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A Study On The Dominant Role Of Digital Marketing In Consumer Purchasing Decisions

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ABSTRACT

In the current retail environment, digital marketing has become a powerful factor in determining what customers decide to buy. In order to better understand how digital marketing shapes consumer behaviour, this study looks at how companies use online platforms and tools to affect purchase intent, brand loyalty, and general customer happiness. With the internet, social media, and e-commerce expanding at a quick pace, digital marketing has emerged as a key component of contemporary company strategy, revolutionising how companies interact with prospective clients. A number of important facets of digital marketing that have a direct influence on consumer choices are examined in the study, such as the efficacy of search engine optimisation (SEO), targeted social media campaigns, online advertising, influencer marketing, email marketing, and the expanding significance of user-generated content like online reviews and ratings. In order to evaluate customers' reactions to different digital marketing strategies, the study used a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and in-depth interviews. Furthermore, case studies of well-known companies across a range of sectors provide information on how digital marketing campaigns are customised for particular customer groups. Key findings indicate that consumer impressions of brands are significantly impacted by digital marketing, especially through social media and personalised content. Particularly when paired with influencer endorsements, social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are crucial in determining customer trust and brand exposure. Additionally, data analytics-powered targeted web advertising enables firms to send highly customised messages to consumers, boosting the possibility that they will make a purchase. Additionally, the study Shows that user-generated content, peer recommendations, and online reviews have a big influence on consumer decision-making since people are depending more and more on other people's experiences to inform their decisions. According to the study, brands that successfully establish an authentic online presence and cultivate deep connections with their audience

typically see better levels of customer loyalty and retention, underscoring the significance of consumer trust and engagement. Furthermore, as more consumers use smartphones for both product research and purchases, the survey emphasises the growing importance of mobile marketing. In summary, this study shows that digital marketing is a dynamic and changing industry that necessitates constant corporate adaptation to new platforms, technology, and consumer behaviours. It is also a crucial instrument for influencing consumer purchase decisions. Businesses that effectively use digital marketing platforms to offer tailored, pertinent, They are in a better position to affect customer behaviour and obtain a competitive edge in the market thanks to compelling and interesting content.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Brand Loyalty, Influencer Marketing, User-Generated Content (UGC)

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, digital marketing has emerged as one of the most powerful tools in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. The rapid expansion of the internet, the rise of social media platforms, and the increasing use of mobile devices have fundamentally transformed how brands engage with consumers. Digital marketing is no longer just an additional avenue for businesses to reach their target audiences; it has become the backbone of modern marketing strategies, shaping how consumers discover, evaluate, and decide on products and services.

The rise of digital technologies has brought forth a seismic shift in consumer behavior. Traditional marketing channels, such as print advertising, radio, and television, while still relevant, have seen a decline in their effectiveness as consumers increasingly turn to online platforms for information and engagement. With the proliferation of digital touchpoints, consumers now have the ability to research products, compare prices, read reviews, and engage with brands at any time and from anywhere. In this environment, digital marketing has become indispensable, offering a dynamic and interactive platform for brands to influence consumer decisions.

Digital marketing encompasses a wide array of strategies and techniques, including search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, email campaigns, content marketing, influencer partnerships, and paid advertising. These tactics are designed to not only increase visibility but also engage consumers in meaningful ways that drive them towards making a purchase. More than just promoting products, digital marketing aims to create relationships between brands and consumers, often fostering a sense of trust, loyalty, and community. With personalized messaging, real-time interactions, and targeted ads, digital marketing has the power to reach the right consumer with the right message at the right time, significantly influencing their buying decisions.

Consumer purchasing decisions have become increasingly complex, influenced by a combination of factors such as convenience, price sensitivity, brand reputation, peer recommendations, and social media trends. Digital marketing, particularly through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, allows businesses to leverage these factors by providing a more personalized and immersive experience. Consumers are no longer passive recipients of marketing messages but active participants in the marketing process, with the ability to interact with brands, share experiences, and create content. This shift has given rise to a new type of consumer, one who expects brands to be transparent, authentic, and responsive.

