

INTERNET MARKETING

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Abstract:

A unique platform that connects people worldwide and at the same time brings truckloads of information on almost anything you can imagine. People make sites to find their lost love and end up connecting millions (heard of Orkut?), brand owners can listen to thousands of customers from around the globe without moving from their chair (seen Twitter?), NGO's run campaigns to motivate people to vote (Jagore.com) ... these are just a few examples of internet's growing reality in today's world.

Introduction:

Internet marketing, also referred to as I-marketing, web marketing, online marketing, or e-Marketing, is the marketing of products, or, services over the Internet. The Internet has brought media to a global audience. The interactive nature of Internet marketing, both, in terms of providing instant response and eliciting responses, is a unique quality of the medium. Internet marketing is sometimes considered to have a broader scope because it not only refers to, such as, the Internet, e-mail, and wireless media, but also it includes management of digital customer data and electronic customer relationship management (ECRM) systems. A unique platform that connects people worldwide and at the same time brings truckloads of information on almost anything you can imagine. Internet is the new age tool for marketers to optimize their businesses. People can interact with each other, see videos, share stuff, read news, research, play games, shop, search jobs, banking and a lot other activity. Internet is a new world altogether. There are

various tools/modes to internet marketing. However, choosing the right one is very important. Each of them has its own advantages and disadvantages. Choosing modes mainly depends upon the kind of product you have and your target audience. Below are list and an extensive analysis on the various tools of internet marketing.

Literature Review

Internet Marketing Research:

American Marketing Association (AMA) (2014) describes marketing research as “the function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through information-information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research specifies the information required to address these issues, designs the method for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications”, AMA approved this definition in (2004) and still use it as it is till now. Marketing research could be conducted in the traditional methods or through internet, many authors compared the traditional methods to the internet based methods (Furrer and Sudharshan, 2001; Wilson and Laskey, 2003) their work revealed that internet marketing research has many valued insights compared to traditional methods. Many firms turned to internet to collect data and conduct research because internet marketing research is relatively low in cost and easy, provide the ability to reach large population, provide the capability to reach physical disabled participants, provides rapid access to participants and the fact that participants can complete it easily increases the participation level and saves time. Internet marketing research provides flexibility and control over format, improves accuracy and simplicity of data entry with ability to incorporate rich media (such as audio, graphics, and video) and the interactive nature of the web in general, and maintain methodological rigor. Internet marketing research is popular among certain populations especially the younger generations, ensures anonymity to participants, simplicity of administration, and provides the ability to follow-up with participants for uncompleted surveys. It also has the capability to provide participants with immediate feedback (such as individual response summaries), eliminates interviewer bias, increases generalizability of data, with the ability to address sensitive topics, and promotes increase access to cultural groups (Sax et al., 2003; Betz & Farr, 2004; Tourangeau et al., 2004; Granello & Wheaton, 2004; Ahern, 2005; Wright, 2005; Parks et al., 2006; Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006; Albrecht, 2009).

Internet Marketing Research and Competitive Advantage:

Information resulted from sound and reliable research can be a powerful support to marketing activities. Competitive advantage can be achieved with the support of precise, appropriate information since it helps managers make better decisions. Organizations can use the obtained information to identify opportunities and develop new products, it also can be used to spot and identify new markets and perhaps modify the way business is conducted. This normally leads to reduce the time and cost which is essential in competitive advantage creation (Chui & Fleming, 2011). Thompson, Strickland & Gamble (2005) argued that corporate executives should give special attention on how corporate resources and capabilities can be used, to enhance the competitiveness of particular business division; such decision can enhance achieving competitive advantage and can be clearly tracked to marketing research results. Karayanni (2006) conducted a study, in order to verify the function of the business usage of the Internet and found that the important usage motivation is to distinguish oneself from the competition (competitive advantage) which includes

both marketing research and market expansion opportunities. This indicates that one of the most important usages of internet is for marketing research to achieve competitive advantage.

Methodology:

This study is a causal one as it is trying to examine the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Quantitative approach and survey strategy are used to assess the dimensions of the study model and test the hypotheses. Both an interview and questionnaire are used to collect data. To assess the use of internet marketing research in the four telecommunication operators in Jordan, an in-depth structured interview with the marketing managers of the four operators will be conducted (separately of course) to underline the different marketing research methods used by the operator. In order to qualify for this study and as a precondition, the operator has to use internet marketing research on regular bases and as a main method to conduct research. The structured interview used multiple items measures on organization of marketing research, marketing information collection vehicles, marketing research information types. Marketing information collection is assessed by using a scale developed by Hart & Tzokas (1999) and Köksal (2008) and presented in a five point likert scale. Marketing research information types are developed based on Hart and Diamantopoulos (1993), Xu and Kaye (1995), and Köksal (2008) studies. The questionnaire is designed based on review of literature and consists of two main parts; the first part gathers demographic information about the respondents and the second part gathers data on the dependent variable competitive advantage dimensions in relation to internet marketing research. The second part is a five point likert scale. The questionnaire is directed to a proportional random sample of telecommunication operators' clients.

Validity and Reliability

Content and face validity of the survey instruments were evaluated by a panel of experts in marketing research, necessary modifications were conducted based on their valuable contribution. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (Sekaran, 2003). According to Nunnally (1978) any value above 0.70 means a reliable measure. Table (1) below shows the result of Cronbach Alpha Coefficient.

.Conclusion:

On the whole, I feel internet marketing definitely has huge potential and in the coming years it will be of great importance due to the growing number of users. However, you cannot ignore the fact that traditional marketing is here to stay for some more time. It would take a while for the new media to sink in and penetrate into the vast sphere of traditional marketing. The need of the hour is to educate business owners about the growing importance of Internet Marketing.

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