H&M Social Media Marketing

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Abstract –

This research examines the social media marketing strategies of H&M, a global fast-fashion retailer, and Sabyasachi, a renowned Indian fashion designer, within the context of the ever-evolving digital landscape. By analyzing their respective approaches, this study aims to uncover key insights into effective social media tactics utilized by diverse players in the fashion industry. Through a comparative analysis of their content creation, engagement strategies, and brand positioning, this research identifies common trends and unique strategies employed by each brand. Additionally, the study investigates the impact of cultural diversity and regional influences on social media marketing effectiveness. By synthesizing data from various sources, including social media analytics, consumer behavior studies, and industry reports, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of successful social media marketing practices in the fashion industry, offering valuable insights for practitioners and scholars a like.

Key Words: Social media marketing, Digital Marketing, Brand Awareness, Consumer Behavior

1.INTRODUCTION

The case study I will use exemplifies this thesis' aims, as the collaboration called Wanderlust between H&M and Sabyasachi includes different social media strategies that both had positive impacts but some others had negative results. This collaboration was launched in August 2021 and involved a combination of Indian-Western fashion. It was composed on the one hand of the Indian slow-fashion brand of Sabyasachi, which is recognized for its good social practices such as just trade and recognition of artisans; and the fast-fashion industry of H&M, on the other side, which is present worldwide but has also been subject to critics due to their unsustainable activities.

However, the objective of this clothing and accessories line was to make the expensive designs of Sabyasachi affordable to H&M consumers. This collaboration could have been highly successful if better marketing strategies were applied; therefore, the ones used and some recommendations will be explained and analyzed further in this thesis.

Therefore, the research question of this thesis is: what are the social media marketing strategies, challenges, and limitations Indian fashion brands use that will mean the success or failure of their campaigns? By success or failure, we mean the campaign's influence in reaching people to inform them about the brand, influencing people to acquire

the products, and keeping them engaged brand

Therefore, an emphasis will be laid under this research on some social media marketing approaches such as mobile-based applications, email marketing, affiliate marketing, and mainly social media-based marketing. Not only this but the challenges and limitations of social media marketing strategies will be specifically analysed considering the failed collaboration of H&M and Sabyasachi. These two brands launched a line of products that ultimately failed due to some factors related to the marketing strategies and campaigns. For example, the previous market study led to an uproar amongst their followers across the globe.

Despite the findings in the other academic literature about digital marketing and marketing in the fashion industry, there was a gap that could not be found in the area of social media marketing focused on the Indian fashion industry. The motivation for this topic comes from personal interests, as I come from an Indian tradition. Thus, I grew up surrounded by unique fashion designs recognized and admired locally and internationally. Also, professional interests motivated this research as the Indian fashion industry has vast business potential and influence in the internal and external markets.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Research on social media marketing strategies employed by H&M and Sabyasachi can offer valuable insights into the approaches taken by two distinct fashion brands operating in different market segments. By analyzing their strategies, one can understand how they leverage social media platforms to engage with their target audience, build brand awareness, and drive sales.

Key areas of study may include:

1. Platform Selection: Examining which social media platforms H&M and Sabyasachi prioritize for their marketing efforts. This could involve analyzing their presence on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and Pinterest, considering factors such as audience demographics and engagement levels.

2. Content Strategy: Investigating the types of content shared by each brand, such as product showcases, behind-the-scenes glimpses, influencer collaborations, user-generated content, and lifestyle imagery. Understanding the tone, style, and frequency of posts can reveal how they seek to resonate with their respective audiences.

3. Audience Engagement: Assessing how H&M and Sabyasachi interact with their followers, including responding to comments, conducting polls, hosting Q&A sessions, and running interactive campaigns. This can shed light on their customer relationship management strategies and efforts to foster community engagement.

4. Influencer Partnerships: Analyzing the brands' collaborations with influencers and celebrities to amplify their reach and credibility. This involves examining the selection criteria for influencers, the nature of partnerships, and the impact on brand perception and sales.

5. Performance Metrics: Evaluating the effectiveness of social media campaigns by analyzing key performance indicators such as reach, engagement rate, conversion rate, and return on investment. This can provide insights into the ROI of their social media marketing efforts and identify areas for optimization.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

H&M's collaboration with Sabyasachi, a renowned Indian fashion designer, likely has several objectives within their social media marketing strategy:

1. Brand Visibility and Awareness: H&M aims to increase its brand visibility and awareness, particularly within the Indian market where Sabyasachi enjoys a strong following. By leveraging Sabyasachi's reputation and fanbase, H&M can reach a broader audience and attract new customers to its brand.

2. Cultural Relevance: Through this collaboration, H&M seeks to align itself with Indian culture and traditions, positioning itself as a brand that celebrates diversity and inclusivity. By featuring Sabyasachi's designs, which often draw inspiration from Indian heritage, H&M can resonate more deeply with Indian consumers and strengthen its connection to local culture.

3. Drive Engagement and Excitement: H&M aims to generate excitement and anticipation among its audience through strategic social media campaigns.

By teasing exclusive previews, behind-the-scenes content, and sneak peeks of the collaboration on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, H&M can engage its followers and create buzz around the launch.

4. Influencer Partnerships: H&M may collaborate with influencers and celebrities to amplify the reach of its social media marketing efforts. By partnering with influencers who have a strong presence in the fashion and lifestyle space, H&M can leverage its credibility and reach to further promote collaboration and drive sales.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In research, social media marketing is essential for staying competitive, gaining industry insights, fostering innovation, and making informed decisions in the rapidly evolving digital media landscape, the researcher will provide a detailed review of existing literature, including journals, articles, research papers, and books, to determine the significance of social media marketing campaigns for brands. The literature review emphasizes the social media marketing campaigns brands implement and their opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, research on these campaigns' usage in the fashion industry will be conducted.

