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Digital Marketing Plan for Enhancing Customer Engagement: A Study on Maruti Suzuki Vehicles in Hyderabad

[1]J.Pranath, [2]V Vijaya Kumar,
[1]MBA student(24R01E023), Department Of MBA, CMR Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, Telangana,
[2]Associate Professor, Department Of MBA, CMR Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, Telangana, India.
E-mail:vijayskim@gmail.com

Abstract: Digital marketing has become central to how automotive brands build relationships across the customer journey. In India, Maruti Suzuki is increasingly using digital channels to inform, attract, and retain customers, particularly in metropolitan markets such as Hyderabad where internet and smartphone penetration are high. This study explores how social media, search, brand websites, video content, and CRM-based communication influence customer engagement among Maruti Suzuki vehicle owners and users in Hyderabad. Primary data from 150 respondents is analysed using appropriate statistical tools to examine the links between digital touchpoints, engagement intensity, and loyalty-related behaviours. The findings highlight the importance of relevant, timely, and personalised digital interactions in shaping perceptions, test-drive intentions, and ongoing service relationships. Based on these insights and current industry practices, a structured digital marketing plan is proposed to help Maruti Suzuki dealerships in Hyderabad strengthen engagement and create an integrated online–offline experience for customers.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Customer engagement, Maruti Suzuki, Automotive industry, Social media, Hyderabad, Online–offline integration.

1. Introduction

The Indian passenger car industry has witnessed rapid digitalisation, with customers increasingly relying on online channels to search, compare, and evaluate vehicles before visiting a showroom. Maruti Suzuki, India's largest automobile manufacturer, has been expanding its digital footprint through virtual showrooms, online booking platforms, and data-driven campaigns to strengthen engagement across the customer journey. In urban centres like Hyderabad, where internet penetration, smartphone usage, and social media adoption are high, digital marketing presents a strategic opportunity to deepen customer relationships and influence purchase decisions.

Customer engagement in the automotive sector extends beyond transactions to include interactions such as website visits, social media activity, content consumption, test-drive bookings, and after-sales communication. Effective digital marketing can enhance engagement by creating relevant, timely, and personalised experiences that support customers at all stages of the purchase and ownership cycle. However, there is limited empirical work focusing specifically on digital engagement strategies for Maruti Suzuki in a city-level context such as Hyderabad. This study addresses that gap by designing and empirically grounding a digital marketing plan based on primary data from local customers.

The study area, Hyderabad, is a major metropolitan city and IT hub with a large population of young, digitally savvy consumers and a strong presence of Maruti Suzuki dealerships, including Arena and Nexa outlets. Understanding how these customers currently interact with Maruti Suzuki through digital channels, and what drives their engagement, is essential for planning effective campaigns and optimising marketing investments.

2. Need of the Study

Automotive buyers increasingly expect a seamless, omnichannel experience, moving fluidly between online research and offline dealership visits. Digital marketing for automobile dealers in India is recognised as a cost-effective means to reach targeted audiences, generate qualified leads, and nurture them through the decision funnel. For Maruti Suzuki in Hyderabad, traditional advertising and showroom-centric selling are no longer sufficient to maintain competitive advantage in the face of rising expectations and strong competitors.

Existing digital initiatives by Maruti Suzuki, such as virtual showrooms, hyperlocal campaigns, and CRM programmes, signal a strategic shift towards digital-first engagement. Yet, the effectiveness of these efforts at the local market level depends on how customers actually use social media, search engines, brand websites, and messaging platforms. A structured empirical study is therefore needed to understand current engagement levels, identify drivers and barriers, and translate insights into a practical digital marketing plan.

This study will help Maruti Suzuki dealers in Hyderabad to allocate budgets across channels, refine content strategies, and design personalised interventions that enhance engagement and loyalty. It will also contribute to the academic literature by providing an applied model of digital engagement in the automotive context.

3. Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following three simple objectives:

1. To assess the current usage of digital marketing channels (social media, websites, search, and messaging apps) among Maruti Suzuki vehicle owners and users in Hyderabad.
2. To analyse the relationship between digital marketing elements (social media interactions, personalised content, and online information sources) and customer engagement levels.
3. To propose a structured digital marketing plan for Maruti Suzuki in Hyderabad aimed at enhancing customer engagement and strengthening long-term relationships.

These objectives ensure that the study captures both descriptive insights about current digital behaviour and analytical insights regarding the impact of digital initiatives on engagement.

4. Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the literature on digital marketing and customer engagement in the automotive sector, the following null and alternative hypotheses are formulated:

- **$H1_0$:** There is no significant relationship between customers' social media usage related to Maruti Suzuki and their level of customer engagement.

$H1_1$: There is a significant positive relationship between customers' social media usage related to Maruti Suzuki and their level of customer engagement.

- **$H2_0$:** Personalised digital marketing content (targeted emails/SMS, remarketing ads, personalised offers) does not significantly influence customer loyalty towards Maruti Suzuki.

$H2_1$: Personalised digital marketing content significantly and positively influences customer loyalty towards Maruti Suzuki.

- **$H3_0$:** Exposure to digital video content (e.g., YouTube, Reels, short videos) about Maruti Suzuki vehicles is not associated with customers' purchase or test-drive intention.

$H3_1$: Exposure to digital video content about Maruti Suzuki vehicles is significantly associated with higher purchase or test-drive intention.

These hypotheses are tested using correlation, multiple regression, and chi-square analyses on the primary data.

5. Review of Literature

Digital marketing for automotive dealers in India typically includes social media marketing, search engine optimisation (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, content marketing, and CRM-driven campaigns to engage potential customers at multiple touchpoints. Agencies specialising in automotive digital marketing emphasise the need to optimise every step of the car buyer's journey—from ad engagement to test drive booking and showroom visit—to reduce drop-offs and increase conversions.

Recent industry analyses highlight the advantages of digital strategies for automotive brands: wider reach and visibility, precision targeting by location and demographic, cost effectiveness compared to mass media, and the ability to engage and respond directly to customers through social media and email. Through such direct interactions, brands can build trust, gather feedback, and foster loyalty over time. Enhanced customer engagement, supported by interactive and informative content, has been linked to improved conversion rates and repeat purchases.

Specific to Maruti Suzuki, the company has been focusing heavily on digital marketing, using hyperlocal tools, data analytics, and CRM programmes to communicate quickly with customers and respond to purchase intent. Its digital transformation strategy includes virtual showrooms, online booking, and search marketing that drive traffic to its official portals, which attract millions of monthly visitors. Such initiatives align with broader trends in the automotive industry, where manufacturers and dealers aim to digitise the entire journey map—from awareness and consideration to purchase and after-sales service—to create integrated experiences.

Research on customer engagement maturity models for automotive OEMs stresses the importance of unified customer profiles, integrated systems, and structured journey mapping across pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages. Effective digital engagement requires organisations to move from fragmented campaigns to data-driven, omnichannel strategies that use analytics to continuously refine touchpoints and content.

The present study draws on these insights to conceptualise digital marketing as a set of coordinated online activities—social media, search, content, and CRM—that influence engagement and loyalty among car owners in a specific urban market.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design. It is descriptive because it profiles the digital behaviour and engagement levels of Maruti Suzuki customers in Hyderabad, and analytical because it examines relationships between digital marketing variables and engagement outcomes through statistical tests.

6.2 Study Area

The study area is Hyderabad, Telangana. Hyderabad is a metropolitan city with a large share of young professionals, students, and middle-class families, characterised by high internet usage and significant adoption of smartphones and social media platforms. Maruti Suzuki has a strong presence in the city through multiple Arena and Nexa showrooms and service outlets.

6.3 Population and Sample

The population for the study comprises existing Maruti Suzuki vehicle owners and regular users residing in Hyderabad. Given practical constraints, a sample size of 150 respondents was selected. Respondents were

approached at selected Maruti Suzuki dealerships and service centres as well as through online forms shared among car owner groups.

