



Research Article

IMPACT OF ONLINE MARKETING ON TEENAGERS IN INDIA

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Abstract

Online Marketing is quickly evolving in front of our eyes and it is almost impossible to reject and hide from this new form of media. "This shift in consumer influence indicates a need and an opportunity for companies to reprioritize the mix of communication channels they use to reach their consumers". The study discusses the attitude of teens towards brand selection due to Online Marketing comprising apparel market in India. The study is exploratory in nature. The research uses content analysis to conduct the research.

This research is divided in three parts to understand The Impact of Online Marketing on Brand Selection by Teenagers. 1) Strategy behind Online Marketing to Teenagers. 2) Role of Online Marketing on Teenagers in Brand Selection. 3) Benefits and worries of Online Marketing on Teenagers

Keywords: Online Marketing; Teens; Social Media; Brand Selection; Communication Channel

Introduction

Online Marketing is quickly evolving in front of our eyes. The new media has created its own unique space in the market which makes it impossible to search any new discussion. Online marketing has been the crucial part in current era. The new media is having immense potential to emerge a new segment of consumer. This new paradigm explores a platform to understand the consumer benefits and needs through reporting communication mix. Teenagers are playing a very crucial role in understanding of the new media. Companies have marked this segment as the most potential segment among rest. There are several reasons to enhance the purchasing power of teenagers

The paper discussed the role of teenagers in the family buying process and online brand selection by teenagers. The researcher believes the importance of understanding the characteristics and buying process of teenagers before drawing their role in online marketing. Teenage is a transitional growth post the childhood. This development formed the psychological development in a teenager. Age of teenagers lies between the age group of 13 to 19 years. This transition involves biological, psychological and social changes.

Dual family income and nuclear family are one of the crucial reasons which enhance the purchasing power of

teenagers. Teenagers are playing a very crucial role in family buying process as they are tech savvy consumers. The new media i.e. online media is playing a very important picture while delivering the new product portfolio in front of consumers.

As the data captured by Data monitor in 2007, \$1.2 trillion has been counted as men's, women's and infants clothing, jewellery, watches and leather goods in the global market. Among this 47.5 percent has been marked as women wear while 31.9 percent as men wear. Teenagers are forming a new relation with the new media and made them more tech-savvy Teens are carrying a special affinity towards international brand in India.

There are several literature justifying the major goal of marketing to generate and maintain brand awareness Brand awareness is particularly important in low-involvement situation as it engaged consumers in making their search highly active in selecting the brand of their preference.

Dotson and Hyatt (2005) tested role of peer group on gender difference and found group forming is highly influential in examining teenagers brand selection and the gender difference among groups creates different opinion in selecting the clothing brands. Parker and Charles (2008) defined group selection is more important than expressing one's own identity in related to fashion. While Shim and

Koh (1997) elaborated teens interaction with peer is very impactful in taking brand oriented decision. Bearden and Randall (1990) focused more on purchasing role of peer group and drawn their conclusion role on group identity.

As literature review suggested the role of peer group on teenagers in brand selection and its impact on brand identity, though only few literature are available on the role of new media in teenagers buying process. To highlight this, the research is going to discuss the impact of online marketing on teenagers.

The study explored many qualitative research and literature review to understand the impact of online marketing on teenagers. The study is exploratory in nature and tries to understand the ways online media is changing their marketing strategies to influence teenagers.

Research Methodology

The study uses content analysis which is described as the scientific study of content of communication. It is the content with reference to the meanings, contexts and intentions contained in messages. Holsti (1968) says that it is any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages.

Research Objectives

- To understand how the online media strategy works.
- To understand how companies are communicating their online strategy with teenagers
- To understand the advantages and disadvantages of online media on teenagers.

Data Collection and Analysis

This research is divided in three parts to understand The Impact of Online Marketing on Brand Selection by Teenagers. 1) Strategy behind Online Marketing to Teenagers. 2) Impact of Online Marketing on Teenagers in Brand Selection .3) Benefits and worries of Online Marketing on Teenagers.

Scope and Limitation

The study could have revealed many more aspects of different categories of companies focusing on online marketing strategies. The paper only deals with selected literatures and the study is restricted to secondary data only.

Strategy behind Online Marketing to Teenagers

Rebecca (2002) defined about the cool hunting process of market research to draw a trend setter while understanding the behaviour of local high school teenagers. Rebecca (2002) elaborated the process of cool hunting as taking picture of kids having tattoos, piercing and weird hair-dos influence the next trend setter

The first internet advertisement came into being in 1989. Tim-Berners found CERN while he was associated with European particle physics library and formed first online advertisement. Carrol (2010) highlighted the online marketing strategies for gender and marked culturally defined behaviours are seen as appropriate for males and females while considering attitudes, personality traits, emotions, and even postures and body language. This may say as our personality traits and social behaviour influenced our way of dressing, styling and interacting.

