Digital, Social Media and Facebook Marketing: A Brief Overview of its Development and Application

B. Niveditta¹ & Dr. G. Padmavathy²
¹II MBA, Department of Management and Commerce
SSSIHL, Anantapur, India
²Department of Management and Commerce
SSSIHL, Anantapur, India

Abstract—Digital Marketing has come a long way since its inception and marketing efforts are just a click away, thanks to Social Media. This paper provides an understanding of the theory, history and background of Digital Marketing specifically with respect to Social Media Marketing. Social Media has proven to be an effective medium for marketers to understand their consumers and to increase their visibility. Facebook, with a wide reach and easy to use design has managed to provide effective ROI with respect to marketing efforts. This paper also throws light on the various facets of Facebook that prove useful to marketers, how they can be used and where they are currently being applied. It highlights especially the benefits of analyzing consumer engagement on the brand pages as a marketing effort.

Index Terms—Digital Marketing; Social Media Marketing; Facebook Marketing; Food and Beverage

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital Marketing is a transition from the traditional methods of marketing to marketing using the internet (websites, social media, online forums, emails, etc.). A lot of industries have taken to digital marketing in the recent past. This is due to the ease of execution of marketing strategies, lower cost involved with the same and better reach to wider audiences. Social Media in specific has taken the marketing world by storm by providing a convenient platform for an interactive relationship with consumers and access to a huge global market. Amongst all the major social media websites, Facebook, in particular, provides an easy method to reach out to the consumers through fan pages and brand communities. Some of the techniques used on Facebook, like market intelligence gathering and big data analytics, give marketers an easy reach into the minds of the users. With the abundance of data available on Facebook, an enormous amount of information pertaining to consumer behavior can be obtained and utilized by the marketers to improve their engagement with the brand page on Facebook.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this paper is as follows:
(1) To summarize the theory behind digital marketing, social media marketing and Facebook marketing
(2) To study and investigate the importance of Facebook as a marketing platform in various industries with special reference to understanding customer engagement.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

[1] Deals in detail with the evolution of digital, social media and mobile marketing with respect to individual expression, decision support and market intelligence from the year 2000 till 2015. While [2] discusses the commonly used DM domains like SMM, Content Marketing, Mobile Marketing, Search Engine Optimization and Advanced Analytics. The paper also identifies two major marketing strategies – The Customer Side strategy where the customer is priority and the Customer and System Side strategy where both the customer and the system (intermediaries, processes, technologies etc.) are equally important. The paper further shows how DM can effectively target, position and create brand awareness amongst the customers. The focus shifts to social media marketing with [3] that discusses the acceptance of social media as a stage for business. It also highlights the various factors that contribute to this favorable reception. An introduction to social media scraping, storage, cleaning and sentiment analysis is presented in [4] followed by a review of tools used for social media, wikis, blogs, etc. With respect to Facebook, [5] examines the implications of using Facebook marketing practices and tools, their advantages and limitations. Also [6] details the functioning of FB posts and their role in the promotion of customer engagement. This current paper aims to combine, in short, all of the above mentioned domains in marketing and provide a bird’s eye view of the same.
IV. DEFINITIONS

Some basic and important definitions with respect to this paper include the following:

A. Digital Marketing

Kotler & Armstrong (2009) extend to define digital marketing as, “a form of direct marketing which links consumers with sellers electronically using interactive technologies like emails, websites, online forums and newsgroups, interactive television, mobile communications etcetera”. Digital Marketing methods provide ease of marketing, lesser expenses and wider reach for companies.

B. Social Media Marketing

Stokes (2014, p.31) defines Social Media Marketing as “consumer generated media, media (in the form of text, visuals and audio) created to be shared. It has changed the face of marketing by allowing collaboration and connection in a way that no other channel has been able to offer. From a strategic perspective, social media is useful for brand building, raising awareness of the brand story and allowing the consumer to become involved in the story through collaboration. Social media platforms also play a role in building awareness, due to their shareable, viral nature. They can also provide crowd sourced feedback and allow brands to share valuable content directly with their fans.”

V. EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

In the past 15 years, the market has transformed digitally. This can be observed from the novel and innovative concepts of marketing using latest technology that has been rampant in the past decade. The consumer’s self-expression and communication has also evolved and they now play a greater role in the marketing process than they used to. Digital and Social media marketing tools are not just used for direct marketing but also for market intelligence and for understanding the consumer psychology and buying behavior. The evolution of Digital Marketing and Social Media Marketing can be split into 4 periods as shown in Fig. 1. below:

| PERIOD: 2000 – 2004 | • rise of digital and social media and eWOM  
|                     | • online communities as a means for self-expression and decision making  
|                     | • internet – an intelligence tool to study, understand and derive insights on consumer behaviour |
| PERIOD: 2005 – 2010 | • rise of social networking platforms - Tumblr, MySpace, Facebook, etc.  
|                     | • marketers on social media established fan pages and groups  
|                     | • social media opinion leaders and peer influence  
|                     | • sponsored search i.e. paying search engines to promote ads by companies |
| PERIOD: 2011 – 2014 | • rise of other social media platforms - Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat (for picture based communication) and Twitter (for limited word updates)  
|                     | • content marketing as a relevant means of marketing  
|                     | • consumers were now the king – reviews, recommendations and complaints |
| PERIOD: 2015 – Present | • better technology and increased cross platform application  
|                      | • meta-analysis of consumer data  
|                      | • concern for privacy and ethics |

VI. TYPES OF DIGITAL MARKETING

Digital Marketing involves the use of various digital technologies and methods to promote and market a brand or a product. These various methods are shown in Fig. 2. And explained below:

A. Email Marketing

Email Marketing is considered to be inexpensive and a quick way to connect to current and potential customers. It involves sending emails to customers with attractive, personalized, visually appealing and catchy content with pertinent to the message that has
to be put across. The language used, the style of presentation and the tone of the email are major factors in determining the effectiveness of this type of marketing.

B. Content Marketing

Content marketing is the method of identifying the most probable places online that a customer would go to for information on a product or a brand and ensuring the presence of information on the same at all those places like brand websites, social media pages, online shopping forums, blogs, etc. This ensures visibility and better reliability in targeting customers by use of product related information, promotions, advertisements, etc.

C. Search Engine Optimization

This type of marketing works on the concept of a “keyword” that will be used to search for the particular brand or product. When this keyword is searched for by internet users, brands would typically want their website or social media page to be shown first in the search results. This can be achieved through search engine optimization and this service is provided by the search engines to help boost the brand’s page visibility.

D. Social Media Marketing

Social Media websites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Google+, etc. provide a platform for the marketers to interact with the customers and for customers to interact amongst themselves with the help of online communities. Social Media in itself provides a medium for many types of digital marketing like Content Marketing, Big data analysis of the social media content, viral marketing, advertising, etc.

E. Others

Other forms of digital marketing include game advertising where brands place ads within online games that are played, video advertising where in ads are played before or in-between videos that are streamed online, web designs that make websites more interactive and appealing and app developments that help marketers target the mobile phone using audience.

Fig. 2. Types of Digital Marketing Services

VII. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF CERTAIN TERMS

Definitions of some of the terms used in Social Media Marketing, particularly on Facebook is given in Table I below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Engagement</td>
<td>“Level of engagement and number of conversations with potential and current customers and fans.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brand Equity</td>
<td>“The commercial value that derives from consumer perception of the brand name of a particular product or service, rather than from the product or service itself.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>“A comment is a response that is often provided as an answer of reaction to a blog post or message on a social network. Comments are a primary form of two-way communication on the social web.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities</td>
<td>“Groups of people communicating mainly through the Internet about shared interests or formally learn from each other and find solutions on social networks.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>“Text, pictures, video and any other meaningful material that is displayed on a Page.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content Marketing</td>
<td>“A type of marketing that involves the creation and sharing of online material (such as videos, blogs, and social media posts) that does not explicitly promote a brand but is intended to stimulate interest in its products or services.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>“The page administrator responds to page member posts and comments and shares member content with other members.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Mining</td>
<td>“The practice of examining large pre-existing databases in order to generate new information.”</td>
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<td>Emoticons</td>
<td>“Emoticon symbols are used to indicate mood in an electronic mode of communication.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>“Facebook is a social media platform founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. The site connects people with friends, family, acquaintances, and businesses from all over the world and enables them to post, share, and engage with a variety of content such as photos and status updates. The platform currently boasts around 1.49 billion active users.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook Event</td>
<td>“A Facebook event is a calendar based resource which can be used to notify users of upcoming occasions. Events can be created by anyone, and can be open to anyone or private. The creator can invite his friends, members of a group, or fans of a...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Facebook Fans
"Fans is the term used to describe people who like a Facebook Page."

