

THE JOURNEY OF DIGITAL MARKETING IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Digital marketing is the word which was first used in 1991. The journey of this digital marketing from its introduction to worldwide acceptance has seen many developments in very small time. Due to the increasing benefits of digital services in the field of marketing, many companies adopting digital marketing practices over traditional marketing practices. The acceptance ratio is increasing very rapidly throughout the world. Particularly talking about India, due the increasing number of internet users in the country, India has becoming a dream market for every company in the world. This article has written with the intention to find out the growth journey of digital marketing in India. Various benefits of digital marketing to the marketers as well as customers have been studied under this study. The future trends in the field of digital marketing are also analysed in this study.

Keywords:

Digital Marketing, E-Commerce, SEO, Online marketing, internet users, AI, Augmented reality.

Introduction:

India has attracted a huge concentration from worldwide businesses as it has been evolved as a digital powerhouse with increasing number of Smartphone users, internet use and data consumption digitally. With this digital transformation in the Indian scenario, the marketing efforts with the help of IT and digital platforms are also taking rapid speed and huge space instead of traditional marketing practices. This situation has created opportunities and challenges for digital marketing in India. This rapid growth in digital marketing in India is a proof of the journey of Indian marketing from traditional to modern ways of doing marketing. Due to the increase in digital marketing and very strong presence of social media, the marketing strategies are now becoming very personalized. This situation has resulted in increased accuracy in targeting the customers. Any marketing effort which is carried out online with the help of various online platforms like internet, web, mail, social media, etc instead of traditional practices is called digital marketing or web marketing or online marketing (Prasanth & Jyothsna, n.d.). This increase in social media and e-commerce has also served benefits to the customers in form of increased options and competitive prices. The revolution of digital marketing in India brought various benefits but also the challenges. Increase in digital frauds and privacy issues are some of them. As far as the future of digital marketing in India, it seems better

than today. One of the reasons for this is increasing digital infrastructure in India. The intention of this research paper is to provide a bird's eye view in regards to digital marketing and its growth in India.

Objectives:

- To study the growth of digital marketing in India from its growth to the present day.
- To uncover benefits of digital marketing in Indian scenario.
- To explore the future prospects for digital marketing in India.

Methods

It's being a review paper, the researcher has done an exhaustive review of various research papers. These research papers are taken from well recognised databases and research search engines worldwide. Further these research papers have been thoroughly analyzed for the sake of creating valuable conclusions from them. Various research papers have been selected from worldwide accepted databases and research search engines for the purpose of this study. Further these research papers have been analyzed with parance to the present study's objective.

Results and Discussions

The growth of digital marketing in India is a journey of many years in the Indian context. The country and businessmen in this country have adopted the practices of digital marketing over traditional marketing practices, but the pace of this acceptance and scale of this acceptance is different as compared to other countries in the world.

Whenever the product or service is being marketed with the help of the internet by using various digital technologies, display advertising, social media platforms, is generally called digital marketing. Whenever we call digital marketing, it is necessary that it is done with the help of digital technologies available. The term digital marketing was first used in 1990 on the debut of server/client architecture. That was the time when the popularity of personal computers started to increase. With the entry of this digital technology, customer relationship management became a significant part of marketing Technology. It was the time of 2000, the internet users were increasing enormously and at the same time the iPhone's birth gave a hike in searching the products digitally instead of salesperson consultations. As most of the companies that time didn't have their own domain address also, faced multiple problems. This situation underlined the need to accept digital technology in the field of business and marketing (Desai, 2019). The introduction of the World Wide Web, popularly known as "www", opened the doors of virtual world for common people. This diversion to the virtual world shifted the customers from traditional marketplace to the virtual marketplace. This shift also motivated marketers for shifting their attention to the marketplace virtually. Social media, one of the fields opened by digital awareness in customers, initiated customers not only for searching various brands and products online but also converted to online purchase. This journey of consumers from traditional to virtual marketplace helped the marketers to find, attract and target the potential customers effectively. Further, 2010 onwards, the field of digital marketing invited huge focus as the social media and internet use was increasingly becoming popular. Due to increasing presence of customers on social media and digital marketplace, many companies used digital marketing as one of the effective tools of brand communications. It has been also seen that the study of digital marketing concentrated on big marketplaces like United States of America, the United Kingdom and India (Faruk et al., 2021).

