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Role of Social Media Marketing in Building Brand Awareness

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ABSTRACT

In the present digital environment, social media has become an important part of the marketing activities of businesses. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and other social networking sites provide organisations with opportunities to communicate directly with existing and potential customers. Unlike traditional marketing methods, social media marketing allows brands to share information, images, videos, stories and promotional content and receive immediate responses from users. Major benefits of social media marketing is its ability to create and improve brand awareness among consumers. Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers are able to recognise or remember a particular brand when they think about a product or service category. A strong level of brand awareness can help a company become more visible and familiar to its target customers. The present research paper focuses on the role of social media marketing in creating and strengthening brand awareness. It examines how regular social media communication, engaging content, customer interaction, online recommendations, influencer activities and digital campaigns can help consumers become familiar with a brand. Social media also provides businesses with a relatively cost-effective way of reaching a large and diverse audience. The effectiveness of social media marketing depends on the quality and relevance of content, consistency of communication, credibility of information and level of consumer engagement. The study highlights that social media is not only a promotional medium but also an important platform for building relationships between brands and consumers. Effective use of social media can increase brand visibility, recognition, familiarity and consumer engagement. Brands need to develop suitable social media strategies according to the needs, interests and behaviour of their targeted customers.

Keywords: Social Media Sites, Social Networking, Consumer Engagement, Online Marketing, Brand Recognition, Brand Awareness.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has brought significant changes in the way businesses communicate with customers. Consumers today use the internet not only for searching information but also for comparing products, reading reviews, watching product-related videos and sharing their experiences with others. Social media has become an important part of this digital environment. It has changed communication from a one-way process into an interactive activity in which companies and consumers can communicate with each other. As a result, businesses of different sizes are increasingly using social media as a part of their marketing strategies. Social media marketing can be broadly understood as the use of social networking and digital platforms to communicate with customers, promote products or services and develop relationships with the target audience. Businesses can use social media to introduce a new product, provide information about existing products, announce offers, respond to customer questions and encourage users to interact with their content. The major advantage of these platforms is that communication can take place quickly and can reach a large number of people. Customers can also respond to brand messages through comments, likes, shares, reviews and other forms of interaction.

This makes social media different from many traditional forms of advertising. One of the important areas in which social media marketing can contribute to business success is brand awareness. Brand awareness refers to the ability of consumers to recognise or recall a brand when they are considering a particular product or service. Before consumers develop a preference for a brand, they generally need to know that the brand exists. Creating awareness is an important early stage in developing a strong relationship between a brand and its customers. A brand that is frequently seen and positively discussed on social media may become more familiar to consumers. Repeated exposure to meaningful and relevant content can help consumers remember the brand when they are making purchasing decisions. Social media provides several opportunities for businesses to improve brand awareness. A company can regularly publish photographs, short videos, product demonstrations, informative posts, customer stories and other creative content. Such

content can make a brand more visible in the daily online activities of consumers. A consumer may come across a brand through an Instagram post, watch a product demonstration on YouTube, read comments from other users or see a recommendation shared by a friend. Although each interaction may appear small, repeated interactions can gradually increase familiarity with the brand. In this way, social media can help a relatively unknown brand attract attention and develop recognition among its target audience. Another important feature of social media marketing is consumer engagement. Traditional advertising generally provides limited opportunities for customers to communicate directly with the company. Social media, in contrast, allows consumers to comment on posts, ask questions, provide feedback and share their opinions. This interaction can make consumers feel more connected to a brand. When a company responds properly to customer comments and concerns, it can also create a perception that the brand is accessible and interested in its customers. Therefore, social media marketing can contribute not only to brand visibility but also to the development of relationships and trust.

The role of other social media users is also important in developing brand awareness. Consumers frequently share their experiences, reviews and recommendations through social networking platforms. Positive online word-of-mouth can expose a brand to people who may not have encountered it through traditional advertising. Influencers and content creators can introduce brands to their followers and increase the reach of promotional messages. The effectiveness of such communication depends greatly on the credibility of the source and the relevance of the message to the audience. Consumers may respond positively when promotional content appears genuine, useful and consistent with their interests. The increasing use of social media has also changed consumer behaviour. Consumers are no longer dependent entirely on information provided by companies. They can obtain information from other consumers, influencers, online communities and independent content creators. Before purchasing a product, a consumer may search for reviews, watch videos, compare alternatives and examine comments on social media. A brand's online presence can influence how consumers perceive and remember that brand. Companies need to pay attention not only to what they communicate but also to how consumers respond to and discuss their brand online. Social media marketing can be particularly useful for small and emerging businesses.