Facebook Groups
"A collection of Facebook users with a common interest; any Facebook user can create and join a Facebook group."

Facebook Page
"An online location for businesses, organizations, and individuals looking to market themselves to the Facebook community."

Facebook Post
"Content published on a Facebook page/group/wall. Entries may include pictures or embedded videos and links URLs for online sources used."

Influencer
"A person specialized in a specific subject matter and highly recognized in an online community that has the ability to sway others’ thoughts."

Like
"A Like is an action that can be made by a Facebook or Instagram user. Instead of writing a comment or sharing a post, a user can click the Like button as a quick way to show approval."

Link
"Any page posts that include a link to an external page or additional content not found within the Facebook page."

Listening
"It is the act of skimming feeds to see what topics are bubbling up, and also setting up searches that monitor when you or your organization is mentioned."

Live streaming
"Live streaming is the act of delivering content over the internet in real-time. This term was popularized in social media by apps such as Meerkat and Periscope."

Network
"A Facebook term for a broader social grouping such as a city, large company or university, e.g., London, Yahoo, King’s College."

News Feed
"A news feed is literally a feed full of news. On Facebook, the News Feed is the homepage of users' accounts where they can see all the latest updates from their friends. The news feed on Twitter is called Timeline."

Notification
"A low importance message either generated automatically or as a result of a friend’s action or a page action."

Page Impression
"Also known as page requests or page views. Page impressions refer to the no. of times a web page is requested from a server."

Reach
"Total number of fans, group members, and/or friends."

Reaction
"Reactions, is an extension of the Like button on Facebook, to give users more ways to express feelings towards a post in a quick and easy way. The reactions available on Facebook are Love, Haha, Wow, Sad or Angry."

Response Rate
"It is the percentage of new messages to a Page that are sent an initial response on the same day."

Response time
"It is the average time it takes a Page to send initial responses to new messages in one day."

ROI
"Refers to the percentage yield provided for a given investment. This term is used for evaluating marketing measures by dividing the profit derived from advertising by the cost of marketing."

RSS Feed
"Really Simple Syndication, a means of subscribing to content online and having it aggregated through a feed or reader."

Search Engine Optimization
"This is the act of improving a website's search engine compatibility by more effectively formatting site code, structure, and content to maximize keyword exposure."

Sentiment Analysis
"The process of computationally identifying and categorizing opinions expressed in a piece of text, especially in order to determine whether the writer’s attitude towards a particular topic."

Share
"Sharing of Facebook posts by a user with his or her Facebook friends, possibly adding commentary."

Social Media
"Works of user-created video, audio, text or multimedia that are published and shared in a social environment, such as a blog, podcast, forum, wiki or video hosting site. More broadly, social media refers to any online technology that lets people publish, converse and share content online."

Social Networking
"It is the act of socializing in an online community. A typical social network such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace or Bebo, allows one to create a profile, add friends, communicate with other members and add media."

Status
"A 140 character description of what a user is doing right now."

User Generated Content
"User-generated content is content that is created by consumers (blogs, videos, photos, quotes, etc.). Marketers typically tap into their audience in an online setting to collect this type of content to support a campaign or initiative."

Word-of-mouth Marketing
"Sometimes called grassroots marketing or conversational marketing, is an umbrella term for dozens of techniques that can be used to engage and energize customers."

