A STUDY OF ONLINE MARKETING IN INDIA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Nisha Yadav
Assistant Professor, Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur, Rewari

Abstract
In the era of globalization internet plays a vital role in all spheres of life and industries. Internet is very famous nowadays for satisfying people with various services related to various different fields. It is a very versatile facility which can help you in completing many tasks easily and conveniently with few clicks. Online Marketing helps to find out the right audience to whom goods and services are to be provided by the business organizations. It consists of all processes and activities with the purposes of attracting, finding, winning and Retaining customers. Online marketing helps not only seller but customer also. In other words we can say online marketing makes shopping life easy for customers. In this paper we focus on pros and cons of online marketing. The paper starts with defining online marketing The marketing opportunities stem from introduction of this new, virtual space is the next focal point of concentration. The study continues with challenges, such as problems of security, privacy, etc, emerged in the field of marketing from implementation of virtual space produces. Contemplating the solutions to tackle the challenges ahead, we provide the conclusions.

Keywords: Internet Marketing, Online Consumers, Marketing Challenges.

Objective of the Study
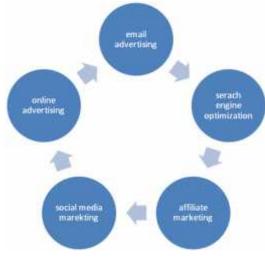The main objectives of research paper are as follows:-
1. To know the concept of online marketing.
2. To find out major challenges faced by online marketing.
3. To find out benefits and problems of online marketing.

Introduction
Due to globalization, not only nations are coming closer to each other but also different sector undergoes into significant changes. And marketing sector is also affected by this and experiencing so many changes continuously. To sell our product through internet or digital media is known as E- marketing. E- Marketing is also known as web marketing and online marketing. It consists of all processes and activities with the purposes of attracting, finding, winning and retaining customers. Creative use of internet technology is made by using various multimedia, text, graphics etc. with different languages to create catchy advertisements, forms, e-shop where product can be promoted, viewed and sold. Online marketing is quickly evolving in front of our eyes. The new media has created its own unique space in the market which makes it impossible to search any new discussion. Online marketing has been the crucial part in current era. The new media is immense potential to emerge a new segment of consumer. The new paradigm explore a platform to understand the consumer benefits and needs through reporting communication mix.

Different Methods of Online Marketing
Online marketing which is also called internet marketing and e-marketing includes several methods and techniques which are as follows:

Advantage of Online Marketing

1. **Internet Marketing Can Be Personalized**

Not only is Internet marketing highly targeted, offers and programs can be customized or personalized based on the profiles and other consumer behaviors your targeted audiences exhibit.

This will give your customers better value for what they have paid for as well as a better insight of the kind of products and services your customers need and are looking for – which your business can provide or develop.

2. **Internet Marketing Helps Build Relationships**

Traditional marketing is one way and there is very limited or no interaction between an advertiser and the end customer. With Internet marketing, engagement is the key and being able to interact with targeted customers in real time can help build better customer-supplier relationships, build higher levels of trust, and generate great customer loyalty that benefits both the business and their clientele.

3. **Internet Marketing is Available 24/7**

The World Wide Web never sleeps and so does Internet marketing, allowing business with little resources to sustain a physical 24-hour operations to compete in the digital marketplace using Internet marketing tools that can run virtually 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

4. **Internet Marketing Results are Measurable**

Unlike traditional mass media that register vague metrics or inaccurate survey results from a sampling of the actual target population, Internet marketing results are easily measurable and available in real time. Each click or visit to a landing page or websites, sign ups, and online purchases can actually be measured very accurately allowing digital marketers to easily gauge which particular Internet marketing tool will work for them and bring the best results. On top of that, Internet marketing analytics data can also give digital marketers a better insight about their targeted customers purchasing behavior among other things.

5. **Internet marketing delivers better results**

Internet marketing as an inbound marketing tool delivers better result and revenues than traditional marketing channel. This is because an outbound marketing such as newspapers, consumer magazine, radio and TV are getting out of style, whereas inbound marketing tools such as mobile media, social media, social networks and search engines are on the rise.

