

Marketing Strategies of E-commerce Companies During COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract- The conditions under which business was carried out in the world were greatly changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which stimulated the development and adaptation of the sphere of e-commerce. In this study, we explore how e-commerce businesses market themselves in the times of pandemic to meet the quickly shifting consumer habits and challenges of operation. Based on a quantitative research carried out on 60 respondents, the research examines the efficiency of social media marketing, personalized promotions, transparent communication on the safety of delivery, flexible payment mode, and corporate social responsibility. The results indicate that online outreach and target personalization as well as the use of clear safety messages were instrumental in maintaining customer loyalty and promotional online purchases during the crisis conditions. The paper establishes the need to embrace agility, innovation, and consumer-focused strategies in e-commerce marketing in the efforts to develop resilience in an unpredictable market. Realistic suggestions are provided to assist companies to make the best use of their marketing processes during both contemporary and any future disruption, and will add useful knowledge to the digital economy that is under transformation.

Keywords- COVID-19 pandemic, e-commerce marketing, consumer behavior, digital strategies, personalized promotions, customer engagement, crisis management, corporate social responsibility.

I. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1: Introduction.

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1.1 History of the Research

Due to the rapid transmission of the COVID-19 pandemic that began at the end of 2019, unprecedented shocks occurred in all global economies and industries. With the policies of lockdown, travel limitations, and social distancing instituted by the governments to manage the spread of the virus, the traditional retail industries have suffered serious setbacks in their operations, such as temporary shutdowns and a drastic decline in the number of people on the move. During these turbulences, the e-commerce industry was placed on a fast growth path as buyers altered their shopping habits in the brick-and-mortar stores to online shopping. This move was necessitated by the convenience, safety and accessibility in an era of uncertainty and limited movements.

E-commerce, which refers to the purchasing and selling of goods and services through electronic networks, especially the internet, was already continuously growing in the pre-pandemic period because of the improvement in technology, digital payment methods, and the shifting shopping habits of people. The COVID-19 crisis has however increased this

dependence on digital commerce and businesses have had to quickly innovate and change their marketing approaches to ensure that they capture this increase in demand and changing consumer expectations. E-commerce marketing took a center stage in the maintenance of growth, as companies had to utilize digital advertising and social media interaction, personalization of communication, and clarity of message about operations to generate trust and loyalty in a tight and highly competitive marketplace.

Consumer behavior was affected by the pandemic as well, and they expect more contactless delivery services, more options on how to pay, and more customized shopping experiences based on personal preferences. Therefore, online businesses incorporated the new technologies (artificial intelligence and big data analytics) to ensure they improved their marketing strategy, customer experience, and operational efficiency even with a disrupted supply chain. Such a changing situation highlights the significance of discovering how e-commerce companies changed their marketing approaches in this peak time in order to guarantee resilience and relevancy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

However, even though online shopping has increased greatly, and the essential role of digital marketing in the time of pandemic is obvious, little is known about the specifics of how exactly e-commerce companies changed their approaches to marketing in the face of a crisis. The sudden shift towards online retail premises placed companies in the exaggerated competition, logistics issues, and new priorities of the consumers that required creative and quick thinking marketing solutions.

As the digital marketplace became more saturated, numerous businesses had trouble distinguishing their brands and keeping consumers loyal amidst the growing competition during a time when they also had to deal with pandemic-related limitations, including supply chain disruptions and shifting safety guidelines. Furthermore, there exist uncertainties about which marketing strategies work, how to combine technology in marketing, as well as how the innovations developed during the pandemic will operate in a post-COVID world. The differentiated effect on industries, small versus large firms, and regional markets makes it even difficult to come up with an integrated view of best practices.

The present study aims at bridging these gaps by examining the marketing practices used by e-commerce companies in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, their effect on consumer behavior, and drawing viable insights that may be applied to future strategy development and crisis management in the area of digital commerce.

