

# **Impact of Digitalization in Marketing Communication on Consumer Perception in Southern Odisha**

**Dr. Satyabrata Dash**

*Professor in Marketing (MBA)*

*S.M. Institute of Technology, P.G. Centre for Management Studies, Brahmapur, Odisha*

\*\*\*

**Abstract** - Digitalization of marketing is an approach used by organizations to brand and coordinate their communication efforts. In the latest couple of years, there has been a quantum growth in the number of internet users and the awareness towards the World Wide Web has increased in India. The various opportunities that it presents have been recognized and companies have started making plans to include internet, e-commerce and e-business in their scheme of things. This paper aims at exploring detailed information on major domains of the dissertation topic by reviewing past research, books and related articles. The study aims to understand the massive contribution of digital marketing in terms of consumer value; the researcher has used stratified probability sampling with a sample size of 200 numbers across Brahmapur, a major commercial city in Southern Odisha. Thus, the present study adopts descriptive research design and undertakes the survey method with questionnaire as a research instrument in order to collect primary data required in the research. The study finds that consumers rely upon more than one medium in order to enhance their brand related knowledge. The study also reveals that main reason for growing importance of Digital marketing is the increasing literacy about internet among people. The major benefits of Digital marketing are its capability of interaction between consumers and marketers followed by availability of wide range of information & ease of shopping. These benefits make Digital marketing superior than traditional marketing.

**Key Words:** digital marketing communication, consumer perception, DMC, IMC, digitalization.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Digitalization of marketing is an approach used by organizations to brand and coordinate their communication efforts. The American Association of Advertising Agencies defines as "a concept that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines, and combines these

disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact. Digital Marketing is the art and science of selling products and/or services over digital networks, such as the Internet and cellular phone networks. The art of Digital marketing involves finding the right Digital marketing mix of strategies that appeals to your target market and will actually translate into sales. It uses internet to deliver promotional marketing messages to consumers. It includes email marketing, search engine marketing, social media marketing, many types of display advertising (including web banner advertising), and mobile advertising. Like other advertising media, Digital advertising frequently involves both a publisher, who integrates advertisements into its Digital content, and an advertiser, who provides the advertisements to be displayed on the publisher's content.

In the latest couple of years, there has been a quantum growth in the number of internet users and the awareness towards the World Wide Web has increased in India. The various opportunities that it presents have been recognized and companies have started making plans to include internet, e-commerce and e-business in their scheme of things. The portals have also launched massive advertising campaigns for their portals invariably spreading awareness towards the concept and the facilities offered by e-commerce.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This paper aims at exploring detailed information on major domains of the dissertation topic by reviewing past research, books and related articles. Modern studies and past theories concerning these domains are presented. The idea of digital marketing communication (DMC) is to create consistency and synergy by combining marketing communication elements so that they support and enhance each other, to promote potential communication understandings (Duncan and Everett, 1993). Viral marketing is a DMC technique that is mostly used for trendy brands; Marketers are increasing acknowledging viral marketing as an important DMC tool because it offers the traditions benefits and effectiveness of advertising. In viral marketing the organization promotes its product using Word of

Mouth Marketing, utilizing individual's communication networks, and relying on their individual recommendations to sell the product. Companies actively seek viral marketing, by fueling discussion on their offerings (Belch, G.E., et al 2004).

As per Diamond, S., (2008), DMC is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences. The key difference in this definition of DMC from that of simple Marketing Communication is highlighted by use of three words: i) strategic, ii) evaluate and iii) measurable.

Schultz, D. E. and Schultz, H.F., (1996) believe that digital marketing communication has significant value for the organization, specifically in lowering costs and having greater control over the marketing communication program. Radio, Newspapers, however, now the future of marketers appears to be digital as technology has become an important part of daily lives (Bengtsson, M., et al., 2007).

Concepts like convergence have come in to bring more versatility in the communication mediums being used. Convergence represents a paradigm shift – a move from medium specific content towards content that flows across multiple media channels, towards the increased interdependence of communication systems, towards multiple ways of accessing media content, and towards ever more complex relations between top-down corporate media and bottom-up participatory culture ( Foux, G., 2006).