6. **Internet Marketing Can Reach Targeted Customers More Effectively**

One of the key characteristics of full Internet marketing is that these digital marketing tools were designed to target specific sets of customers or audiences. Unlike traditional mass media marketing where advertisements are broadcasted to anyone, even those who do not like or are not interested in a particular product or service. Internet marketing which is a form on inbound marketing attracts targeted customers who are specifically looking for the brands, products or services a particular digital marketing campaign is focused on.

7. **Elimination of geographic barriers**

One of the key advantages of online marketing is that it removes all geographical limitation from the practice of buying and selling. So internet allows an unlimited global reach at on outstandingly lower cost. Due to massive cost of traditional media, global reach was once the exclusionary realm of huge Multinational Corporation, but the advent of cost-effective internet technologies has enabled smaller businesses to enjoy this kind of reach. Overcoming the geographic barriers, marketers are now able to present products and services to different groups of costumers across the universe with the simple condition that they have access to internet.

8. **Internet Marketing Delivers Immediate Results**

Real-time marketing tools can bring businesses more benefits than other tools. Internet marketing is characterized with real-time interactions that can connect your business much more effectively with targeted customers. What you get are immediate results for your marketing efforts. The results are above-average conversions to either leads or sales every time a targeted customer visits your landing pages or websites.

Disadvantage of Online Marketing

1. **Online Marketing Is Not Yet Embraced by All People**

Lastly, not all people have already bought into the idea of Internet marketing, preferring to choose or put more importance to products that they can actually touch before they purchase.

Many are still concerned and have serious doubts in the security of online transactions that they fear going into one for business purposes. Focusing only in Internet marketing will prevent you from reaching out to targeted audiences in this category which can still be very considerable in terms of numbers.

2. Online Marketing Reputation Can Be Damaged by Negative Feedback
Digital marketing tools are prone to their perennial problem of negative feedback which can damage your online reputation. A single post or tweet that defames or give erroneous claims and negative feedback about your products or services can scar and ruin your Internet reputation for a long time.

3. Internet Marketing May Not Be Appropriate for Your Product
Some brands, products or services have targeted audiences that may not be reached by Internet marketing channels. Some products and services target the elderly and only a few percentages are tech savvy and may not have access or do not even know how to get online. If that's the case, you will only be wasting time and resources marketing your products or services through Internet means.

4. Internet Marketing Involves Too Much Competition
Just like the proliferation of online ads, Internet marketing is faced with a great challenge of too much competition. Digital marketers are scrambling to get into a better position for optimum visibility for their marketing and advertising campaigns, and with the presence of too much competition, will make it doubly hard and expensive to get the attention of targeted audiences.

5. Internet Marketing Is Highly Dependent on Technology Which Can Be Prone to Errors
Digital marketing makes use and is highly dependent on technology. In many cases, technology can break down and produce erroneous results that can severely affect your Internet marketing campaigns. Non-working links to important landing pages, pay buttons that do not work another similar stuff like can ruin your hold of your targeted audiences and lose good business.

Challenges of Online Marketing
1. Governance, laws and regulations- India is still not a very open economy although things have been changing for good since the mid eighties. Our financial and banking rules are not always the best conducive environment for anyone to get started with a business – online or offline. When it comes to online businesses, there are even stricter money transaction rules. For example, it is not at all easy to provide a payment mechanism such as PayPal to your domestic customers in India. Similarly the RBI (Reserve Bank of India) has got stricter Forex policies that don't help the end customers who want to transact in other currencies. We pay a lot to buy fore and we get less when you sell the same.When it comes to law enforcement and protection against cyber crime, though we have taken some initiatives, how often an online criminal gets caught in this country? For that matter, if you raise a complaint in a police station against a cyber crime, you may have to first educate them on what has happened and in most cases the criminals don't get caught. Widespread corruption is another big issue. Many people don't want to set up online shops to escape taxes and do things unaccounted. Even if some noble person wants to do things through the right channels, he may face severe issues with officials at all levels and multiple organizations.