1.3 Study Purposes

The major research aims of the research are the following points:

To examine the major marketing trends used by e-commerce businesses in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To work out the efficiency of these strategies to attract and retain the customers.

To learn more about the alterations in consumer behavior and expectations, under the circumstances of the pandemic, in the environment of e-commerce.

To measure the importance of digital technologies and platforms in the increase of the effectiveness of marketing in the crisis.

To determine the problems of e-commerce companies in carrying out marketing practices under the restrictions of the pandemic.

To draw practical conclusions which can be implemented by e-commerce companies to maximize their marketing activity during the crisis situation (both present and future).

1.4 Research Questions

According to the mentioned objectives, the research questions of this study are the following ones:

Which methods of marketing were major among e-commerce companies during the COVID-19 outbreak?

In what ways did these marketing strategies affect the consumer buying behavior at this time?

How did digital technologies and platform influence the marketing performance in e-commerce during the pandemic?

What were the problems faced by e-commerce companies to carry out their marketing campaigns during the crisis?

What can e-commerce businesses take forward about marketing in light of the things they learned during the pandemic?

1.5 Importance of the Study

This study is of much importance to different stakeholders. To e-commerce firms, it offers crucial information on effective promotional strategies that maintained growth and consumer retention in the face of disruption in the market, unseen before. The knowledge of these strategies can help the firms develop more agility and resilience to future uncertainties. To marketers and practitioners, the study will provide a subtle insight on digital marketing innovations and customer engagement strategies that were effective in crisis condition.

On the scholarly level, the study will be offered as a contribution to the developing body of literature on such topics as crisis-prompted marketing, changes in consumer behavior during pandemics, and the transformation of digital

commerce. It fills a gap as it is devoted to a particular research topic, namely e-commerce marketing strategies during the COVID-19 period, and supplies it with empirical evidence and theoretic support.

More so, these insights can guide policy formulators and business support institutions to encourage activities that support digitalization and sustainability of the e-commerce sector, especially among small and medium enterprises. Altogether, the research contributes to knowledge about the ways the marketing efforts can be reoriented successfully when facing the sudden and mass-scale environmental shifts, and the findings of the study can be applied not only to the conditions of the pandemic.

1.6 Scope and limitations

The research is centered around the discussion of the marketing techniques employed by the e-commerce businesses in the times of the COVID-19 outbreak, approximately, since the beginning of 2020 up to the end of 2021. It explores numerous marketing strategies such as online advertising, social media marketing, individual offers, and communication in terms of safety measures and delivery service. Geographically, it focuses on the Indian e-commerce market and provides complimented by comparative perspectives where relevant.

The study focuses on the consumer perception and reaction to the marketing strategies by the use of a quantitative study approach that is a survey. It does not include too much analysis of operation or financial performance indicators of e-commerce businesses. Also, the conveniences sampling and sample size reduce the possibility of generalization of results.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the above limitations, the research will present meaningful and context-dependent knowledge of adaptive marketing practices and consumer behavior in a developed digital economy under the influence of crisis conditions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last 20 years, the e-commerce business has flourished like never before, driven by technological innovations and enhancement, online payment methods, and the changing buyer behavior in favor of convenience and availability. E-commerce has been continuously growing before the COVID-19 pandemic as an alternative retailing channel, which provides consumers with opportunities to shop at any time and place and has a huge variety of product offerings (Ma & Gu, 2024). This growth experienced a major inflection point with the beginning of the pandemic, which further spurred it by several times, due to the closing of physical retail and the shift in the shopping patterns of consumers worldwide. Social distancing rules and lockdowns ended up interrupting the usual brick-and-mortar business, causing a significant shift towards online shopping of both essential and non-essential products (Misra et al., 2024). E-commerce organizations have had to acquire the ability to scale up fast and maintain consistency in the quality of service, supply chain resilience, and consumer outreach amid limited circumstances (Xena Intelligence, 2024). Omnichannel strategies integration took on a critical role where online channels were integrated with offline ones, including curbside pickups and local deliveries to adjust to new consumer