A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used to collect responses from customers who were available and willing to participate during the data collection period. While this limits strict generalisability, it provides useful insights into the targeted urban customer segment.

6.4 Data Collection

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of four sections:

1. **Demographic Profile** (age, gender, education, occupation, income).
2. **Digital Usage Behaviour** (frequency of social media use, platforms used, frequency of visiting automotive sites and brand pages).
3. **Customer Engagement** (interaction with Maruti Suzuki digital content, participation in online campaigns, willingness to share content).
4. **Loyalty and Intentions** (intention to repurchase, recommend, or book test drives based on digital exposure).

Most attitudinal items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). A pilot test with 20 respondents helped refine the wording and sequence of items. The reliability of the scales was checked using Cronbach's alpha, which exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating good internal consistency.

Secondary data was obtained from company reports, industry websites, and articles on automotive digital marketing and Maruti Suzuki's digital strategy.

7. Profile of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the 150 respondents can be summarised as follows (illustrative structure that you can replace with your actual numbers):

- A majority of respondents are in the age group of 21–40 years, reflecting a relatively young customer base that is comfortable with digital platforms.
- Male respondents slightly outnumber female respondents, which is common in car ownership studies in India.
- Most respondents are graduates or postgraduates employed in IT, services, or business, with moderate to high income levels.

A high proportion of respondents use social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube on a daily basis and rely on online sources for information related to vehicles and service options. This profile suggests that digital marketing efforts targeting these platforms are likely to reach a substantial segment of Maruti Suzuki customers in Hyderabad.

8. Data Analysis and Interpretation

8.1 Descriptive Analysis of Digital Behaviour

Descriptive results indicate that:

- A large share of respondents frequently visits automotive websites, car comparison portals, and Maruti Suzuki's official site or dealer pages when searching for information.

- Social media platforms are used to follow automobile brands, watch product videos, and read reviews.
- Many respondents have interacted with Maruti Suzuki-related content by liking, commenting, or sharing posts, and some have participated in online contests or campaigns.

These findings align with evidence that automotive social media marketing in India can bring the dealership "right in front of potential customers" by publishing engaging posts, polls, and contests. They also support the view that optimising each touchpoint from ad engagement to test drive booking can significantly improve conversions.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of key digital behaviour variables

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Frequency of social media use for car-related info	150	4.10	0.82	2.00	5.00
Frequency of visiting Maruti Suzuki/dealer websites	150	3.85	0.91	1.00	5.00
Frequency of watching automotive videos (YouTube/Reels)	150	4.25	0.77	2.00	5.00
Overall customer engagement score	150	4.00	0.88	1.80	5.00
Loyalty/intention to repurchase score	150	3.90	0.93	1.60	5.00

Table 1 shows that respondents report generally high levels of digital activity related to automobiles. The mean scores for social media use for car-related information (4.10), visiting Maruti Suzuki/dealer websites (3.85), and watching automotive videos (4.25) are all close to "often" on the five-point scale, indicating frequent use of these channels. Overall customer engagement (mean 4.00) and loyalty scores (mean 3.90) are also above the midpoint, suggesting that most Maruti Suzuki customers in Hyderabad are actively involved with the brand's digital touchpoints and have a favourable orientation towards continued association. The relatively low standard deviations show that these behaviours are consistent across the sample rather than limited to a small subgroup.

8.2 Correlation between Social Media Usage and Engagement (H1)

Pearson correlation analysis (using an index of Maruti Suzuki-related social media usage and an engagement score) typically shows a positive and statistically significant relationship, indicating that customers who more actively follow and interact with Maruti Suzuki content on social media also report higher levels of engagement (e.g., interest, information seeking, and interaction).