Finally, a short literature review of social media marketing in Indian fashion brands

Later, in 1995 the new phase started with more importance when internet users increased to 16 million. This change kept increasing, leading to a significant increment in internet users during the year

2002, with 587 million personal computer and network users recorded during the same year (IWS, 2021). Global internet users climbed to 4.9 billion at the start of 2022, with internet penetration now at 62.5 percent of the population (Statista.com, 2022). Highlighted the importance of social media as one of the most evolving web-based platforms available. Organizations and companies are using these platforms to generate digital marketing campaigns and personalized ad campaigns. It can be said that it can help them share their thoughts and ideas and build a virtual community that can facilitate brand recognition among the target market online. While initially, social media was only used by users for communicating with each other using platforms like Facebook and Instagram; today, social media platforms have become multifunctional, and this is due to the addition of various promotional and other additional features, including paid advertisement, partnerships, and influencer collaborations (Agarwal, 2020). These new social media tactics have enhanced the sheer scope of social media marketing and allowed brands to establish a one-on-one reach with their customers (Agarwal, 2020). Therefore, it can be inferred that social media marketing has become a bridge between brands and their customers by establishing a network that connects various categories of users with their desired brands through a word-of-mouth network. This technique is entirely digital and is spread across multiple social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Furthermore, it can be said that customer-centric social media marketing strategies help brands build a close-knit relationship with the target market through the exploration of innumerable opportunities

that allow brands to reach their consumers (Elena,2016). Specifically, those who are between the ages of 18 to 30 years, since 90% of the population across the globe who uses social media falls under the said age group (Agarwal, 2020). Henceforth, the above facts depict how social media over the years has been exponential in engaging customers and enhancing the profitability of brands with enhanced levels of customer engagement with their online social media strategies. Thus, allowing the brand to reach out to millions of people worldwide who are connected through social media platforms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To Conduct a study research will emphasize the data collection methods, sampling methods, and conceptual framework, which will be used for conducting research and analyzing the data accordingly to gain the desired result from this thesis. The research is done based both on primary and secondary data. The first is through information collected from questionnaires to customers about the collaboration between H&M and the Indian brand Sabyasachi. Furthermore, the secondary data was gathered from academic research used for the theoretical background of this work and will be used to analyze the case to compare the results.

This study will analyze the use of marketing strategies on social media and the challenges and limitations Indian fashion brands face while influencing customer purchase behavior and engagement in social networks in a positive way.

In this context, the study will highlight the importance of studying the marketing

tools social media can offer to target the social media campaign and have success-

successful results.

1. To identify the favorable impacts of social media marketing on the final advertisement of a social media campaign
2. To ascertain the influence of social media marketing on the customer decision-making process and post-purchase engagement in the fashion industry
3. To determine the challenges brands face while marketing their apparel through social media, which, if well or poorly managed, can allow an apparel brand to influence consumers within the fashion industry.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Research is limited due to the limitation of both time and budget, thus limiting the research results to the number of respondents. A broader group would have a much more comprehensive range of options through which a more realistic picture could be obtained. By choosing a snowball sampling technique, and choosing the circle of family and friends of the researcher as the starting sample, which later spread, could limit the sample to some of the respondents might not have been aware of specific terms used or misinterpreted the questions, resulting in wrong or missing inputs. Due to the decision not to ask for personal identification information, the researcher couldn't contact these people to solve those inquiries or ask them to provide more detail in

the open questions. Related to the open questions, the categorization of responses could also be considered a limitation of this research, as only the clear and most common answers were considered. For example, the topics that only one participant mentioned were not considered. This excludes some opinions that could also represent factors for the failure of the collaboration between both brands. Also, despite trying to avoid it, the categorization of answers made by the researcher could have been influenced or biased by the information gathered during the research

FINDINGS

A recent social media marketing research study comparing H&M and Sabyasachi revealed notable insights. H&M, known for its fast fashion and global presence, exhibited a higher frequency of posts across various platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Their content emphasized diversity, sustainability, and collaborations with influencers and celebrities, resonating with a younger, trend-focused audience. In contrast, Sabyasachi, renowned for its luxury ethnic wear, maintained a more selective approach, with fewer but visually stunning posts primarily on Instagram. Their content highlighted craftsmanship, heritage, and exclusive collections, appealing to a more niche, discerning demographic interested in couture and tradition. Despite the differing strategies, both brands effectively leveraged social media to engage with their respective target markets and reinforce their brand identities, reflecting the diverse landscape of fashion marketing in the digital age.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite all the knowledge and research available on the topic of social media marketing, and that companies nowadays pay special attention to the marketing areas and their work on social media, we can still find some mistakes even in big brands such as the ones shown in our study case. H&M and Sabyasachi started a collaboration, and later a social media campaign to sell an apparel collection in H&M stores. With the H&M presence worldwide and the Sabyasachi importance in India and surrounding countries, we could assume they would have a perfect campaign. However, this thesis focused on the challenges and limitations they faced that could be prevented by future collaborations between these brands or new ones.

The conclusion is that it is significant for brands like H&M and Sabyasachi to only launch a collaborative range of clothing or apparel within the Indian consumer market after conducting an extensive market survey that can give them a clear idea of the target expectations the market will have from such a collaboration. Not only this, but the fact that few customers could purchase the said collaborative range reflects the need to conduct a market forecast. Last but not least, collaborative social media marketing can all be zeroed down to the needs of the customers.

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