The Effectiveness and Role of Social Media on Advertising

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Abstract: **Information Technology's advancements are revolutionizing every business and firms. Social media marketing is the process of gaining awareness, driving traffic and engaging your customers and prospects using social media channels. Despite the current boom of Social networking sites for marketing, this study reveals that the effectiveness of advertising through social networking sites. However, a Social networking site provides the ideal platform for direct communication between organizations and customers. Marketing on social network sites has to follow new rules and principles and each organization has to clearly determine if social media marketing is appropriate for them or not. Communication through the internet is more specified, with effective interactive strategy among its users. In recent days, internet advertising has taken new forms which have more advantages over traditional mediums like print media, television and radio. Marketing communication is becoming precise, personal, interesting, interactive and social. Different strategies of communication are followed in various social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn etc., they not only create effect over the users but also make them interact with the marketing statistics created. People get attached to brand communication in social networking sites than usual banner and pop up ads. The study finds that social media marketing effectiveness is highly influenced by its messages/contents quality, the company's involvement, and its association with the other marketing platforms. In addition, a complex and detailed analysis of the strategy is needed in order to accurately measure the return on investment of social media marketing.**

Keywords: **Information Technology, Social Media**

1. Introduction

Advertising on Social Networking Sites The best use out of social networks is not to make money directly off them, but to harness their marketing potential and to use them to market your own business. We put forth the concerned networking features, friend focus, search, security, help & support. Social networks provide the ability to set profiles to private in some way or another. Additionally, they have the ability to report and block users. A good social network goes above and beyond just allowing users to post profiles and update pictures. Additional features include music sections, video uploads, groups and more. The object of a social network is to find friends and expand relationships. Top social networking websites allow members to search for other members in a safe and easy to use environment. Common search functions include search by name, city, school and email address. Social network sites are self-explanatory. No doubt social network is a significant new way of reaching people, but the market is far from being mature.

2. Literature survey

Silva et.al. (2017) conducted a survey on "Advertising on social networking sites" with the objective of ascertaining the effectiveness of users towards advertisement messages. It also aimed at assessing the influence of social networking sites on consumer buying behaviour. An amount of 39% increase in advertising spends on Social networking sites have been forecasted for 2016. Results from the analysis indicated that social media is a very important tool for networking among youngsters.

Hindshaw, (2016) has studied on "Effectiveness of advertisement in social networking sites" with the aim to measure both the positive and negative aspects of advertisements. He concluded that the advertisement creators must concentrate on moron the information and social aspects in any advertising and must avoid harm products. A questionnaire measuring motivation, knowledge and effectiveness of advertisements.

Bashar et.al., (2016) have done empirical research to understand the effectiveness of social networking sites as a marketing tool and an effort has been made to analyze the extent social networking sites helps consumers in buying decision making. Results of the paper suggested that the medium is growing very fast and holds huge potential but is still in its nascent stage in India. Therefore, it is time for the companies to make effective strategies and execute them to win a larger share of business through this revolutionary medium and become the innovative firm of the coming future.

Vijai and Sharma, (2015) have done a study on social networking sites experience of consumers and marketers in the State of Punjab. Based on the results of the study and reviewed literature, the paper suggested the measures for effectiveness of advertising on Social networking sites (SNS) strategies that Above all, social networking sites marketing content should be "interesting", "informative", "interactive" and "reliable". Marketers should align their social marketing effort with the changing tastes and preferences of customers. They suggested that the advertisement promotes competition in the market

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which leads to supply better quality products for consumers.

Yadav, (2015) has made an attempt to set up the significance of social networks as an advertising medium and evaluated the existing advertising methods that are in trend via certain case studies and concluded that social websites are not just a tool to interact with the different people but also medium to reach the prospective customers.

