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Digital Marketing – A review of the trends in Industry and Constantly changing dynamics

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Abstract:

The consumption and ease of accessibility of the internet and social media have changed consumer behaviour which has resulted in companies to reshape and realign their strategies. The effort with this exploratory research is to understand how new technologies and trends have become relevant and go hand in hand for organizations to shape their strategies. Social Media Marketing and Digital Marketing has empowered businesses and brands to reach wider audiences with much lower costs and less manpower to be employed for redundant tasks. Digital marketing is reshaping marketing strategies constantly and is using new technologies, platforms not only to attract customers but to give them an immersive experience and engage them with the brand. Digital marketing is now not only limited to a few platforms but has evolved into a multi platform, multi media interconnected web of Digital Marketing Mix. Multi Marketing/ Omni Channel Marketing are in play when brands are pushing the use of interconnected eco-system of technologies to enhance customer experience. With the emergence of Artificial Intelligence the traditional Digital Marketing Tools, platforms can more effectively engage with a wider audience keeping in check costs and at the same time catering personalized experience. This paper is an effort to study the adoption, practice and future of Digital marketing.

Keywords:

Digital Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Digital Marketing Mix, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Omni Channel Marketing.

1.Introduction

A product with a value cannot make a place for itself unless it is marketed and placed with the correct proposition. Marketing helps the product distinguish itself and stand out in the market. One of the most well-known definition says that "Marketing is the social process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others." (Philip Kotler, 2007). With the current scenario irrespective of the product value it has to be marketed such that the buyers can distinguish, identify derive the value to them based on the features and utility, thus making a final purchase decision. Thus marketing is a key component in the success of a product and this is not limited to simply a single medium push rather it starts from the Ads in various platforms Print(Newspapers, magazines), Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn), OTT Ads, Omni Channels, TV ads, emails, SMS, Messengers (Whatsapp, WeChat, Telegraph. Over and above these the new age factors like Influencer marketing, AI based tools.

There will need to be a push such that the buyer is constantly engaged, is aware, is constantly educated and is involved with the brand so they make the final decision. The perfect marketing mix will have a blend of the traditional methods and will make the best of the digital marketing

ever changing landscape culminating not just technology as a factor but communicating on the latest mediums where the consumer is constantly engaged.

A major event in the recent times being the pandemic has further led to the evolution of consumer awareness, needs, as well as education as well. There is a growing number of people who are spending more time at home and shopping, these people have developed a habit to indulge in for comfort and nostalgia to purchase products. Organisations, Brands, Marketeers who have learned to recognize the transitions and further communicate their preposition in terms of values and relevance to changing customer lives are more likely to form long-term connections with their consumers across different demographics.

Digital marketing effects very aspects of advertising starting from strategy to planning through the marketing mix, marketing communications and even customer actions to marketing research. ((David Chaffey, 2012). Digital Marketing as means allows organizations to interact with consumers real time, enabling organizations to promptly address concerns, queries, resolve complaints, and cultivate favourable brand views (Md Afnan Hossain, Oct 2022))(Yogesh K. Dwivedi, 2021).

Table 1.1 Timeline of emergence of Digital Marketing

Year	Event
1990	Digital Marketing term was first used. That year, Archie, the first search engine, was launched.
1993	The first clickable web ad banner was introduced this year.
1994	Yahoo was launched as the first e-commerce transaction over the Net Market.
1996	This year, small search engines were introduced, i.e., Hotbot, Looksmart, and Alexa.
1997	Launch of the first social media website, SixDegree.com.
1998	This year was the changing year of the birth of Google. Microsoft launched MSN, and Yahoo! Introduced Yahoo! Web search.
2000	The Internet bubble burst this year; SixDegree.com shut down, and smaller search engines were wiped out.
2001	This year's first mobile marketing campaign, Universal Music, was introduced.
2002	The birth year of LinkedIn.
2003	This year, WordPress was introduced and launched Myspace
2004	This year changed when Gmail was launched, Google went public, and Facebook went live.
2005	YouTube was introduced in this year.
2006	Microsoft launched MS Live Search; this year, Twitter was launched, and Amazon's e-commerce sales crossed \$10 billion.
2007	Launch of Tumblr, Web streaming service Hulu, and iPhone.
2008	This year, China took over America regarding the number of users. Spotify was introduced to allow users to listen to online songs.
2009	Google launches Instant for real-time search engine results.
2010	WhatsApp was introduced to make communication easier.
2011	Google Buzz shut down, and the web overtook the TV viewership among the youth.
2012	There was a progressive increment in the Social Media Budget of up to 64%.