According Gefen, D., (2002), “as media-blitzed, ad-cynical, time-poor, channel-flicking audience living in a fast-paced, attention-challenged world” The fact is that due to fast pace of technology, and globalization of the world, consumer behavior around the world is changing. The company should use the contact method that offers the best way of delivering the message to the target audience. Digital marketing communication supports the AIDA model where in it helps to gain attention of consumers, generate interest, create desire, and result in purchase action. Warren J., (2002) believes that the power of ideas; integration across all media: The P's of the marketing mix are argued by some to be the four C's, with communication replacing promotion. This article champions communication as an effective tool in marketing. Within the marketing sphere there are many mediums by which advertising messages can be conveyed to consumers. The marketing manager must utilize all of the mediums in their thinking in order to determine the right mix of mediums to use and in the right frequency in each to best convey their message to the selected target market.

This paper seeks to argue that mediums must work together for a unified message to be conveyed to consumers with a feedback

mechanism in place for consumers and the organization to be involved in two-way communication. Also stated is the importance of word-of-mouth communication, which is often overlooked by marketing managers. This ties in closely with integrated marketing communication as the mediums must come under one umbrella, or message to be communicated, that covers all the mediums used to ensure a single clear message is communicated to consumers.

### 3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aims to understand the massive contribution of Digital marketing as a part of Integrated Marketing Communication and to know its splendid efforts towards promotion in practice and also to find out some challenges in using Digital marketing as a tool of integrated marketing communication. The recommendations of this research can be used to frame an appropriate Integrated Marketing Communication strategy in which companies can give special consideration to digital marketing along with the other traditional tools of IMC. Based on the above research problems, the research objectives are as follows,

1. To understand the consumer perception towards Digital marketing communication.
2. To understand the reasons for growing popularity of Digital marketing.
3. To analyze the effectiveness of Digital marketing as compared to traditional marketing tools.
4. To identify the limitations of Digital marketing Communication.

### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The first step is to formulate a research design. This means planning a strategy of conducting research. It is a detailed plan of how the goals of research will be achieved. Research design is exploratory, descriptive and/or experimental in nature. It is helping the investigator in providing answers to various kinds of social/economic questions. After collecting and analysis of the data, the researcher has to accomplish the task of drawing inferences. Only through interpretation researcher can expose relations and processes that underlie his findings and ultimately conclusions. Interpretation refers to the task of drawing inferences from the collected facts after an analytical study.

It is a search for broader meaning and research findings. It is the device through which factors that seem to explain what has been observed by researcher in the course can be better

understood and provides theoretical conception which serve as a guide for further researches. It is essential because it will lead towards findings of the study and proper effective conclusions of the study.

Surveys are conducted in case of descriptive research studies with the help of questionnaire techniques in most appropriate manner. Survey type of research studies usually have larger sample. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exists, opinion that are held, processes that are going on effects that are evident or trends that are developing. Thus in surveys variables that exist or have already occurred are selected and observed. It is the example of field research.

In present study, the required data was collected through Sample survey using structured questionnaire. Since 'Customer's perception towards Digital marketing' is the core focus of the study, a structured & closed ended questionnaire was prepared for customers only covering various demographic parameters. The questionnaire incorporated questions related to customers' preference for Digital marketing and other traditional mediums for getting awareness on various brands and making purchase decision. Though questionnaire is an economic tool for data collection, non-response or incomplete response is high in this case. However, proper follow up was taken to overcome this barrier by making sure that each questionnaire is completely filled.

In this study, researcher has used published and unpublished sources of secondary data. Secondary data was collected to provide the dissertation with necessary theoretical back up. Information related to IMC, Digital marketing & its implication etc. was collected through various secondary sources such as research journals, reference books, business magazines and content sharing websites. In present study researcher has used stratified probability sampling with a sample size of 200 numbers across Brahmapur, a major commercial city in Southern Odisha.