3. Statement of the Problem

The present study identifies the outcomes of using social networking sites in promoting the business. In this research, we need to further know how effective and convenient on the part of young marketers and entrepreneurs to use social networking sites as their tool for advertising and marketing their goods and services and also the average business owners or marketers do not fully understand the risks and challenges in it. The field is still so fresh that it is difficult to evaluate the qualifications of social media "experts" who offer their services online. So, before a company step into the field of social media marketing, they have to complete full research on social media practices. An organization has to master basic principles and tactics of using social media as an effective tool in order to survive in the field of social media marketing.

4. Highly Influential Factors on Social Media Marketing Effectiveness

1) Content quality, not quantity

Blanchard (2015) suggests that millions of followers/fans could act as "ghost followers", which means these followers/fans have never been actively involved in the online conversation. In addition, research published by the Advertising Age suggests that the number of brand mentions is not the real indicator of the SMM effectiveness, especially when the word is so generic, which can be misinterpreted by the social media monitoring tool. For instance, an "accident", which the researcher called "The Salt Lake City Effect" or "The Bieber Distortion" when there was a sudden increase in number of mention for the word "salt" on Twitter, which the researcher thought was caused by the release of Angelina Jolie's latest movie at that time entitled "Salt." After spending some time to track back the individual tweets, he finally found out that the increase was caused by pop star Justin Bieber who was then on tour and has just arrived in Salt Lake City, where he tweeted "Salt Lake City is super chill. Air just feels clean…" his fans retreats generated a big boost for the word "salt". This example also shows that managers should not totally rely on the monitoring software to measure and analyze their social media campaign. The Twitter analysis shows that some brands/companies (e.g. Microsoft, Charmin) used their Twitter account to connect and to communicate with customers. Their tweets were about communicating and connecting with their followers, through some personal conversations in subjects that were relevant to their customers. As a result, they were able to beat their main competitors in financial performances and Twitter activities.

2) Building trust and long-term relationship

Rust, Moorman, and Bhalla (2016) discuss that marketing approach has changed. It used to be about persuading consumers to buy products by "bombarding" customers with numerous advertisements. Today, marketing is about building relationships and trust through effective two-way communications (e.g., talk about something that customers are interested in), and creating products that will help to solve customers' problems. Ironically, some of today's social media marketing campaigns are still driven by old-fashioned marketing and focus on short-term effect (sales), which is also known as incentive-induced behaviour. Blanchard (2015) says that trust and genuine buyer/seller relationships achieved through consistent and engaging conversation will increase the messages (SMM) level of influence.

3) Offline community to extend their relationship and customers' loyalty

Firms should start their involvement by inviting their customers or prospects to join their social media community. For example, firms can post the icons of the social media sites that they are a part of on their main website, or by giving some special deals to customers who become their fans or followers. In the online community, firms should start writing more effective posts. An effective post should reflect humbleness, honesty, and conciseness, which Woessner (2015) suggests as key elements of an effective post. It should also be informative to satisfy the customers' need for information and experts' opinions. Effective contents should be able to elicit call-to-actions from the audience (conversion) so that by the end of this process, fans/followers will place an order, subscribe newsletter, or participate in online surveys. In the offline community, managers/executives should share their expertise with their community by volunteering as a guest speaker in the local community, which will help to attract more followers or fans and to strengthen their connection with the community. As was discussed previously, it is important to maintain the content relevancy within customers' main interests and to not overwhelm the customers with too many posts/messages, which is really important in keeping customers engaged. In doing so, it will help companies to increase their brands/products awareness especially in the smaller community/market, enhance their expertise among their colleagues in their industry as well as expand their influence, and strengthen companies' relationships with current customers.

4) Integration with other marketing platforms

Some managers are worried that their social media campaign can affect the number of their main website's visitors because more and more customers switch to Facebook or Twitter. If the social media program is done correctly, the website's visitors will not be affected by the growth of companies' fans/followers in social media sites. This is because in the end customers should be directed to the company's main website. As a result, social media marketing becomes the medium to increase the

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website's traffic as well as the company's e-commerce. Research shows that "most successful salespeople, over two-thirds believe social media is integral to their sales success" because social media has enabled marketers to engage with customers along their buying process. From the Twitter/revenue analysis, AT&T did a good job of combining some of its marketing platform in its Twitter account. AT&T has utilized its Twitter account as an additional tool to answer any questions from its customers regarding AT&T's services as well as to handle some complaints about its customers/followers (e.g. customer service and customer support), which clearly has increased the quality of its customer service department and its customer satisfaction.

