Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp, as he said that he faces many problems, including the size of reaching customers is very limited, as the number of

customers is about 7,500 followers only and that the population of Oman is 4 million. At least the number of customers is approximately 2 million, which is half the population of Amman. The second problem is delivery, where the company delivers products through private companies, but these companies deliver the goods at a minimum within two or three days, and sometimes five days, with a crisis. Corona and the closure of areas and shops in the Sultanate.

As for the third question, it was about, the smart application can provide a way for the customer to display all the products on their phones before purchasing, and thus it can provide a better option for the selection process, He replied that the WhatsApp application is divided into an application for messages and conversations and the other for free businesses or for emerging companies, as the WhatsApp business application contains multiple and distinct options that were not previously present, such as the possibility of creating a catalog and that the customer can choose the type of any perfume from the catalog And put them in the shopping cart with the prices next to each perfume, and finally the customer can submit an order to purchase the product by direct communication via WhatsApp with the owner of the product, as it is considered that the application is the best choice because it will be more professional and display the products with more beauty, arrangement and pictures Clear and more successful.

As for the fourth question, which is, special offers and discounts can be part of small companies to promote their products, He replied that discounts and discounts are one of the most important rules for promoting a perfume company's project, as he may seize any important occasion to work in which to promote such festive occasions such as Eid al-Fitr, National Day, Mother's Day and Teacher's Day as well. They have developed a complete and comprehensive plan to do the promotion where it helps That is due to the spread of the product, the increase in sales and the large number of demands.

As for the fifth and final question, it was about, online ordering and communication channels help small industries grow faster and speed up their transactions, in no doubt, he answered that all social media applications, Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat are very important means in accelerating the spread of knowledge of the company and its type and supporting it with sales force, which is a successful method for the present and contemporary times.

Interview 2:

This interview was conducted with one of the owners of small home projects. The first question asked was whether the business owner would agree to the existence of an application in the house in order to publish all his work, so the business owner agreed with this opinion in order to highlight his own home projects, as the owner said Business that there is no delay when ordering via the mobile phone, as he tries as much as possible to satisfy his customers and not to delay in responding to them and deliver his product quickly. He was also asked him about providing different ways for customers, so he said that he provides and provides different ways in order to attract customers and make them continue In the purchase of those with him constantly, as he said that he displays his products on the phone before purchasing, in order to use the time and not disturb the owner of the project to see the pictures and prices, as well as help him not to delay the customer in the response because he presented everything related to his products as authors asked him about the order and communication channels via the Internet Is it growing rapidly? He said yes. You can help him and save time for the owner of the project and help him save time for the delegate by delivering the products to their owners. He was also asked that it is possible that the offers and discounts are the private part of the small companies is part of the small companies in order to promote the products, he said yes, it helps in increasing the followers, customers and the owners of small projects, they are always looking for ways to promote their products and finally I asked him about any suggestions or improvements about your own project. And to arrange them in an orderly manner in order to attract the attention of customers, as we always strive to innovate and give new, varied and appropriate ideas that satisfy customers and that their prices are affordable for everyone.

Conclusion

The authors outlined the most crucial and noteworthy aspects of the fledgling e-commerce platform. As a result, anyone considering starting an e-business as a source of income should first conduct a thorough examination of the project's details, both in terms of the project's importance and success, as well as the pitfalls to avoid. Alternatively, do it for monetary gain. Successful projects have a significant impact on the project owner as well as the economy of

the country. Rather than developing and maintaining a business, more people nowadays prefer to engage in e-commerce.

Acknowledgement

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