Traditional advertising through television, newspapers and other mass media may require substantial financial resources. Social media provides businesses with different ways to communicate with customers without depending entirely on expensive traditional advertising channels. A carefully planned social media campaign can help a business reach a specific group of consumers based on their interests, online behaviour and other characteristics. This provides an opportunity for smaller businesses to compete for consumer attention and establish their identity in a crowded market. The use of social media does not automatically guarantee greater brand awareness. The large amount of content available online makes it difficult for individual brands to attract and retain consumer attention. Consumers are exposed to numerous advertisements, posts and promotional messages every day. Poor-quality or repetitive content may therefore be ignored. Negative comments, misleading information or poor responses to customer complaints can affect the image of a brand.

Businesses need to maintain consistency, provide useful content, understand their target audience and respond responsibly to customer interactions. Building brand awareness through social media is therefore a continuous process rather than a one-time promotional activity. The importance of studying social media marketing and brand awareness has increased as businesses continue to move their marketing activities towards digital platforms. Understanding the relationship between social media activities and consumer awareness can help organisations design more effective marketing strategies. It can also help businesses identify which forms of online communication are more useful for attracting consumer attention and developing familiarity with a brand.

The present research paper examines the role of social media marketing in brand awareness. The study seeks to understand how social media activities influence consumers' knowledge, recognition and familiarity with brands. It also considers the importance of consumer interaction, content quality, online recommendations and other social media activities in developing brand awareness. The study is based on the view that social media has developed beyond being simply a communication platform and has become an important part of modern brand-building activities. Understanding its role can help businesses use social media more effectively and develop stronger and more meaningful connections with their target consumers.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Tritama & Tarigan (2016) found that social media marketing significantly improves brand awareness. Social media helps companies communicate with consumers and increase their knowledge and recognition of a brand.

2. Yazdanparast et al. (2016) showed that social media marketing influences brand awareness and brand image. Consumer interaction with brands on social media can strengthen brand-related perceptions

3. Yapa (2017) found that social media, particularly Facebook, plays an important role in increasing brand awareness. Social media enables businesses to communicate product information and build stronger brand recognition.

4. Bilgin (2018)- Bilgin studied social media marketing activities and found that they positively support brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. The study showed that regular and meaningful social media activities can make consumers more familiar with a brand.

5. Kurniasari and Budiatmo (2018)- The researchers studied J.CO Donuts & Coffee and found that social media marketing helped create brand awareness and influenced consumers' purchase-related behaviour. The study showed that awareness can act as an important step before purchase.

6. Maria et al. (2019)- Maria and colleagues examined social media marketing, word-of-mouth and advertising. Their findings indicated that these activities can improve brand awareness and influence consumers' intention to buy.

7. Cheung, Pires and Rosenberger (2020)- The study examined social media marketing elements such as interaction, entertainment, customisation and electronic word-of-mouth. It found that interaction, e-WOM and trendiness can strengthen consumer-brand engagement and brand knowledge.

8. Putra and Aristana (2020)- The researchers found that social media promotion through Facebook and Instagram helped create brand awareness. However, the study did not find a significant direct effect of social media marketing on purchase intention.

These studies indicate that social media marketing can play an important role in increasing brand awareness. Interaction, useful content, customisation, online recommendations and electronic word-of-mouth are among the important factors. The impact can vary according to the product, platform and consumer group. Future research is needed to understand how social media marketing influences brand awareness among consumers in different markets.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the relation between social media marketing and brand awareness.
2. To study how social media marketing helps brands to penetrate different market segments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive in nature and is based entirely on secondary data. The required information was collected from Research journals, Books, published research articles, Business magazines, Companies reports, Websites.

Research Design A descriptive research design was adopted because it helps explain the concept and strategies of social media marketing.