2013	Yahoo acquired Tumblr this year.
2014	This year, many things happened, like mobile internet usage exceeding PC internet
	usage.
2015	In this era, Snapchat was launched, and predictive analytics also rose.
2016	Yahoo discontinued a few of its services.
2017	TikTok was launched.
2019	Google+ left the market.
2021	Most of the digital marketers use social media websites for marketing.
2023	AI Chatbots like ChatGPT took over the internet.

Source: (www.wscubetech.com, 2024)

1.1. Major tools used in Digital Marketing

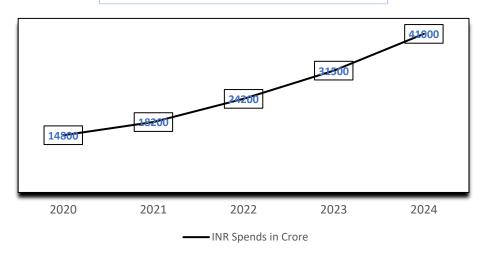
Digital Marketing is a highly specialized and fragmented means of marketing which is utilized by specific tools and mediums all of which have specific purposes to convert audiences as leads and further into sales.

The following is a description of Digital Marketing spends in India from 2020 to 2024 Since 2020 from when we have observed the data pattern, there has been a drastic increase in data on an annual basis and there is a constant upward trajectory in terms of spending in Digital Marketing.

Table 1.2 Digital Marketing Spends in India

Year	INR Spends in Crore
2020	14800
2021	18200
2022	24200
2023	31500
2024(Estimates)	41000

DIGITAL MARKETING SPENDS INDIA



Graph 1.1

Source: (www.ispos.com, 2023)

1.1.1 Social Media Marketing (SMM)

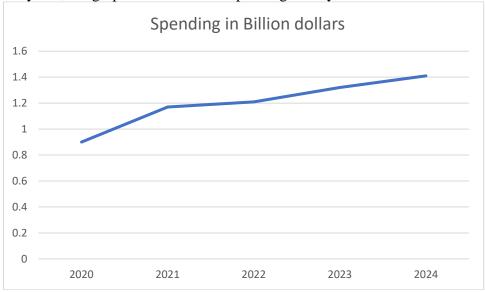
SMM uses different social media platforms to build brands, connect to audiences, educate consumers and create brand awareness and loyalty.

SMM as a tool can be used starting from Brand Building to engaging with customers to further continuous relationship building with customers driving them to making purchase decisions all the way to order carts.

Table 1.3 Social Media spends

	Spending in Billion
<u>Year</u>	dollars
2020	0.9
2021	1.17
2022	1.21
2023	1.32
2024	1.41

The below is a look at how companies have increased their budget on Socia Media spends over the years, the graph is a look at the spending from years 2020-2024



Graph 1.2 Social Media Marketing in Billion Dollars

Social Media Market size was valued at USD 5.24 Billion in 2023 and is projected to reach **USD 35.32 Billion by 2030,** growing at a **CAGR of 25.92%** during the forecast period 2024-2031. (Statista, 2024)

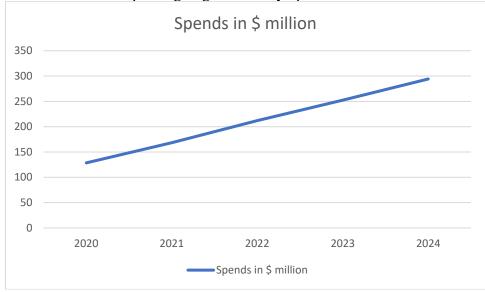
1.1.2. Influencer Marketing

Hiring Influencers on various platform and collaborating with them to promote the brand. In recent times this has become a very specialized field as influencers are specific to their fields, ranging from Healthcare, Travel, Automobile, Electronics and various other categories.