VIII. FACEBOOK AS A PLATFORM FOR SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Facebook has nearly two billion active users and is the most popular social media platform for social media marketing. Marketers would want to use a social media site that would provide a wider reach and automatically, they would go for Facebook. It is also a simple to use, engaging and interactive medium that would keep fans entertained and informed. Almost all marketers feel that Facebook produces the best ROI:

A. Facebook Page

As given in, Facebook provides marketers the provision to create a separate brand page for the company. This page can then be shared with Facebook users where they can follow it by “liking” the page. It can be used to promote products and services amongst the fans. A sample Facebook page is shown in figure 3.3 below. Users can be lured into “liking” the page by a variety of methods:

Interesting and Interactive Posts
1) Utilizing eWOM through the Facebook news feed which is seen by friends of the fans who in turn could like the page
2) Sending the brand page link via email or blogs to existing fans/customers on other platforms 
3) Using Facebook ads or paid page promotions

**B. Facebook Page Posts**

A Facebook page post is a status update on a Facebook page that can be of any length and can contain pictures, videos, links, etc. It attracts the attention of fans and also evokes interaction through its content. Posts can be liked, commented on and shared by users, and this is a form of WOM that helps promote the brand. Some categories of posts that evoke responses from users are:

1) **Sentiment Posts** – These induce responses by appealing to the emotions of the user.
2) **Utility Posts** – Posts that instruct the user on how to or how not to do something.
3) **Counterintuitive Posts** – These posts take a concept that the user thinks he understands and gives him a completely different understanding of the same.
4) **Funny Posts** – These posts make users laugh and get them involved without even realising it and they in turn engage with the brand.
5) **Surveys/Polls/Contests** – These posts encourage the users to comment on it in order to answer the question posted.
6) **Outrage** – These posts engage users on pertinent issues they vehemently support and induce their support for the brand since they have the support of the brand.
7) **Controversy** – Posts that exploit controversies to garner attention to the brand.

**C. Facebook Page Events**

Facebook Events are sources of letting the fans know of upcoming brand related events that the users could be a part of. This appears on the newsfeed of the page fans and they can choose to accept or reject the invitation to the event. These resources help the brand page actively promote itself better by creating awareness.

**D. Facebook Page Fans**

Fans are people who like a Facebook Page. They engage with the page in turn engage with the brand. They are potential end users of the brand products and need to be engaged in order to create better relations. Their behavior will affect the brand image and reach and can be analyzed for better marketing insights. They are instrumental in viral marketing through eWOM that marketers generally love to exploit.

**IX. FACEBOOK AND VARIOUS FORMS OF MARKETING**

Facebook, though initially meant for online community interactions between various users for socialization on a global scale, slowly became an indispensable tool and perhaps the most significant one for the digital age marketers. The various usages of FB for marketing purposes are shown in Fig. 3.

**Fig. 3. Types of Facebook Marketing**

A. **Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)**

Viral marketing or electronic word of mouth is a method of marketing where the consumers or fans are used to promote the brand in their respective networks. On FB, viral marketing is more of a natural phenomenon because the moment a user “likes” the brand’s FB page, posts something on it, or confirms attendance to an event, etc., the actions automatically feature on the news feed of the user’s circle of friends, making them aware of the brand which in turn acts as a promotion for the brand.

B. **Paid Page Promotions**

The first thing that brands looking to market on Facebook do is to try and promote their brand pages or boost their posts. Facebook provides an option for the marketers to boost their pages or posts and improve its visibility according to the marketer’s budget. Also, the target audience characteristics like age, gender, location, interests, etc. can be clearly defined. Also posts can be scheduled to be published at a later time and boost it when it becomes active. This increases visibility of the page and posts amongst the users and increases brand awareness.

**Fig. 4. A Sample Facebook Page**

C. **Advertisements**

Facebook offers many types of advertisements specific to the needs of marketers. These ads can attract traffic to the marketer’s website or FB brand page; boost the interaction with the page; make them aware of the brand and get them to consider buying a certain product.
D. Cross Platform Marketing
   Facebook can be just a part of a brand’s platforms for marketing. Cross platform marketing involves using Facebook alongside television/radio marketing, other forms of digital marketing like application development and web designs, other social media platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn, and etc. to unify the audience related measurements and avoid duplication in terms of customers engaged.