The growth and use of digital marketing is no longer a feature of international markets only. It has entered the Indian market also with many benefits and conveniences. In the Indian perspective, the digital marketing industry has got significant attention and is growing at a fast pace. This growth in digital marketing has proved beneficial

for customers too as they can now stay updated on the information of a product or service, they can simply compare the options offered by various companies and take decisions, the prices are very transparent and most important for doing all these actions customers need not to visit any physical market. These benefits of digital marketing gave enormous response from the end of customers also (Maheta & Rami, 2023). Particularly speaking about the Indian way of advertisement, it can be seen that this journey started from door to door marketing, word of mouth, TV commercials, radio advertisements and such traditional ways of marketing. The entry of digital technologies changed these traditional mediums into new mediums which include Smartphone, PCs and such advanced gadgets. The increase in availability of such gadgets also resulted in the increase in digital marketing throughout the country. This growth is now recorded at 40% annually and it is still growing at a pace. This transformation in India has witnessed bottom to top events like launching of the first search engine to today's role of AI in marketing (Pole, 2021). This acceptance of digital marketing in Indian companies is increasing day by day. The digital marketing gives many competitive advantages for the companies also and this has become the reason for increase in digital marketing acceptance. One of the reasons for accepting digital marketing is the Indian population and the growing number of internet users in the country. It can be seen that India is the third largest internet user country in the world, now shifted to second number. Second reason for adopting digital marketing very widely is the increasing screen time of Indians. People in India spent much more time on screens. It has been found that the majority of internet users spent their time getting entertainment on the internet by using games. This increased screen time, economical data and increasing number of Smartphone users in India is resulting in growth of digital commerce and online retails. Overall, it can be seen that with the increase in internet and internet users, the presence of the Indian population is increasing on the internet. The same thing has invited many companies to adopt digital marketing for competitive advantage (Kaushik, 2016).

Companies are facing many troubles in retaining the customers and for resolving the same problem they are adopting new trends in digital marketing. Increase in Smartphone users in India has significantly contributed to the internet users in India. In 2016, India has reached to second number in the world in case of internet users which is helping in expanding the growth of digital marketing in India. Digital marketers are searching and adopting new strategies for attracting and targeting better. Content marketing, one of the tools of digital marketing, is getting a major focus in the Indian market as internet users are increasing. The same is recognised and taken care of as a major strategy by the business managers. Hence the campaigns of content marketing are also increasing. Following content marketing, visual marketing is also getting interest from the marketers. Visual marketing is being used by a number of marketers with the help of YouTube, Twitter and Face book for convincing the customers (Danish, Bhola Dutt Tiwari, Arvind, 2023). India has an internet user's base of about 450 million as of July 2018, 40% of the population. The introduction of 3g, 4g and 5g in recent time will be a positive aspect for the growth of digital marketing in India. 34% of the companies working in India had already adopted digital ways of marketing in 2018. Due the emergence of increased network strength, this number will be increased drastically in the coming time (Kumar, 2019). This growth of digital marketing will also result in the growth of employment in various sectors in India in the coming time. Investments and infrastructure developments will also be the part and parcel of this increasing revolution (Tripathi & Mishra, 2023).