To analyze data collected through structured questionnaire researcher used various statistical tools such as Mean, Median & mode, Standard deviation, Skewness & Kurtosis. Thus, the present study adopts descriptive research design and undertakes the survey method with questionnaire as a research instrument in order to collect primary data required in the research. Stratified probability sampling is the sampling technique used to select the appropriate sample. And content validity is used for the verification of data.

## 5. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

### 5.1. Profile of Respondents:

Survey for research work was conducted in the city of Brahmapur keeping in mind a sample of 200 respondents was selected for survey. The questionnaire included a segment on customers profile as a classification of their demographic factors such as gender, age & occupation. During data collection phase, due care was taken in order to make sure that the given questionnaire is completely filled by the respondents. The detailed respondent profile is as follows:

Table- 1: Respondents' profile

| Age   | Occupation |         |              |       | Gender |        |       |
|-------|------------|---------|--------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
|       | Student    | Service | Business man | Total | Male   | Female | Total |
| 18-25 | 81         | 0       | 0            | 81    | 38     | 43     | 81    |
| 26-35 | 19         | 41      | 3            | 63    | 31     | 32     | 63    |
| 36-45 | 0          | 47      | 9            | 56    | 29     | 27     | 56    |
| Total | 100        | 88      | 12           | 200   | 98     | 102    | 200   |

As seen in table-1, out of 200 respondents, 100 are students out of which 81 are between the age 18 to 25 years & 19 are between the age 25 to 35 years. There are 88 respondents who are jobber out of which 41 are between the age 25 to 35 years & 47 are between the age 35 to 45 years. Also there are total 12 respondents who are self employed out of which 3 are between the 25 to 35 years & 9 are between the age 35 to 45 years. As far as gender wise segmentation is concerned, there are total 98 males out of which 38 are between the age 18 to 25 years, 31 are between the age 25 to 35 years & 29 are between the age 35 to 45 years. And there are total 102 females out of which 43 are between the age 18 to 25 years, 32 are between the age 25 to 35 years & 27 are between the age 35 to 45 years.

### 5.2. Sources of awareness of Brands:

The details of responses given regarding different sources of awareness of various brands are given below.

Table- 2: Source of awareness towards brands

| Sl. No. | Source of awareness | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
|---------|---------------------|-----------|------------|

|   |                    |     |      |
|---|--------------------|-----|------|
| 1 | Print ads          | 22  | 10   |
| 2 | T.V. commercials   | 53  | 26.5 |
| 3 | In-store promotion | 37  | 18.5 |
| 4 | Outdoor media      | 18  | 9    |
| 5 | Online media       | 70  | 35   |
|   | Total              | 200 | 100  |

From table- 2, it is observed that when respondents were asked about which source do they refer the most to get awareness of various brands;

- 11% have chosen print ads,
- 26.5% respondents have chosen Television commercial,
- 18.5% have chosen In-store promotion,
- 9% have chosen Outdoor media,
- 35 % respondents have chosen Digital media

It means consumers do refer various mediums to get awareness but highest preference is being given to Digital media. Digital media incorporates blogs, Digital PR, Window displays, banner ads etc. And consumers today are more exposed to these forms of Digital advertising as compared to advertising through other mediums.

### 5.3. Knowledge of Internet

To understand importance of knowledge about internet in order to ascertain digital marketing, respondents were asked on their knowledge about use of Internet. Details of which are given below.

Table- 3: Knowledge of Internet

| Sl. No. | Response                     | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1       | Not knowledgeable about      | 14        | 7          |
| 2       | Somewhat knowledgeable about | 28        | 14         |

|   |                               |     |      |
|---|-------------------------------|-----|------|
| 3 | Knowledgeable about           | 67  | 33.5 |
| 4 | Very well knowledgeable about | 91  | 45.5 |
|   | Total                         | 200 | 100  |

From table - 3, it is observed that when respondents were asked about their convergence with internet;

- 7% were not knowledgeable about internet.
- 14% were somewhat knowledgeable about internet.
- 33.5% were knowledgeable about internet.
- 45.5% were very well knowledgeable about internet.