Table 1.4 Influencer Marketing Market Spends

Year	Ad Spend in \$ Million
2020	103.2
2021	137.2
2022	174.4
2023	208.7
2024	244.2

From years 2020 to 2024 there is a steady growth of spending on Influencer Marketing to the tune of the overall spends going all the way up to more than 30% on an annual basis.



Source: (Statista, 2024)

Graph 1.3 Influencer Marketing spends

1.1.3 Digital India Initiative campaigns

Government of India is actively promoting digital marketing through its *Digital India* campaign. *Digital India* campaign, started with an aim to empower citizens by providing them with education and access to digital services and technologies.

These initiatives have a focus on improving internet connectivity, digital literacy, and e-governance, creating awareness on digital security and creating a favorable environment for the growth of digital marketing in India.

Furthermore the government is ensuring that various measures are taken to create an environment that support businesses in adopting digital marketing strategies, which includes offering financial incentives and organizing training programs.

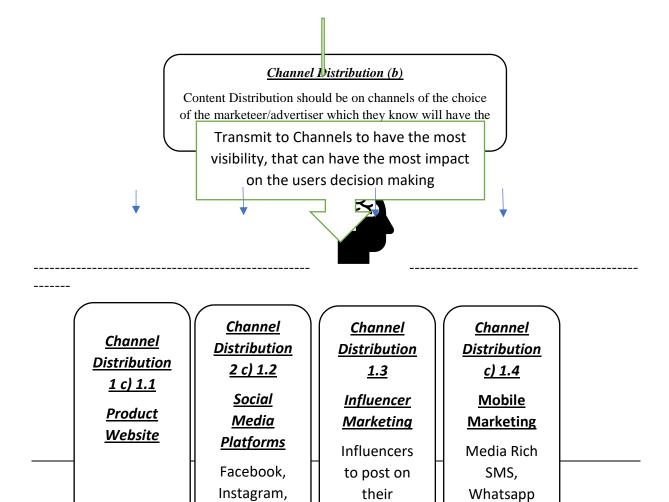
As digital marketing continues to expand its footprint in India, the government continues its efforts via *Digital India campaign*, these initiatives will play a dominant role in cultivating a thriving digital ecosystem.

1.1.4. Suggestive model based on existing Digital Marketing and techniques, using AI.

Create Theme, Choose day, Festival, Event based (utilize an AI tool for graphics)

Create Word content to fit the theme.

2670



d) Deploy AI and ML tools to Measure the responses across the channels, backtrack the

Channels

Channels

effective leads and re-apply new strategies.

X, LinkedIn

Fig 1 Conceptual Model

We have sequentially divided into phases

- a) Content Creation is the core of any marketing activity to convey a message, in this case a marketer, advertiser can create Content from messages, short jingles, images all of these depending on the specific Theme that can further be matched with Festivals, Days, Events, Current affairs. The usage of words to creation of images can be done using AI tools.
- b) Channel distribution is the second most important activity as the medium is selected in this phase and then transmitted to the target audiences.
- c) 1.1) The website of the company is at the core of any Digital marketing as a base and the content created must first reflect on the website, over and above all the activity the main order cart or the lead source is the website and thus the content should be first deployed on the

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website; the content from AI can be further put in the website which can again be done by respective Web Builder tools.

- 1.2) Social Media Marketing is the most effective means of visibility and thus a product promotion across channels (which can again be expanded in terms of more channels or reduce to a few) is a key activity, again keeping in mind the content across platforms; for e.g. Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn is uniform in nature and conveys the same message.
- 1.3) Influencer Marketing is a very crucial activity as their presence on multiple mediums across Social media and their followers can churn into leads depending on the impact that they make. Thus depending on product, region, popularity the advertiser will have a task of selecting the influencer.
- 1.4) Mobile Marketing is another important activity that can influence the consumer and churn into leads. SMS, Location based Marketing, In-App Marketing can further funnel in to the specific target audience.
- d) Deployment of AI tools to employing Machine Learning to understand how many clicks resulted in leads, potential leads, subscribing to brand channel, geography of the users from where the consumer traction is. Based on this an advertiser can reframe the entire Digital Marketing strategy from the start and again focus on specifics to ensure maximum brand visibility and lead conversion.