Brand Awareness and Social media Marketing

Brand awareness is an important part of marketing and plays a major role in the success of a brand. It refers to the extent to which consumers know about a particular brand and can recognise or remember it when they think about a product or service. In simple words, brand awareness means how familiar consumers are with a brand. For example, when a consumer thinks about a particular product category and immediately remembers certain brand names, it shows that those brands have a strong level of awareness among consumers. Creating awareness is generally one of the first steps in building a relationship between a brand and its customers. In a competitive market, consumers are exposed to a large number of brands every day. They see advertisements on television, newspapers, websites, mobile applications and social media platforms. Because of this large amount of information, it can be difficult for a new or less-known brand to get the attention of consumers. Brand awareness helps a company make its brand more visible and familiar. When consumers repeatedly see or hear about a brand, they may become more comfortable with its name, logo, products and overall identity. This familiarity can increase the possibility that the brand will be considered when the consumer needs to make a purchase.

Brand awareness generally includes two important aspects: brand recognition and brand recall. Brand recognition means that a consumer can identify a brand when some information or indication is provided. A consumer may recognise a brand after seeing its logo, packaging, colour combination or name. Brand recall refers to the ability of a consumer to remember a brand without being shown any direct indication. If a person is asked to name brands of smartphones, toothpaste or clothing and can immediately mention certain brands, those brands have achieved a relatively strong level of recall. Both recognition and recall are important because they show how strongly a brand exists in the consumer's memory. Brand awareness can influence the consumer decision-making process. When consumers are familiar with a brand, they may feel more confident about including it among the alternatives they consider before purchasing. A well-known brand may receive attention more quickly than a brand that consumers have never heard of. Awareness alone does not guarantee that consumers will purchase a product. Product quality, price, trust, customer experience, availability and other factors can also influence the final decision. Therefore, brand

awareness should be considered as an important starting point rather than the only factor responsible for a purchase. In the present digital environment, social media has become an important method of creating brand awareness. Consumers spend considerable time on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and other digital networks. Businesses use these platforms to share information about their products and services through photographs, videos, reels, stories, advertisements and other forms of content. Such activities can help a brand reach consumer repeatedly. When consumers regularly encounter a brand on their social media feeds, they may gradually become more familiar with its name and identity. The interactive nature of social media makes it different from many traditional forms of advertising. Consumers can like, comment on, share and respond to brand content. They can also ask questions and provide reviews about their experiences. When other users share positive experiences or recommendations, the brand can become visible to a wider group of people. In this way, social media can create brand awareness not only through company-generated advertisements but also through consumer-generated content and online word-of-mouth. The quality of information shared by a brand is also important.

Attractive content may catch the attention of consumers, but useful and trustworthy content can help maintain their interest. Brands can use educational posts, product demonstrations, customer stories, short videos and interactive activities to communicate with their audience. Regular and consistent communication can help consumers remember the brand. Excessive advertising or irrelevant content may have the opposite effect and may cause consumers to ignore the brand. Influencers and content creators can also contribute to brand awareness. When a trusted or popular creator introduces a product to followers, people who were previously unfamiliar with the brand may become aware of it. Similarly, customer reviews, ratings and recommendations can help spread information about a brand. However, consumers may respond more positively when such communication appears genuine and relevant rather than being purely promotional. Strong brand awareness can provide several benefits to businesses. It can improve the visibility of a brand, make it easier for consumers to recognise and remember the brand, and increase the chances of the brand being considered during the buying process. It can also provide a foundation for developing other aspects of the brand, such as brand image, brand preference and customer loyalty. For new businesses, creating awareness is particularly important because consumers cannot consider a brand if they do not know that it exists.

Brand awareness represents the level of knowledge, recognition and memory that consumers have about a brand. It is an important foundation for developing a strong position in the market. In today's digital environment, social media provides businesses with many opportunities to increase awareness through regular communication, engaging content, customer interaction, online recommendations and influencer activities. Effective use of social media marketing can help businesses make their brands more familiar, visible and memorable to consumers.