2. Cultural issues- Indians are highly social and sociable people – sometimes we often over do it. Most people believe that shopping online can prevent them from getting the best deals out there from their favorite shops and shopkeepers (and their families) that they know for generations. Also, this gives them excellent F2F opportunity to do maximum negotiation and receive other freebies. And festive offers in India during Diwali, Akshay Tritiya etc are unbeatable and probably not feasible to provide such discounts via online mechanisms at the kind of volume involved.

3. Online shopping worries- A lot of computer literate people are still hesitant to consume online shopping facilities that are available out there in India for the following reasons.

1. **Fear factor**: A lot of people still do not believe things that are not tangible. It's perhaps more of a cultural issue.

2. **Unreliable delivery mechanisms**: In India, even the postal service or the most expensive (and so-called safest) courier companies may not be able to guarantee prompt delivery due to multiple factors including theft, tracking issues and corruption.

3. **Credit card fraud and usage**: Like in any other country, swiping a card is not always safe. In India specific cases, there are even scenarios where you have to provide your card number to the customer care executive over the phone which is not the right way it should work.

4. Lack of technical infrastructure- Broadband Internet access is still and expensive thing in India if you take get one for your home computer and still there are connection issues. Many people do shopping kind of things using the Internet access

at work but there are still other issues with online businesses. The backbone of any reliable online service or sales is a strong supply chain. In volume business, this has to be at its best and this is exactly what many online services in India lack. Many times, the delivery of the advertised service or product does not happen due to bad supply chain management. Additional issues include the lack of supporting infrastructure such as escrow services, legal advisory for online businesses etc.

5 Marketing philosophies & channels- Due to the social aspects that I mentioned before, the Internet is still not the best marketing channel in India. Television, hoardings and cinema ads are still way ahead of the Internet when it comes to preferred marketing channels. This also results in poor quality affiliate networks, online ad services and everything else.

6. Marketing integration - Multiple channels are employed by the sales efforts which are online and offline, e.g. email advertising, social networking, outbound call handling and so on. The problem faced with these is that they are supposed to serve a concrete and measurable goal as part of an integrated campaign even though they are often handled as different parts of the work. So to coordinate all marketing efforts must be a priority. Alongside the traditional campaign, e-marketing should be done and should not be tacked at the end of the business plan.

Other Challenges Are As Follows:
1. **Dealing with the IT Department** -There is a circle of IT vs. marketing for a long time. But, it's a time to understand that we need to be partner with our IT friends to implement our marketing programs more efficiently. In simple sense, we need them and they need us or we can say that both complement each other.

2. **Continuing Education** -Constant learning is needed by the marketers of 21st Century. It is said that knowledge in marketing comes with an expiration date and continues professional development is a necessity for up gradation. Take a class, get a certification, read a book, attend a seminar or conference whatever works for you, but keep learning.

3. **Bad Marketing** - Anyone can call themselves a web designer, marketer, consultant, SEO expert and so on. Poorly created and executed marketing programs degraded our profession and also create mistrust among clients, marketers and other related parties. By doing marketing in a right time or way helps you to tip the scale in favor of our own profession which helps in long run survival.

4. **Lack of Trust** - In general, identity theft, Spam, intrusive advertising and technological glitches have left many mistrusting of marketing. You are either part of the problem or part of the solution, you have to decide it.

Conclusion
Internet has revolutionilized every aspect of life including economy and marketing. Introducing major techniques and methods of online marketing, this study has shed light upon opportunities and challenges of Internet. The major advantages internet has are its Empowering effect, Elimination of geographic barriers, target reaching, immediate results, cost effective, reaching wider or international auditory, measurable result, can be personalized, relationship build, 24 hours / seven days availability. However, implementation of Internet in the field of marketing involves special disadvantages such as: copying, too much add clutter, unserious perception, unconformity to the product, too much competition, damage by negative feedback, technology dependence, is not embraced by all people and lack of trust. As the Internet continue to evolve, new technologies in Internet marketing will emerge and will define how products and services will be marketed in the near future. Getting a better understanding of the power of Internet marketing by giving a comprehensive look at its advantages and disadvantages will prepare business owners and digital marketers in years to come.

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