2. Review of Literature.

Explanition para – discussing about the study

2.1 Adoption of Digital marketing

Digital Marketing has been consistently growing ever since Internet became available to individuals from their Desktops to Laptops and then further on their mobile phones thus expanding the reach to a larger audience across the globe.

The interesting part of Digital marketing is that since the initial phases of it being available means of Click based ad banners as well as emails are still relevant and continue to generate awareness and sales for the brand despite there being advancements and technology having moved further in the forms of dedicated Apps as well as multiple tools and Social Media platforms.

Digital Marketing benefits from presence of users on Social Media platforms and other networks and they are open to share details if they are part of the network, thus utilization of Search Engine Optimization, content marketing, influencer marketing, content automation, e-commerce marketing, campaign marketing, and social media marketing, social media optimization, e-mail direct marketing, display advertising is effective In terms of getting the consumers as well as cost effective for small scale enterprises who can have a more target oriented approach ((Madhu Bala, Oct 2018).

In order to execute this hiring dedicated agencies, choosing the specific digital tools and platforms becomes essential for achieving desired results, at the same time it is also essential that companies have dedicated and educated staff that is well educated in executing the strategies using these tools. Recruiting digital marketing experts, as well as offering in-house training programs for existing employees, investing in their education on the emerging technologies and practices promotes a culture of learning and innovation (Dave Chaffey, 2017).

The presence of Social media and its ever growing user population has made it an essential element of digital marketing strategies for organizations. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, provide companies chances to interact with consumers, in the process cultivate brand loyalty, and continue advertising items through collaborations with assigned influencers. Companies can utilize social media marketing to establish connectivity with their target audience, simultaneously address customer feedback, and capitalize on viral trends as well as specific ongoing events to enhance brand exposure (Gökhan Aydin, 2021). With access to the Internet easily across the globe has led individuals to spend more time on the internet, which in a research was found to be close to 2-5 hours average duration. (Shiwangi Singh, 2022).

2.2 Pre and Post Pandemic Era Digital Marketing impact

Digital marketing is the one means using technology that has a constant upward trajectory and has not seen any declines, infact Pandemic era forced the non Technology Brick and mortar setups to go digital or go extinct. This forced disruption has a led to an increase in all age groups including geriatric population to educate use and consume platforms which they have in the past avoided or hand restrictions in utilizing.

A bibliographic analysis done showcases that SMEs that contribute 50% of global economy are at the cross roads of transformation digitally, with the pandemic changing the consumer landscape, the transition has become an inevitable necessity for these organisations and they will continue to reap benefits post pandemic (Nisful Laila, 2024).

COVID-19 pandemic enforced lockdown across the globe and led to enforcement of severe restriction of any movement outside the residences, completely limiting social interactions which resulted in distress for many individuals across demographics. In this time period the evolution of technology by means of internet Social Media became an effective means to overcome and adapt to this "new normal" which helped overcoming this distress (Dey, 2022). Further this also became a means for Brand Building and a very essential part of marketing going all the way from product launch to customer engagement, a trend that would be practice in the years to come (A. N. Mason, 2021).

The dynamics of Covid-19 caused a sudden shift in HRM practices, changing operational and strategic shift due to remote working and changes in policies, newer methods to create employee engagement and continue with commitment, marketeers further acknowledged the digital transformation in full swing/phases of implementation and as a means of continuing in their respective business (Yas, 2020) . This trend was predicted to continue and remote working to become an acceptable norm in the near future (Kalogiannidis, 2021).

Brand Loyalty disruptions are a result of the consumer ready to go for private labels, this was one of the biggest change in consumption of consumer goods (Tran, 2023)

One of the studies conducted in Covid Era found that millennials are practical and less emotional compared to previous generation customers, who were brand loyalists. Employing a robust digital marketing strategy, leading to customer satisfaction and involvement can lead to positive purchase decisions. (Ganesh Dash, 2021)

Technology, from the very beginning, brought a new era of implementation and development of marketing practices. Advances in technology are moving fast and despite Covid-19 it is impossible to stop progress as innovative methods and modern marketing tools are developing by leaps and bounds.