expectations (Academy of International Business, 2024). It is also during this time that there was increased competition and hence the need to adopt new marketing strategies to acquire and maintain customers in a saturated digital market (Dixit, Correia, & Gunasekar, 2023). In addition, technological catalysts such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and automation were also crucial in enhancing customer segmentation refinement and personalization of the marketing message and operational efficiency optimization (Gong et al., 2024). The shift in consumer needs interacted with the necessity to reevaluate marketing messages and products offered by e-commerce marketers, as people started to focus more on safety, contactless payment, and alternative payment methods (Misra et al., 2024). Sustainability and corporate social responsibility also became a powerful tool that determines the brand preferences of consumers, as shoppers began to appreciate ethical business practices and honest communication more in the time of crisis (Saura & Palos-Sanchez, 2025). Taken together, these changes highlighted the fact that the nature of e-commerce marketing has shifted radically toward the importance of agility, technology use, and consumer focus to survive and thrive in the digital economy that was affected by the pandemic conditions (Willems, Verhulst, & Brengman, 2021).

In e-commerce, the marketing efforts have long been concerned with increasing visibility, traffic, and conversion of the online visitors via digital advertising, search engine optimization, social media campaigns, loyalty programs (Ma & Gu, 2024). Nevertheless, the pandemic caused the shift of the paradigm to more dynamic, personal, and interactive methods of marketing. Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube social media platforms became one of the most essential parts of attracting the attention of various demographics and building brands community during the period of physical isolation (Wang, Bart, Netessine, & Wu, 2025). As one of the keys to building authenticity and trust in uncertain times, influencer marketing, especially the use of micro-influencers with niche, highly engaged followings, became a useful tool (eMarketer, 2023). The development of artificial intelligence and big data allowed marketers to provide customers with personalized promotion, individual recommendations on products, and dynamic pricing models that increased relevance and satisfaction among consumers (Gong et al., 2024). Timely communication and open messaging about product availability, delivery schedules, and safety measures were also necessary in regards to increased consumer fears and staying true to the brand (Misra et al., 2024). Moreover, the availability of flexible payment methods, such as cash-on-delivery or digital wallets, played a decisive role in relieving the uncertainty about financial resources and making a purchase decision (Gu et al., 2021). At the theoretical level, theories like the Resource-Based View (RBV) will be important to point out how companies used their internal resources, like technology base and data analytics, to build competitive advantage due to adaptive marketing (Ma & Gu, 2024). The changes in purchase intentions depending on risk perceptions, trust, and social norms in the time of pandemic are explained through Consumer Behavior Theory and Theory of Planned Behavior (Behl et al., 2024). Beyond that, Crisis Management Theory would put into perspective the need of marketing practice flexibility and resilience to enable business continuity despite the occurrence of external shocks (Dixit et al., 2023). Nevertheless, even with the increased pace of introducing

digital marketing innovations, there are still problems of balancing personalization and privacy, logistics disruption management, and maintaining consumer interest after the pandemic (Ma & Gu, 2024). Therefore, it becomes evident that constant innovation and responsible marketing is what e-commerce companies need to succeed in a new digital environment determined by the experiences of the pandemic and new consumer demands.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