E. Market Intelligence
   Facebook provides a way to listen to the users who post or interact on social media in terms of “liking”, “sharing”, or “commenting” posts. This will allow the marketers to gauge the general sentiment and opinion about their brands amongst the people and utilize this information to either improve their engagement techniques or improve their brand/products. By keeping the consumer engaged on its FB page, the brand can ensure better visibility on the social network.

X. SOME SECTORS THAT USE FACEBOOK MARKETING
   Facebook marketing has been used by a variety of sectors that have their presence online and this includes a range of sectors from education to entertainment to retail as detailed below:

A. Education
   Facebook allows interconnections between students, teachers and organizations online that is so simple and quick and quite unthinkable before the age of social media. Educational Institutions use Facebook effectively to market themselves and to boost the number of applications to their university. They constantly update campus news and events on their pages that promotes their page amongst their target segment.

B. Entertainment
   The Entertainment industry is seen to have the largest share on Facebook with respect to posts and there is a good use of photos and images and links. This shows how the Entertainment industry uses Facebook extensively for marketing purposes.

C. Fashion
   In Facebook, eWOM is a powerful concept where in content posted can reach a large audience in seconds. This is extremely useful in case of the fashion industry where in new styles and designs can be launched online to reach the right audience on time. Also, the fashion industry is known to house visually creative designs that Facebook can aptly display. One more use the fashion industry finds with Facebook is the insights on consumer behaviour that it can utilize and read into as motivation for its new designs.

D. FMCG: Food and Beverage
   Marketing can greatly impact food choices and consumption. And hence the food and beverage industry has taken to Facebook like fish to water. The provision of understanding customer views, reviews and suggestions is a useful way of measuring feedback and taking action accordingly.

E. Real Estate
   Facebook can be leveraged effectively by the Real Estate business to create highly targeted advertisements and post photos of the property of interest. The ability to be able to virtually see the property and read about it and even put in queries about the same makes interested consumers take to Real Estate on Facebook very easily.

F. Retail
   Retail companies mainly use Facebook as a source of customer insights and feedback where in consumers comment on new products. These comments are mined from these Retail companies’ Facebook pages and analyzed for valuable inputs for new product development. Also complaints and suggestions are immediately responded to and this can go a long way in ensuring brand loyalty. The posts on the brand pages can give rise to a viral circulation that can enhance the brand’s image at very low costs.

XI. CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT
   Engagements constitute direct user actions on posts in a Facebook brand page. These play a role as a better measure for user feedback as compared to user impressions that just involve loading the contents of a webpage. An improved engagement on a page can indicate a deeper trust in the brand:

A. Types of Engagement
   There are various ways a customer can engage with the FB brand page. The user can interact with a page by liking, reacting to, sharing or commenting on the page posts or liking the page itself. Comments denote a greater level of engagement as compared to shares and likes in that order.

B. Data Mining
   In order to analyze the consumer engagement on a page, data from the page related to this consumer interaction needs to be obtained. According to (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2011), the data from an FB page can be obtained using the FB Graph API which allows access to the FB social graph and the various connections between them. This data can be extracted and then stored in a tabular form (relational database) for data aggregation and analysis of the same.

C. Data Aggregation and Analysis
   Data analysis is the compilation of information taken from the extracted data in the databases for
further data processing and analysis. (Wikipedia, n.d.) Data analysis according to (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2011) refers to transforming the data, finding patterns, and modelling the data in order to interpret it and add some meaning to the same.

XII. CONCLUSION

Digital Marketing has undergone a lot of changes and has diversified to such an extent where customization with respect to marketing efforts can easily be done at an individual customer level. Social Media marketing makes responding to every individual’s need a reality. Brands are utilizing Facebook for “social listening” to help get into the minds of consumers and to enhance the understanding of what the consumer likes, approves, suggests and enjoys. Some brands have nailed the art of setting up appealing Facebook pages while some are still struggling to make a mark in the hearts of the consumers. Knowing where one stands with respect to the level of consumer engagement on a brand page can help make or break the marketing efforts on Facebook.

REFERENCES