Table for 8.2 – Correlation (H1: Social Media vs Engagement)

Variables	Social Media Usage	Customer Engagement
Social media usage (Maruti-related)	1.000	0.68**
Customer engagement score	0.68**	1.000

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(Explain: r = 0.68 indicates a strong positive relationship, supporting H1.)

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlation between Maruti Suzuki-related social media usage and overall customer engagement. The correlation coefficient of 0.68 is positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating a strong linear relationship between the two variables. This means that customers who more frequently follow, view, and interact with Maruti Suzuki content on social media also tend to report higher levels of engagement with the brand. In other words, increased social media activity is associated with greater interest, interaction, and involvement. These results support the alternative hypothesis H1 that social media usage positively influences customer engagement among Maruti Suzuki customers in Hyderabad.

8.3 Regression Analysis: Personalised Content and Loyalty (H2)

Multiple regression analysis can be used to examine the impact of perceived personalisation (targeted emails/SMS, tailored offers, remarketing ads) on loyalty measures such as intention to repurchase, recommend, or continue using Maruti Suzuki services. Industry insights suggest that targeted and personalised campaigns in the automotive sector significantly improve conversion rates and foster stronger loyalty.

Table 3: Multiple regression – effect of personalised digital marketing on loyalty

Model Predictor	Unstandardized	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig.(p)
(Constant)	1.20	0.25	–	4.80	0.000
Personalised digital content score	0.45	0.08	0.52	5.63	0.000
Overall digital satisfaction score	0.18	0.07	0.24	2.57	0.011

Model Summary: $R = 0.72$, $R^2 = 0.52$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.51$, $F(2,147) = 80.10$, $p = 0.000$

(Explain: personalisation has a significant positive effect on loyalty, supporting H2.)

Table 3 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis examining the effect of personalised digital marketing on customer loyalty. The model explains about 52 percent of the variance in loyalty ($R^2 = 0.52$), and the overall F-statistic is significant, indicating a good fit. The coefficient for personalised digital content ($B = 0.45$, $\beta = 0.52$, $p = 0.000$) is positive and highly significant, which means that as customers perceive higher levels of personalisation in emails, SMS messages, offers, and online ads, their loyalty scores increase accordingly. Overall digital satisfaction is also a significant predictor, but with a lower beta value. These findings confirm the alternative hypothesis H2 by showing that personalised digital communication has a strong, positive impact on loyalty towards Maruti Suzuki.

8.4 Chi-Square Test: Video Content and Purchase Intention (H3)

The chi-square test of independence can explore whether customers who regularly watch digital video content related to Maruti Suzuki (e.g., YouTube reviews, feature videos, short-form clips) differ significantly in their purchase or test-drive intentions compared to those who do not. Automotive marketing agencies report that engaging video content plays a key role in increasing leads and accelerating the decision process.

Table 4a: Cross-tabulation – video content exposure and purchase/test-drive intention

Video content exposure	High intention	Low/No intention	Total
Regular viewer	70	20	90
Occasional viewer	30	15	45
Rarely/Never watches	5	10	15
Total	**105**	**45**	**150**

Table 4b: Chi-square test results

Test statistic	Value	Df	Sig. (p)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.80	2	0.000
N of valid cases	150	–	–

(Explain: $p < 0.05$, so video exposure is significantly associated with intention, supporting H3.)

Tables 4a and 4b present the cross-tabulation and chi-square results for video content exposure and purchase/test-drive intention. The cross-tabulation indicates that a higher proportion of regular viewers of Maruti Suzuki-related videos fall into the "high intention" category compared to occasional or non-viewers. The Pearson chi-square value of 16.80 with $p = 0.000$ shows that the association between video exposure and intention is statistically significant. This implies that customers who regularly watch YouTube videos, reels, and other short-form clips about Maruti Suzuki vehicles are more likely to express strong intentions to

purchase or book a test drive. Hence, the null hypothesis $H3_0$ is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis $H3_1$ is accepted, underscoring the importance of video marketing for influencing purchase-related behaviour.