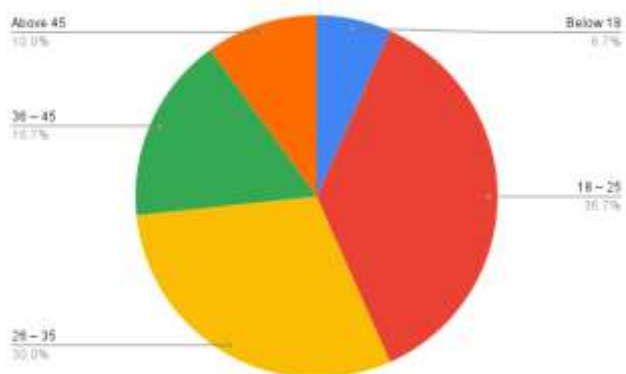
The research design used in this study is descriptive research design, and the approach is quantitative, to systematically discuss marketing strategies e-commerce companies have adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect on the consumer behaviour. The descriptive research was chosen because it would give a vivid picture of the current marketing practice and consumer perception at a specific period of time, which was in line with the objective of the study to capture the trends and relationship in a well-organized and quantifiable format (Kothari, 2004). The information was gathered using a structured online survey that was administered to a convenience sample of 60 respondents who were avid online shoppers throughout the pandemic regime. The survey consisted of closed-ended questions, namely, Likert scale questions, multiple-choice questions, and ranking questions, that would help measure the attitude towards different aspects of marketing, namely, social media advertisement, personalized promotions, delivery safety communication, flexible payment, and corporate social responsibility programs. Online survey method provided the wide geographical coverage, adherence to social distancing standards, and allowed the respondents the convenience of participating at their will, which was critical in the circumstances imposed by the pandemic (Wright, 2005). Although it is not a probabilistic method, the sampling technique was selected because of the practicality presented by the accessibility of the respondents and the resource constraints, with an understanding that it is limited in producing a generalizable result but insisting on collecting data on a timely manner in a restricted setting (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) were used to describe demographic profiles and consumer attitudes, whereas inferential statistics (chi-square tests and correlation) were applied to test the links between demographic variables and perceptions of the marketing strategies. The statistical software tools such as IBM SPSS and Microsoft Excel helped to facilitate these analyses as they allows rigorous interpretation of results and their graphical presentation. In order to establish reliability and validity of the instruments, pilot study was performed using small sized group that represented the target population and cronbach alpha coefficient came out to be higher than the acceptable range thus demonstrating high internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Content and construct validity was ensured by conducting an extensive literature review and revising proven scales, whereas the ethical aspects were taken seriously by obtaining an informed consent, by promising the respondent anonymity, and by ensuring the confidentiality of the data. Such limitations as sampling bias, self-reported data, and cross-sectional design were noted, and it is necessary to be careful when applying the findings outside the limits of the research. Nevertheless, the proposed methodology is an effective approach which allows to investigate the efficacy of e-commerce marketing strategies under the conditions of

COVID-19 crisis, and this empirical evidence may be usefully incorporated into future studies and business operations in quickly changing online shopping environments.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents (N=60)

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 18	4	6.7
18 – 25	22	36.7
26 – 35	18	30.0
36 – 45	10	16.7
Above 45	6	10.0



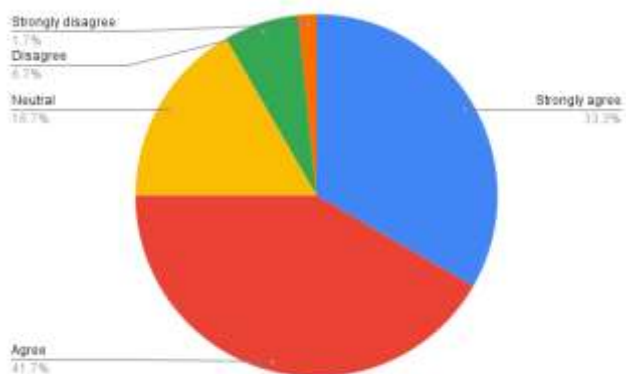
Graph 1: Age Distribution of Respondents (Pie Chart)

Interpretation:

The graph also shows that most (67%) of the respondents are within the 18 to 35-year-olds age-group, which means that it is mostly young adults who are usually more tech-savvy and involved in digital commerce. This age group is of great importance to marketers because they are more receptive to the digital marketing platform like social media and individualized promotions. The minor shares of the youngest and oldest populations indicate the poor level of digitalization or the less frequent online purchases, which is why it is relevant to focus on the targeting strategies regarding these groups.