The active Indian internet users, the base for digital activities, was found to be 700 million in 2020, which shows a great number as compared to the number of remaining countries in the world. The same was estimated to grow over 970 million in 2025. One of the reasons for this growth is the recently faced lockdown, Indian digital market industry is booming at a rapid speed (Shriram, 2023). According to the Reports of Statista and Intelligence 2022 digital market and allied industry will be the market of INR 537 billion during the year 2024. At the same time digital marketing and advertising market, worldwide, is projected to touch the high of \$ 786 Billion by 2026 (Seven Boats, 2023). These reports and data show that the digital market is the industry which will be growing in the

coming future also with a rapid speed. This speed and growth will not be only limited to the Indian markets but the world is going to experience such a huge growth.

With the increasing growth and spread of digital markets and allied industry, the research and innovations are also increasing. Various new technologies are coming to the market which are making digital marketing's task more accurate and easy. At the same time it is also causing increased competition in the field of digital marketing. The digital marketing scenario is always changing with new tools and technologies coming to the surface every day. Some of the features of digital marketing in coming time will be Content on the base of AI, Voice command enabled marketing and purchase activities, Handiness of augmented reality, outsourced digital services and much more. So and so forth, it can be easily estimated on the base of this data that the digital marketing is having a great future in case of market size and penetration in the coming period (*The Future of Digital Marketing: Predictions for 2024 and Beyond* - Marketing Insider Group, n.d.)

Findings and Conclusions

Information technology and related developments have given various new trends in the market. With the help of increasing digital infrastructure, application is also increasing across all industries worldwide. Number of internet users is increasing in the world on rapid speed. This increase has given a boost to digital marketing worldwide. India has experienced a huge growth in internet users in last decade. It has been found that India, a country with highest population in world, is now second country in case of highest internet users. This Increase in internet users has given a boost to online activities across various industries. Digital marketing being mostly changed industry due to the enhancement of internet and related facilities. It has been found that the Indian Smartphone users are increasing a day by day. The increased population and easy internet access has boosted the growth of Smartphone users in the country indirectly its proving one of the reasons for rapid growth of digital marketing in India.

Digital marketing has become a need of time for the marketers. Due to its competitive advantage, digital marketing is gaining much popularity worldwide and in Indian marketplace also. The growth in digital infrastructure has resulted in shift of marketing practices from traditional to digital in the last few years. The companies which are not having this edge benefits will be behind the competitors in the race of success so many companies worldwide are accepting the change. One of the major benefits of digital marketing is that the customers can have the information and take purchase decision by seating at one's own place. This benefit is also working effectively for the marketers who provide better services online to the customers.

Marketers as well as the customers are also getting benefitted from this growth of digital marketing practices. Customers can have the brochures of a variety of products at a time. By comparing these brochures and information customers can take better decisions. The information which is being provided to the customers in regards of the products and services has a new platform now. This new way of display of products and services can give more time, precise environment to the customer for taking purchase decision. Another benefit given by digital marketing to the customers is the availability of comparative, fare, still, a much updated prices of the products and services. It enables customers to get the product at very competitive price. At last the major benefit offered to the customer is saving of time and efforts by allowing customers to see, compare and purchase product by seating at his own place. The customer needs not to visit various shops for knowing the product and related information. He or she can have the information and the product at a single click.

These benefits to the customers and to the marketers are helping the digital marketing to grow at a larger scope. With increasing research and innovations in the field of digital marketing, these benefits can achieve greatest of ever position. The emergence of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning is one of the great technical

advancement in the IT field. The fusion of AI and ML practices in marketing strategies has given an upper edge to the customers also. Augmented reality is another technology which can give a real life experience to the customer before even the purchase of that product or service. Content marketing, at present is proving itself a helping aspect for the acceptance of digital marketing in Indian market. Most of the companies have already accepted the content marketing for increasing their market share.

On the basis of above data it can be found that the increasing number internet users and Smartphone users in India is making digital marketing a successful strategy for the companies. Due to the increasing and proven benefits to the companies and customers, various companies are adopting this change over traditional marketing practices. India, being a developing country, will be rising as a big market for the world in the coming time.

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