Moreover, digital marketing has significantly enhanced the ability of businesses to gather and analyze consumer data. With tools like Google Analytics, social listening platforms, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems, companies can gain invaluable insights into consumer preferences, behaviors, and purchase patterns. This data-driven approach allows businesses to tailor their marketing efforts with greater precision, improving the likelihood of influencing purchasing decisions and driving conversions.

The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated the dominance of digital marketing. As physical stores closed and consumers turned to online shopping, businesses had to pivot quickly to maintain engagement with their audiences. This period highlighted the critical importance of a strong digital presence, as those who had invested in digital marketing were better positioned to connect with consumers during a time of uncertainty.

In conclusion, the dominant role of digital marketing in consumer purchasing decisions is undeniable. As digital platforms continue to evolve and consumer expectations shift, businesses must adapt their marketing strategies to stay relevant and competitive. Understanding the impact of digital marketing on purchasing behavior is crucial for any organization looking to thrive in the digital age.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Digital marketing is a vital tool for influencing consumer behaviour as the emergence of digital technologies has fundamentally changed how companies engage with their customers. Digital marketing has emerged as a crucial factor in influencing consumer choices due to the growing dependence on the internet, social media, and online shopping. However, despite its extensive use, little is known about the precise effects that digital marketing tactics have on consumer purchase behaviour, especially with regard to the ways in which digital content, ads, and social media affect customer decisions. While many studies emphasise the significance of digital marketing, few thoroughly examine how digital marketing dominates the decision-making process for distinct customer categories. By examining how digital marketing tactics affect consumer purchasing decisions and providing insights that can assist companies in improving their marketing strategies to more successfully engage their target audiences, this study seeks to close this gap.

1.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Chaffey, D. & Ellis-Chadwick, F. 2020** To explore the role of digital marketing in the automotive industry and how companies can integrate strategies across channels. Digital marketing increased brand awareness and sales in the automotive sector, particularly through integrated use of social media and search engine optimization (SEO). An integrated digital marketing strategy can lead to higher engagement and conversions in the automotive industry.
- **Kingsnorth, S. 2019** To investigate how digital marketing frameworks impact consumer buying behaviour. Consumers are heavily influenced by targeted advertising and online reviews when making purchasing decisions for vehicles. A strategic focus on content marketing, user engagement, and reviews is essential for improving digital marketing effectiveness.
- **Tiago, M. T. P. M., & Veríssimo, J. M. C. 2014** To assess the impact of social media and content marketing on customer engagement and purchase decisions. Social media channels have a strong influence on customer perceptions, with Facebook and Instagram being particularly effective in automotive marketing. Social media platforms are crucial for creating a digital presence and improving customer interaction.
- **Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. 2016** To explore how digital marketing strategies affect the customer decision-making process, particularly in high-involvement products like automobiles. Online reviews and ratings play a pivotal role in influencing automotive purchases. Transparency and reputation management are key to successful digital marketing.
- **Baltes, L. P. 2015** To investigate the role of content marketing in consumer decision-making in the automotive industry. Well-curated and informative content positively influences consumer trust and decision-making processes. Content marketing should be a core component of digital marketing to drive consumer decisions.
- **Kannan, P. K., & Li, H. 2017** To assess the importance of data analytics in optimizing digital marketing strategies for automotive firms. Data-driven decision-making leads to more personalized marketing efforts, increasing engagement and sales. The use of analytics tools enhances the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies.
- **Charlesworth, A. 2018** To evaluate the impact of search engine marketing (SEM) on automotive consumer behaviour. Higher search engine rankings lead to increased website traffic and higher conversion rates in the automotive industry. Search engine marketing is a critical component of digital marketing strategies, contributing to increased visibility and sales.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Primary objective

- To study the awareness of digital marketing among consumer.