5. Methods to Measure the Effectiveness of Advertising

1) Establish a baseline

Managers should list all the data that they are trying to measure (i.e. sales volume, net transactions, number of brand mentions) as the baseline of their campaign also supports this idea and emphasizes the importance of taking benchmarks before firms launch their campaign to see "before and after" impact of the SMM.

2) Create activity timelines

Companies should plot all of the activities from all departments and media platforms that might have an effect on the non-financial outcomes. One way to do this is by creating a shared document that will allow all departments to integrate their campaign, which will prevent any misinterpretations/misassumptions when analyzing the result.

3) Monitor the volume of mentions

There are two things that firms need to do in this step. First, staffs need to measure the brand mentions all across the web (i.e. social media sites, blogs, and news sites) using social media monitoring tools. Second, to measure the mix of the sentiment of the brand mentions that is measured from the previous step.

4) Measure transactional precursors

This is where the firm needs to measure the non-financial outcomes that may indicate the changes in consumers' behaviours resulted from their SM activities such as number of fans, followers, shares, recommendations, RSS subscriptions, content downloads

5) Look at transactional data

In this stage, companies need to measure the financial data by combining both the changes in net transacting customers and the number of network transactions. This will give the firm more in-depth analysis as for which customers (e.g. new or current customers) contribute to the sales increase.

6) Overlay all data (steps 1-5) onto a single timeline

This is where managers need to put the baselines and add other relevant data such as competitors' press release, important events (i.e. natural disasters, new technology introduction) during certain timelines that might affect the firm's SMM activities.

7) Look for patterns

There are three different patterns that demonstrate some possible impacts of the firm's social media campaign. The first pattern shows that there is an increasing trend even before the campaign was launched. The impact of social media activities is difficult to determine from this pattern, due to lack of significant changes on the firm's performance. On the other hand, the second pattern (flat line) shows that there is a lack of influence from the SM program. In this case, executives need to look closer to any particular factors that might cause this pattern. This might also be caused by the firm's activities' outside social media. For instance, the SMM was successful to bring some new customers to the store, but there was no stock available at the store, which interrupted this conversion process. The last pattern is the desired outcomes of the SMM. It indicates that there is a significant increase shortly after the social media campaign started, and it also shows that there might be some relations between the SMM and this performances increase, which will be discussed on the next stage.

8) Prove and disapprove relationship

In order to prove that the 3rd pattern resulted from the firm's SMM, executives need to work their way backward from the outcome to trace the correlation between the change in firm's performances and its SMM by connecting the firm's performance metrics with the timeline from step 6. For example, whether there is a correlation between the firm's Facebook campaigns during the new product's introduction with an increase in the volume of customers' conversations about the product, increase in website's visitors, and ultimately an increase in the product's sales. In doing so, it will give executives a clear analysis of how the firm's SM activities contribute to the outcomes.

6. Conclusion

The social media provides new opportunities, paving way for enhancing brand images firms that need to put it in their top priority. Also, the new and old brands would use social media to improve their competitiveness in the market and to gain momentum with their consumers in order to achieve customer satisfaction. Through the use of social media would easily reach the user-friendly interactive system, understanding customers' special and unique needs in a way that clients themselves are can adapt and understand well. In the course of data analysis, many consumers turned to do word of mouth for brands, making them a brand's indirect advertisement force. Even so some firms believe that using social media extensively would cheapen the way of enhancing brand image businesses because evidences as available by checking out social media pages, blogs, forums and such we can understand that customer satisfaction has been increased in a way that while these networks are not the backbone of service providers, they got better feedback regarding the use of these networks and media.

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