It means major percentage of respondents is very well knowledgeable about internet. They are well convergent with various usage, functions and benefits being offered by internet. While out of 200 respondents, only few i.e. 7% are not knowledgeable about internet. So it reveals that there is high degree of literacy for internet usage.

### 5.4. Frequency of being Digital:

The number of people using internet has really gone up due to technological advancements. People use internet for a variety of reasons. The details of frequency of being Digital are tabulated below.

Table- 4: Frequency of being digital

| Sl. No. | Response  | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1       | Very low  | 16        | 8          |
| 2       | Low       | 25        | 12.5       |
| 3       | Moderate  | 44        | 22         |
| 4       | High      | 60        | 30         |
| 5       | Very high | 55        | 27.5       |
|         | Total     | 200       | 100        |

From table - 4, it is observed that when respondents were asked about their frequency of being Digital;

- 8% chosen very low frequency,
- 12.5% chosen low frequency,
- 22% chosen moderate frequency,

- 30% chosen high frequency,
- 27.5% chosen very high frequency

It means majority of respondents i.e. 30% use internet with high frequency followed by 27.5 % respondents with very high frequency of using internet. So, due to its attribute of making life easier by allowing the users to have instant access with every informational, educational, interactive & entertaining material; Internet is heavily used medium today. To analyze in detailed, some important parameter were calculated and the results of analysis are tabulated below.

Table- 5: Analysis of scores for knowledge about internet and frequency of being digital

| Particulars    | Knowledge about Internet | Frequency of being digital |
|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mean           | 3.1750                   | 3.5650                     |
| Median         | 3                        | 4                          |
| Mode           | 4                        | 4                          |
| Std. Deviation | 0.92120                  | 1.23832                    |
| Skewness       | -0.901                   | -0.551                     |
| Kurtosis       | -0.105                   | -0.662                     |

From table - 5, it is observed that:

- Mean value scores for parameter their convergence with internet is 3.17 with negative skewness -0.901 indicates respondent agreement of being convergent with internet. It means they are well versed with the use of internet. Median and mode values are 3 & 4 respectively, close to each other, support this result.
- Mean value scores for parameter frequency of being Digital is 3.56 with negative skewness -0.551 indicate respondent agreement of being Digital. It means they use internet heavily for one or the other purpose.

Hence, most of the consumers are well versed with the usefulness of internet and they actually make maximum utilization of the various functions served by internet and therefore their tendency of being Digital is high.

5.5. Important factors motivating respondents to like the Brand on Internet:

There are various factors which motivate consumers to get inclined towards Digital marketing to like the brand. The stated factors in terms of consumers' perception are given below.

Table – 6: Important factors motivating respondents to like the brand on internet:

|                 | Discount                      |      | Stay informed                   |      | Updating and future extension of brands |      |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|------|---------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------------|------|
| Perception      | F                             | %    | F                               | %    | F                                       | %    |
| Most Important  | 49                            | 24.5 | 52                              | 26   | 36                                      | 18   |
| Important       | 66                            | 33   | 52                              | 26   | 49                                      | 24.5 |
| Least important | 44                            | 22   | 42                              | 2    | 6                                       | 30.5 |
| Not important   | 41                            | 20.5 | 54                              | 27   | 54                                      | 27   |
| Total           | 200                           | 100  | 200                             | 100  | 200                                     | 100  |
|                 | Fun and seeking entertainment |      | Access to the exclusive content |      | Interaction                             |      |
| Perception      | F                             | %    | F                               | %    | F                                       | %    |
| Most Important  | 33                            | 16.5 | 53                              | 26.5 | 48                                      | 24   |
| Important       | 56                            | 28   | 59                              | 29.5 | 61                                      | 30.5 |
| Least important | 45                            | 22.5 | 42                              | 21   | 36                                      | 18   |
| Not important   | 66                            | 33   | 46                              | 23   | 55                                      | 27.5 |
| Total           | 200                           | 100  | 200                             | 100  | 200                                     | 100  |

From table - 6, it is observed that when respondents asked about factors motivating to use internet;

- 24.4% respondents consider discount factor as most important and 20.5% respondents do not consider it as important.
- 26% respondents consider other factor 'to stay informed about company's activities' as most important and 27% respondents do not consider it as important.