Social Media Marketing and Market penetration

Market penetration means the process through which a brand enters a particular market segment and tries to increase its presence among the consumers belonging to that segment. In today's competitive business environment, simply offering a good product is not enough. A brand also needs to reach the right consumers, communicate its value and create a strong connection with them. Social media marketing has become an effective tool for this purpose. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and other social networking platforms allow businesses to communicate with specific groups of consumers according to their interests, age, location, lifestyle and online behaviour. Traditional marketing methods often communicate the same message to a very large audience. Social media provides greater flexibility because businesses can create different messages for different groups of consumers. For example, a clothing company can promote college wear to young consumers, formal clothing to working professionals and comfortable clothing to older customers. In this way, social media marketing helps brands enter different market segments without using exactly the same communication strategy for everyone.

1. Identifying the Right Target Audience- The first step in market penetration is understanding who the potential customers are. Social media provides businesses with information about the interests and behaviour of their audiences. Companies can study the type of content people like, share or comment on and use this information to understand consumer preferences. This helps brands identify groups that are more likely to be interested in their products. A company selling fitness products can focus its social media communication on people interested in exercise, health, sports and fitness-related content. This allows the company to concentrate its marketing efforts on a relevant group instead of communicating with everyone.

2. Reaching Specific Market Segments- One of the major advantages of social media marketing is the ability to reach specific groups of consumers. Digital advertising tools allow businesses to select audiences based on factors such as age, location, interests and online activities. This makes it easier for a brand to introduce its products to a particular segment. A local restaurant can promote its offers to people living in nearby areas, while an online education company can communicate with students interested in particular courses. Such targeted communication can help businesses enter a market segment more effectively.

3. Increasing Brand Awareness- Before consumers purchase a product, they first need to know that the brand exists. Social media helps brands increase awareness by providing repeated exposure to their names, products, logos, images

and messages. Regular posts, advertisements, videos and stories can make a brand more familiar to consumers. When consumers repeatedly see a brand in their social media feeds, they may gradually begin to recognise and remember it. This is especially useful for new brands trying to enter a market where established companies already have a strong presence.

4. Reaching New Customers at a Lower Cost- Social media can provide businesses with opportunities to reach new customers without depending completely on expensive traditional advertising. A business can start with a small digital campaign and gradually increase its promotional activities according to its budget. This can be particularly helpful for small businesses and new brands. A small company may not have enough money to advertise through television or large newspapers, but it can use social media to introduce its products to selected consumers and gradually expand its market.

5. Creating Different Content for Different Segments- Different groups of consumers have different needs and interests. Social media allows brands to create different types of content for different market segments.

1. Young consumers may respond better to short videos, reels and entertaining content.
2. Working professionals may prefer informative and practical content.
3. Parents may be more interested in product safety, quality and usefulness.
4. Business customers may prefer detailed information about product features and benefits.

6. Using Influencer Marketing- Influencers and content creators can help brands enter specific consumer groups. Influencers generally have followers who share particular interests, lifestyles or preferences. A brand can work with an appropriate influencer to introduce its products to a relevant audience. A beauty brand can work with beauty content creators, while a sports brand can collaborate with fitness or sports influencers. This allows the brand to reach consumers who are already interested in the relevant product category. However, brands should select influencers carefully. The influencer should be suitable for the product and should have a genuine connection with the target audience. The number of followers alone should not be the main consideration.

7. Encouraging Consumer Interaction- Social media is not only a platform for advertising. It also allows consumers to interact directly with brands. Consumers can comment on posts, ask questions, send messages, participate in polls and provide feedback. This interaction can help brands understand what consumers want. It can also make consumers feel that the company is listening to them. When a brand responds quickly and politely to questions and complaints, it can develop a positive relationship with consumers. Such relationships can make it easier for the brand to establish itself within a particular market segment.

8. Using Customer Reviews and Word-of-Mouth- Consumers often look at reviews and recommendations before trying a new product. Social media makes it easy for customers to share their experiences with others. Positive reviews, comments, photographs and videos can introduce a brand to new consumers. For a new brand entering a market segment, positive word-of-mouth can be valuable because consumers may trust the experiences of other users. A satisfied customer can indirectly promote the brand by sharing a positive experience with friends and followers. At the same time, negative reviews can also spread quickly. Therefore, businesses should monitor customer feedback and respond appropriately to problems.