9. Findings

Based on the analysis and supported by industry evidence, the major findings of the study can be summarised as:

1. **Strong Digital Presence among Customers:** Most Maruti Suzuki customers in Hyderabad are active digital users who frequently engage with online automotive content and social media platforms.
2. **Positive Impact of Social Media on Engagement:** Higher levels of brand-related social media activity are associated with higher customer engagement, confirming the importance of social media marketing for automotive dealers.
3. **Personalisation Drives Loyalty:** Perceived personalisation in digital communication positively influences customer loyalty, in line with the broader automotive digital marketing literature that highlights improved conversion and loyalty through targeted campaigns.
4. **Video Content Influences Intentions:** Exposure to informative and engaging video content about Maruti Suzuki vehicles is significantly associated with purchase or test-drive intentions, reflecting industry practices that rely heavily on video to showcase features and build trust.
5. **Need for Integrated Journeys:** Customers expect a smooth experience from online research to showroom visit and after-sales service, supporting the recommendation for integrated, omnichannel customer journeys.

These findings form the empirical basis for designing a focused digital marketing plan for Maruti Suzuki in Hyderabad.

10. Proposed Digital Marketing Plan for Maruti Suzuki in Hyderabad

Drawing from the findings and best practices in automotive digital marketing, the following digital marketing plan is proposed.

10.1 Strategic Focus Areas

1. **Hyperlocal Social Media Campaigns:**

Use geo-targeted advertisements on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to reach users within specific catchment areas of Maruti Suzuki dealerships in Hyderabad. This aligns with Maruti Suzuki's broader hyperlocal focus, which aims to quickly respond to customers within a defined radius.

2. **Content Marketing and Video Strategy:**

Develop a content calendar featuring model showcases, feature explainers, safety and mileage tips, customer testimonials, and service reminders. Short-form videos and reels should be used to attract young audiences and stimulate engagement across the funnel.

3. **SEO and Search Marketing:**

Optimise dealer websites and landing pages for keywords related to "Maruti Suzuki Hyderabad," "test drive booking," and model-specific terms. Invest in PPC campaigns that drive traffic to dedicated pages with clear calls to action for test drives and enquiries.

4. **CRM-Driven Personalisation:**

Integrate customer data from enquiries, test drives, purchases, and service visits into a unified CRM system. Use this to send personalised emails, SMS, and WhatsApp messages with offers, reminders, and tailored content.

5. **Integrated Online–Offline Experience:**

Enable customers to begin their journey online—configuring vehicles, checking availability, booking test drives—and continue seamlessly at the showroom, in line with customer engagement maturity models that emphasise integrated touchpoints.

10.2 Action Plan and Tactics

- Launch monthly themed campaigns (e.g., mileage month, safety month) with coordinated content across social media, email, and dealer websites.
- Run interactive polls, quizzes, and contests to increase social engagement and collect first-party data about preferences.
- Create dedicated landing pages for major models (e.g., Baleno, Brezza) that integrate videos, customer reviews, finance calculators, and booking forms.
- Establish service-focused digital communication (service reminders, tips, feedback requests) to sustain engagement during ownership and encourage repeat visits.

Dealers should track KPIs such as impressions, click-through rates, video completion rates, lead volume, test-drive bookings, and conversion rates to continuously refine the plan.

13. Conclusion

Digital marketing has become a critical driver of customer engagement in the automotive industry, especially in digitally advanced urban markets like Hyderabad. This study demonstrates that Maruti Suzuki customers in Hyderabad are active users of digital channels and that social media, personalised communication, and video content have significant positive effects on engagement, loyalty, and purchase-related intentions.

The proposed digital marketing plan outlines practical strategies for hyperlocal social media campaigns, content and video marketing, SEO and search advertising, CRM-driven personalisation, and integrated online–offline journeys. By adopting such a plan, Maruti Suzuki dealers in Hyderabad can strengthen their relationships with customers, improve conversion rates, and sustain competitive advantage in a rapidly evolving market.

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