- 18% respondents consider other factor 'to get updates on brands and its future extension' and 27% respondents do not consider it as important.
- 16.5% respondents consider other factor 'Fun & entertainment' and 33% respondents do not consider it as important.
- 26.5% respondents consider other factor 'to get access to exclusive content' as most important and 23% respondents do not consider it as important.
- 24% respondents consider interaction factor as most important and 27.5% respondents do not consider it as important.

It means majority of respondents are motivated to use internet as it offers them products at discounted rates, gives access to exclusive content such as specific functional & emotional benefits of the brand and facilitates interaction about the brand directly with the company.

Table – 7: Analysis of scores for important factors motivating respondents to the brand on internet

|             |    | Discount | Stay informed | Updating and future extension of brands | Fun and seeking entertainment | Access to the exclusive content | Interaction |
|-------------|----|----------|---------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| N           |    | 200      | 200           | 200                                     | 200                           | 200                             | 200         |
| Median      |    | 2        | 2             | 3                                       | 3                             | 2                               | 2           |
| Mode        |    | 2        | 4             | 3                                       | 4                             | 2                               | 2           |
| Percentiles | 25 | 2        | 1             | 2                                       | 2                             | 1                               | 2           |
|             | 50 | 2        | 2             | 3                                       | 3                             | 2                               | 2           |
|             | 75 | 3        | 4             | 4                                       | 4                             | 3                               | 4           |

From table - 7, it is observed that:

- Modal value for discounts, get access to exclusive content and interaction is 2 indicates that majority of respondents feels that these three are the most important factors.
- Modal value for Stay informed about the activities of company, for fun & entertainment is 4 indicates that

majority of respondents feels that these two are the least important factors.

- Median values and percentile values also support above interpretations.

Hence, consumers use Digital marketing extensively as it offers discounts and access to exclusive content, and it facilitates interaction with the advertisers.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that consumers rely upon more than one medium in order to enhance their brand related knowledge. It means that they use the combination of various sources for making final purchase decision. Consumers do require detailed information about the brand so as to evaluate its strengths & weaknesses; this ample amount of information then saves their time by allowing them to make the purchase decision quickly.

The study also reveals that main reason for growing importance of Digital marketing is the increasing literacy about internet among people. They have identified that internet is truly advantageous through which they can serve their various purposes mainly social networking, Digital shopping & media sharing (photo, music, video). This efficacy of internet has intensified their tendency of being Digital.

Today's consumers strongly feel that every company must use this efficacy to strengthen its marketing efforts. So that they will get motivated to use Digital marketing with the intent of getting access to exclusive content about the brand and getting discount and sharing their feedback about brand with the advertiser .

With the advent of internet technology, consumers' preference towards traditional marketing tools has decreased. Most popular traditional marketing tools are television & print media. The major benefits of Digital marketing are its capability of interaction between consumers and advertisers followed by availability of wide range of information & ease of shopping. These benefits make Digital marketing superior than traditional marketing. But at the same time consumers are susceptible about the user-safety side of internet. They feel that Digital marketing is unsafe as it may lead to increase in frauds & privacy issue.

## REFERENCES



1. Belch, G. E. and Belch, M. A., 2004. Advertising and Promotion – An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective. 6th ed. New York: Tata McGraw-Hill.
2. Bengtsson, M., Boter, H. and Vanyushyn, V. 2007. Integrating the Internet and Marketing Operations. Journal: International Small Business Journal, Issn02662426, Volume 25, Issue 1, pg. no. 27.
3. Diamond, S. 2008, “Web Marketing for Small Businesses: 7 Steps to Explosive Business Growth”, Sourcebooks Inc., Illinois.
4. Duncan, Tom R., and Everett, Stephen E., 1993. Client Perceptions of Integrated Marketing Communications. Journal of Advertising Research, pg. no.30-39.