In his article with topic "Digital Marketing", Sawicki defines Digital marketing as "exploitation of digital technologies, which are used to create channels to reach potential recipients, in order to achieve the enterprise's goals, through more effective fulfillment of the consumer needs (Sawicki, 2016).

Durmaz and Efendiouglu indicated in their study "Travel from Traditional Marketing to Digital Marketing" that digital marketing aims to reduce response times to customers and expects guidance from customers instead of trying to change their perception like traditional marketing (Y. Durmaz and I. H. Efendioglu, 2016)

"Specifically, EDT research after the COVID-19 outbreak has been focusing on emerging topics, such as corporate governance, sustainable development, platform ecosystems, and dynamic capabilities." The practices that came into effect as a result of pandemic that led to EDT(Enterprise Digital Transformation) has now become a regular practice and what started as an enforced measure for survival has now become a regular feature resulting in increased revenue generation for organisations (Jinnan Wu, 2024).

"They must redefine their target consumer personas to account for the new Workday Consumer mindset." The article discusses on the importance of marketeers to understand the devices used and the audience that can afford the product, moreover it is also important to understand where their target audience will be at the specific time of the day, especially now that the working hours, times and habits have evolved post the pandemic (Microsoft, 2022).

2.3 Emergence of AI in Digital Marketing

Employing AI tools to create, publish, measure content is another massive industry change that has been witnessed towards the end of Covid Era and is becoming a methodology that will forever change the landscape of traditional digital marketing.

Further utilization of AI tools across social media platforms and thus their marketing campaigns increase consumer satisfaction and engagement. Companies can employ AI-based tools to achieve expansion across social media platforms and achieve derived results to reach out to customers and highlight content relevant to customers, inducing the need to purchase goods. (M. Bilal, 2024)

For marketeers, agencies and organizations a major aspect is utilizing advanced AI tools, for content creation, publishing and then aligning it with the consumers neural networks so as to cater the preferences of customers such that they can relate to and are feed with the accurate information content of their choice. One of the biggest advantages of AI for marketing is the real time data analysis and understanding the patterns of responses, thereby giving a marketer to further modify the content and understand trends.

AI offers the Personalized experience that uses the analytics such that the customers is already being monitored and responded based on their participation at many levels, including rational, spiritual, sensory, physical, and emotional (Borges et al., 2021).

Artificial intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning have the potential to improve marketing automation, allowing for more accurate targeting and personalization, as well as offering indepth analysis of consumer behavior. According to (Tarun Gupta, 2021)

Utilizing AI, businesses can better understand customer behavior, anticipate needs, and deliver more relevant and impactful marketing messages. As AI continues to evolve, it will play an increasingly vital role in shaping the future of digital marketing, empowering businesses to stay ahead of the curve, drive innovation, and achieve their marketing objectives more effectively in a rapidly changing landscape. (.L, 2024).

2.4 The Indian Perspective

With the availability of handheld devices in the form of cellphones, internet has penetrated not only urban but in rural markets as well as thus when positioning a product the brands now have a wider reach to all section of Indian society (Nimmi Rangaswamy, 2012). A paper that mentions discussed Indian scenario for B2B businesses in Brand Building, discusses about focusing on Engaging With Audiences, Mobile-First Approach, Personalization, further recommending that B2B organisations must adopt a strategic digital marketing approach that includes power of content, social media, and data (Neha Sharma, 2024).

Another paper that states that India having the largest young aged population has enabled the digital marketing to be visible but there needs to be focus on definite content and that is something that is at the initial phases and needs to further mature to endure customer engagement, further stating - <u>The problem of genuine and non-plagiarist content can only be solved by letting marketers experiment with their content</u>. (Ratna, 2020).

While Digital Marketing in India is a trend that has aggressively caught up but there needs to be a definite approach by marketing professionals such that they keep up with the trends and understand the aspect of Technology fatigue and subsequently continue to cater to the customers with variations in technical advances (Kiradoo, 2017).