Table 2: Agreement with Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing During Pandemic (N=60)

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	20	33.3
Agree	25	41.7
Neutral	10	16.7
Disagree	4	6.7
Strongly disagree	1	1.6



Graph 2: Perceived Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing During COVID-19 (Pie Chart)

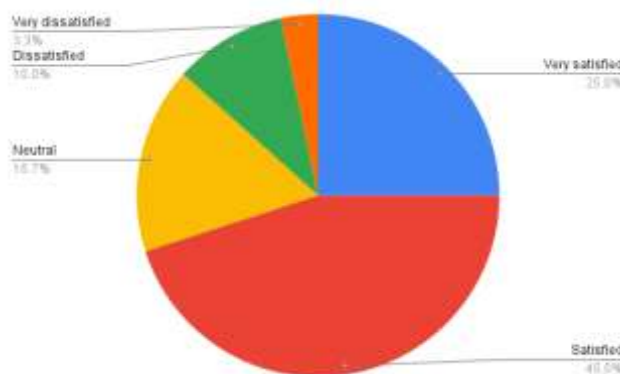
Interpretation:

As clearly indicated in the chart, 75 percent of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that social media marketing was

an effective way of engaging them during the pandemic. It underlines the fact that social media is a multimedia and interactive platform, making it possible to get involved in real-time and communicate genuinely. The fact that the disagreement rates are rather low indicates that the impact of social media marketing is widely accepted, and the neutral answers can be attributed to the fact that some people may have a different experience with various platforms or simply prefer one platform over another. Getting these insights highlights the relevance of e-commerce firms to invest in multi-platform social media approach to maintain consumer interest and loyalty.

Table 3: Satisfaction with Customer Service Provided by E-commerce Companies (N=60)

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very satisfied	15	25.0
Satisfied	27	45.0
Neutral	10	16.7
Dissatisfied	6	10.0
Very dissatisfied	2	3.3



Graph 3: Customer Satisfaction with E-commerce Services During COVID-19 (Pie Chart)

Interpretation:

When asked about their satisfaction with e-commerce customer service during the pandemic, the majority of respondents (70%) claim to be satisfied or very satisfied with the service, which speaks positively of the initiatives of the companies to ensure the same level of service despite difficulties in their work. Such satisfaction would probably result in consumer loyalty and repeat buying. Nevertheless, the existence of the dissatisfaction (13.3%) suggests that some problems take place, and they might be connected with delays in the delivery or lack of communication, which causes the necessity to focus on the permanent advancement of the customer support facilities. Action on these issues before they are reflected in customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction is critical to maintaining competitive advantage in a disrupted market place.

V. DISCUSSION

The data obtained through respondents and its subsequent analysis presents the disaster of adaptive marketing techniques utilized by e-commerce organizations in the situation with COVID-19 and the impact that those techniques have on a consumer behavior. The fact that most of the respondents consisted of younger adults aged between 18 and 35 is consistent with the currently available literature which states that this group is at the center of digital commerce due to their technological proficiency and increased online platform usage (Ma & Gu, 2024). The receptiveness of this demographic group implies that e-commerce marketers need to focus