Secondary objective

- To identify various digital marketing channels in order to reach the customer.
- To measure the strategies framed to strengthen social media advertising for customer engagement by asking customers.

HYPOTHESIS CORRELATION

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant correlation between social media marketing, customer engagement, and content strategy.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There are significant correlations between social media marketing, customer engagement, and content strategy.

ONE-WAY ANOVA HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in the mean scores of social media marketing, customer engagement, and content strategy across the different groups.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in the mean scores of social media marketing, customer engagement, and content strategy across the different groups

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study has been conducted on a sample of 120 customers, which may not be representative of the entire consumer base of SVM KIA Motors.
- The study is conducted on SVM KIA Motors in Chennai, and the results may not be generalizable to other regions or dealerships.
- The study mainly focuses on digital marketing channels, which may not consider the effects of traditional marketing channels.
- Data collected through surveys and questionnaires may be prone to response biases, as respondents may not give fully accurate or honest answers.

METHODOLOGY

The influence of digital marketing techniques at SVM KIA Private Limited will be studied using a descriptive research approach. To obtain data for an accurate hypothesis production, the quantitative research data method is employed. The closed-ended questions will be the one asking them. Numerical data will be collected through closed-ended questions. All pertinent questions are included in the preparation of the inquiry, and samples are gathered, most of which are closed-ended inquiries.

DATA ANALYSIS CORRELATION

Correlation measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables.

		social media marketing	customer engagement	content strategy
social media marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	.559**	.477**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	120	120	120
customer engagement	Pearson Correlation	.559**	1	.618**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	120	120	120
content strategy	Pearson Correlation	.477**	.618**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	120	120	120

DISCUSSION

The correlation matrix reveals positive significant relationships between social media marketing, customer engagement, and content strategy. Social media marketing has a moderate positive correlation with customer engagement, $r = 0.559$, and content strategy, $r = 0.477$, with both relationships being statistically significant at $p = 0.000$. Customer engagement and content strategy have a strong positive correlation, $r = 0.618$, which is also statistically significant at $p = 0.000$. These findings suggest that improvements in one area are likely to enhance the others, and the relationships are reliable based on the sample size of 120.

ONE WAY ANOVA

One-way ANOVA is used to compare the means of three or more independent groups to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between them.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
social media marketing	Between Groups	25.213	4	6.303	.323	.862
	Within Groups	2246.112	115	19.531		
	Total	2271.325	119			
customer engagement	Between Groups	43.072	4	10.768	.406	.804
	Within Groups	3050.128	115	26.523		
	Total	3093.200	119			
content strategy	Between Groups	18.421	4	4.605	.202	.937
	Within Groups	2625.046	115	22.826		
	Total	2643.467	119			

DISCUSSION

The ANOVA results indicate nonsignificant differences between the groups for social media marketing ($p = 0.862$), customer engagement ($p = 0.804$), and content strategy ($p = 0.937$). The F-values for the three variables are low, which represents minimal variation between the groups. Given that all p-values are larger than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This implies that the factors being analyzed do not result in significant differences within the groups. Thus, there is no evidence of a meaningful effect for these variables across the groups.

CONCLUSION

The study on the dominant role of digital marketing in consumer buying decisions, particularly concerning SVM KIA Pvt Ltd, underscores the critical influence of digital platforms on modern consumer behavior. It reveals that effective digital marketing strategies, including social media engagement and targeted content, significantly enhance brand awareness and consumer trust. The findings indicate a strong correlation between digital marketing efforts and consumer purchasing decisions, emphasizing the necessity for SVM KIA Pvt Ltd to continuously adapt and optimize its digital strategies to meet evolving consumer expectations. By focusing on personalized marketing and leveraging data analytics, SVM KIA Pvt Ltd can enhance customer engagement and drive sales in a competitive automotive market.