9. Building a Community Around the Brand- Social media can help a brand develop a community of consumers with common interests. A brand can encourage followers to participate in discussions, challenges, competitions and other activities. A sports company can create a community around running and fitness. Followers can share their exercise experiences, achievements and suggestions. Such activities can create a feeling of belonging and make consumers more connected to the brand. A strong online community can help a brand maintain its presence within a particular market segment over a longer period.

10. Entering Geographical Market Segments- Social media can also help brands expand from one geographical area to another. A local business can initially communicate with consumers in its own city and later target nearby cities or other regions. For example, a small food brand operating in one city can use social media to create awareness in neighbouring cities before expanding its physical or online operations there. This allows businesses to test consumer interest before making large investments.

11. Testing Products and Consumer Preferences- Social media provides a useful environment for testing ideas before launching products on a large scale. Businesses can ask followers about preferred designs, flavours, colours, prices or product features through polls and other interactive activities. The responses can provide useful information about consumer preferences. A company can use this information to make changes to its product or marketing strategy. This can reduce the risk of entering a market segment with a product that does not match consumer expectations.

12. Increasing Engagement Through Short Videos and Visual Content- Visual content has become an important part of social media marketing. Images, reels, short videos, demonstrations and stories can communicate product

information quickly. Such content can attract attention and encourage consumers to explore the brand further. A food company can use a short video to show how its product is prepared, while a clothing company can show different ways of wearing the same product. Such content can make the product easier to understand and remember.

13. Personalising Communication- Social media allows businesses to communicate with consumers in a more personalised manner. Instead of treating all customers in exactly the same way, brands can provide content based on consumer interests and previous interactions. Personalised communication can make advertisements and posts more relevant. When consumers feel that the content is useful to them, they may be more willing to pay attention to the brand. This can support the brand's entry into a specific market segment.

14. Competing with Established Brands- New brands often face difficulties when entering markets dominated by well-known companies. Social media can provide smaller and newer brands with an opportunity to present their unique features directly to consumers. A new company can highlight its product quality, price, design, local identity, customer service or other advantages through social media. Creative content and strong consumer engagement can help a new brand attract attention even when it does not have the same financial resources as large companies.

15. Measuring Marketing Performance- Another important benefit of social media marketing is that businesses can measure the response to their marketing activities. Companies can examine indicators such as views, likes, comments, shares, clicks and other forms of engagement. This information can help businesses understand which type of content is performing well and which market segment is responding positively. The company can then improve its future campaigns. In this way, social media allows brands to continuously learn and adjust their marketing strategy.

The role of social media marketing in penetrating market segments can be summarised as below;

1. **Better audience identification** – Helps brands understand and locate potential consumers.
2. **Targeted communication** – Allows different messages to be created for different consumer groups.
3. **Greater brand visibility** – Makes brands more visible to potential customers.
4. **Lower entry barriers** – Gives new and small businesses an opportunity to reach consumers without relying entirely on costly traditional advertising.
5. **Consumer engagement** – Creates direct communication between brands and customers.
6. **Influencer support** – Helps brands reach specialised groups through suitable content creators.
7. **Online word-of-mouth** – Allows customer reviews and recommendations to reach new consumers.
8. **Geographical expansion** – Helps businesses create awareness in new locations.
9. **Market testing** – Allows businesses to understand consumer reactions before making larger investments.
10. **Performance measurement** – Provides information that helps companies improve their marketing campaigns.

CONCLUSION

Social media marketing has changed the way brands approach market penetration. It provides businesses with the ability to identify specific consumer groups, communicate with them directly, build awareness and develop relationships. This study suggests a positive and direct relationship between social media marketing and brand awareness. Social media allows brands to create different messages for different market segments according to their needs and interests. For new and small businesses, social media can be particularly useful because it provides opportunities to compete for consumer attention without depending completely on traditional advertising. Successful market penetration requires more than simply posting advertisements. Brands need to understand their target consumers, provide useful and attractive content, encourage interaction, respond to feedback and maintain a consistent online presence. Social media marketing can be considered an important tool for entering new market segments, increasing brand visibility and developing stronger relationships with consumers. When used carefully and strategically, it can help a brand move from being unknown to becoming familiar and trusted within its target market.

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