particularly on social media when targeting this population, since the research proves that social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook were a tremendously efficient means of communicating with the brand, engaging, and acquiring customers under lockdown and mobility limitations conditions. The solid consensus concerning the efficacy of social media marketing supports the results of Wang et al. (2025), who emphasize the versatility of social media as the means of providing interactive, authentic, and timely brand-consumer engagement. Further, the significance of the individualized marketing, provided by the breakthroughs in the sphere of artificial intelligence and big data analytics, is demonstrated by the positive reaction of consumers on the personalized promotions and products suggestion, contributing to the shopping convenience and its perceived value (Gong et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the existence of the neutral and disagreeing opinions also invites the reflection of the fragile balance that marketers need to uphold not to be perceived as intrusive and respect the privacy of consumers (Ma and Gu, 2024). The research also sheds light on how transparent communication on safety of delivery and ease of payment methods played a central role in eliminating anxieties caused by the pandemic in line with values expressed by Misra et al. (2024) on consumer risk sensitivity that increases during a crisis. The fact that the levels of customers satisfaction with such aspects of the services as order tracking and returns policies were high, shows that the companies that invested in the well-developed customer support infrastructure were able to maintain the trust and loyalty of their customers, even in the face of logistical issues (Xena Intelligence, 2024). However, the unsatisfaction of a certain group of respondents indicates that there are still vulnerabilities in the functioning of the organization and, therefore, optimization of the services provided should be the top priority at all times. Also of positive consumer reaction to the actions of corporate social responsibility points to an increased tendency towards values-based consumption, in which the ethical business behavior plays an important role in determining brand preference and brand loyalty (Saura & Palos-Sanchez, 2025). Taken together, these results highlight the importance of the e-commerce businesses that have displayed strategic agility, technological integration, transparent communication, and ethical branding to be more prepared to meet the uncertainties of the pandemic environment and build lasting relationships with the consumers. The findings of the study can be explained by theories and models (including Resource-Based View and Crisis Management Theory) that suggest using internal resources and dynamic actions to maintain a competitive edge in unstable conditions (Dixit et al., 2023; Ma & Gu, 2024). Although the insights are subject to the disadvantages of sample size and generalizability, the study provides e-commerce marketers with worthy advice to improve the resilience and growth strategies in the face of a more digital and uncertain market in the future.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper will give an in-depth analysis of the marketing approach undertaken by e-commerce businesses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated impact on consumer behaviour and business performance. The results indicate that the pandemic has been an influential factor boosting the digitalization process and prompting the immediate strategic change in the e-commerce business. The particular importance of younger adults as the main online shoppers suggests the exceptional significance of focusing on

this cohort via the digital-first marketing platforms, especially social networks, which were found extremely successful in reaching consumers when physical retail was limited due to the security concerns. One-to-one marketing has become a crucial technique to increase the relevance and satisfaction of consumers, and it was facilitated by developing artificial intelligence and data analytics capabilities that can make personalized recommendations and offers. Also notable was the open provision of information on safety in delivery services and the offer of easy terms of payment that responded to the increased concern of consumers on the risk to their health and anxiety related to their finances thus building confidence and trust in making purchases. The quality of customer service, which included order tracking, returns policies, etc., was decisive in keeping the customers loyal, regardless of operational problems caused by supply chain disruptions. Moreover, the consumer loyalty and brand preference were largely impacted by the corporate social responsibility initiatives as the consumer expectation towards a business and its practices was changing towards ethics and sustainability. Taken together, these insights confirm that e-commerce businesses that demonstrated strategic flexibility, technological coherence, open, and compassionate communication, and ethical branding genuineness were in a better place to maintain business and improve relations with customers during the crisis. It is on the basis of these findings that the following conclusions are drawn and recommendations made to e-commerce businesses to pursue multi-platform social media interaction and engagement, ethical personalization via advanced analytics, and greater transparency in safety measures and payment options to boost consumer confidence. Enhancing the customer service facilities by producing responds tracking systems and dealing with returns without botheration is retention and competitive edge. An authentic integration of corporate social responsibility into brand identity will distinguish companies in values-oriented markets that are becoming more and more competitive. Moreover, dividing the marketing activities to address the variations in the demographic wishes will also organize the resources and maximize the influence. Last but not least, building elastic crisis-adaptive marketing models which can be quickly customized to unexpected shocks will maintain business continuity and resiliency in an unpredictable digital economy. Future studies ought to pursue the diversification of samples, the inclusion of longitudinal study frameworks to understand shifting behaviors, and qualify the views of industry practitioners to deepen the comprehension of how strategic marketing is played out in the post-pandemic e-commerce environments.

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