Technology and trends that are impacting globally have also caught up with the Indian audience thus employing strategies like Influencer Marketing, utilization of short videos, voice search, utilization of AI based tools will bolster traffic and result in sales.

3. Research Methodology

The current study is exploratory in nature using secondary data from existing Research Papers, market trends in publications, industry reports and books by leading authors to understand how the market has shaped from the adoption stage through pre and post pandemic era, the duration of most of these researches are between 2015 to 2024 as the emergence and shaping of digital marketing was aggressive and digital adoption in this period plummeted at an all time high globally in this period.

Since information related to the market trends is readily available in websites and industry service providers, we have taken the information from these websites.

We have used these as a standard to conduct this research.

4. Analysis and discussion of the Study

Digital marketing is the essential means of any business to thrive and survive in the current era, we have witnessed unprecedented technological advancements post internet being available to consumers globally and its increasing reach. From the moment we wake up we are using devices extensively, especially cellphones and this as a device along with Computers and Laptops is boon for organizations as this has increased the reach via various channels and tools. Any individual having access to Cellphones, Laptops and computers has presence on Social Media, utilizes Communication platforms and is constantly engaging on these mediums to have a digital presence. Thus using Digital marketing is an absolute essential for any Organization. Platforms have expanded and matured and are now focused on catering quality content, personalized, immersive experiences. With the marketing tools utilizing Artificial Intelligence as well as Machine Learning is rapidly changing the dynamics thereby catering to a larger audience, to ensure presence on multiple/selective platforms and utilize a real time analysis and feedback.

5.Implications

One of the most notable outcomes of the technological surge and its widespread accessibility to consumers is the disruption of both the market and marketing practices. The average consumer of today is empowered with the know how, utilization and exerts control over interactive online media, content, and communication processes. Traditional marketing tools and communication methods is slowly seeing a downward trend and is waning, leading to a decline in consumer trust towards corporate messages and brands. With the emergence of new technologies and platforms there is a constant reshaping of marketing landscape and newer practice being implemented, which has compelled marketers to navigate a complex and evolving environment where they no longer possess complete control over media and messaging.

Over and above this, consumer behavior is constantly evolving; customers are becoming more skeptical, informed, and proactive than ever before. Marketers today and in the future must acquire new knowledge, skills, and strategies to understand the dynamic, technology-driven marketing landscape and effectively engage with the modern consumer.

Marketing is increasingly digital, and ongoing technological advancements present both challenges and opportunities for marketers. Areas such as mobile marketing, the Internet of Things, analytics, big data, 3D printing, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, mobile marketing, Blockchain are among the most rapidly growing, evolving and demanding fields in which future marketers must embrace and continue with the rapid evolution of digital technology and social media.

There will be a need for marketers to stay educated, abreast of these technological developments and related trends to further leverage and deploy them effectively. Thus this necessity has prompted to concentrate on this subject in the current study.

6. Limitations of the Study

This study looks at the effective utilization of internet for marketing and making use of various platforms, apps, technologies for an organization to grow as a brand create market presence and

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convert into sales figures. Since there are multiple platforms and different methodologies implied in their unique ways, this study can be still explored further to understand various business models that have worked using these technologies and applying specific models to gain maximum brand presence and sales numbers. There can also be a further look into new emerging trends and technologies as both of these continue to constantly emerge and reshape the Internet marketing landscape. Areas like Digital Awareness, Digital Literacy, Cyber Security, Influencer Trustworthiness, Information Overflow, Influencer Fatigue can be explored across demographics and geographies such that organizations can have a more meaningful connect with the audience.

7. Conclusion

The research was aimed to understand the emergence and current status of Digital Marketing and future growth. We have clear picture of how Digital Marketing evolved and with Internet being the highway for all connected devices it allowed marketeers, organisations, brands to be visible on multiple platforms. Since the emergence of Digital marketing the growth pattern has shown an upward trajectory and with the emergence of Social Media Platforms and post Covid era there is a massive rise in adoption of technology across geographies and demographics. Adoption to utilize these platforms is all time high and will continue to grow with new platforms and technologies branching out as tributaries.

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