Research firms do focus group analysis to check the attitude of Teens. The role of marketing is to understand the consumers and draw the strategies as per their need and want. The strategies and technology are highly influential in the way to understand the behaviour and choice of teenagers. Media watches teens closely and push the product through creating an image of accomplishment of purchasing. Many literature are defined the gender difference between male and female as teenagers as female prefer to look older than they are while teenagers as male prefer to look aggressive. These personality traits influence their style of purchasing.

Social media is helping a lot to encourage online marketing in teenagers. Teens came to a platform to get aware about the brand, product its price, usage and style. It gives an idea to the teens about the current trend going in the market. Television Advertisement also gives an impact to Teens about the different types of categories, products and brands available in the Market. Due to continuous increase of the usage of internet, teens found it easy to get the knowledge of Company's brand. They found it easier to know the product style, color, price at home while using the internet mode.

When it comes to understand any particular apparel brand on internet, companies have created their particular links for Teens where they can chase all the competitors of the same product having different types of colors, styles, prices and designs.

Marketers also use different types of pricing strategy while using online marketing. Teens are highly price conscious. They save their money like adults and use it at big products consumed by them.

Role of Online Marketing on Teenagers in Brand Selection

Online Marketing is here to stay, and are where our youth are spending much of their time. Research proved that even the youngest of our children are migrating from mall shopping to online shopping and be a frequent user of tablets and smartphones

Teens are getting highly influences by Internet Advertisement. They take this as a guide tool and decision maker to buy any product. Now day's teens are more

curious and determined to be updated with their likings. And Internet is giving them an easy mode to get it through.

These recent technologies have formed the global teenagers as a strong opinion maker in the family buying process as they are enhanced with social media opportunities to interact with international apparel brands.

The main advantage of Online Marketing is cost-related. The majority of Online Marketing sites are free to access. The advantage of reaching and segmenting target audience is very cost effective and formed a substantial low cash investment, and the teens easily get aware about the product segmented for them. In current scenario, teens are becoming highly important part in family buying process. The earlier patriarchal culture now looks more like inclined towards teenager's decision. Online Marketing is also getting easily viral among the teens through which consumers easily come to know about the usage and result of product within his own network, so information spread easily in large number of people in a short time.

There are certain drawbacks of using Online networking websites. As it creates negative syndrome as lacks of control while the consumer can also receive deep information of the company which may affect company's current brand and its product. As the information would be helpful for the consumer to make its decision correct though it would be harmful for companies to create a high commitment for the consumers while dealing with the social media. Brooger (2010) mentioned that each conversation, content, blogs are being posted online are not fully controlled by the brand and also not regulated by the company. These conversation or content could manipulate teenagers in taking brand selection. One of the major tools in manipulating teenagers is social websites. Karimi (2009) highlighted about the posting of false, negative comments, complaints, blogs or conversation on new media by the consumers, clients can harmed company reputation. With this company may lose their current consumers. This way company may lose its international image and global clients. Therefore it's the major responsibility of the companies to handle the new media cautiously and formed new regulations while dealing with the new media to restrain from uncertain scenario.

Snapdeal.com, yebhi.com, sosastta.com, jabong.com, mantra.com are very famous online shopping websites in India. Also the individual brands are having their own websites for shopping of their products. In all these websites Indian and international brands are available. Brand makes the consumers recognizable amongst competitors. As a consumer, teens prefer those brands which they make themselves cool and help to build their personality as per their perception of present trend.

Koester and May (1985) concluded teens value apparel and fashion more than any other age group. Schewe and Wyscki

(1997) elaborated the results of Koester and May and defined teenager's value apparel, fashion, cell phones and internet more than any other age group. Wysocki (1997) suggested about international communication modes and global teen preferences and attitudes. Teens are not in their pre mature stage but they should also not get treated as adolescents, so the techniques and the tools used by the marketers must be verified and tested before implying on them.

Taylor and Cosenza (2002) argued that self-expression is especially important to the new trend setter while focusing on clothing style and concluded as look and fit were the two most important clothing selection for teenager's as females Taylor and Cosenza (2002) concluded their findings as age group was preoccupied with acceptance, affiliation and new trend name as coolness which gives motivation for the right choices of the clothing selection.

Teens are creating three different markets, the primary market, the influencer market and the future market. Marketers are considering teens as one of the most important consumer segment. They are creating new online marketing tools to target this segment.

Buzz Marketing has also been introduced by the marketers. It creates a viral among the consumers. Marketers are using word of mouth publicity, social media website and viral marketing strategy. Marketers are using different types of modes to advertise about their brand. They launch different types of contests, sweepstakes and premium mode via online mode to target their brand.

Buzz Marketing is particularly well suited to the internet, where teenagers and young youth are highly inclined towards social networking platforms to spread the awareness about the new music, clothing and all information required and related for them.

Online Marketing is very effective and successful communication mode to advertise about its brand and its products. Also it is easy to use umbrella advertising in online marketing. Through which teens are easily aware about the new products launched under the same brand.

Benefits and Worries of Online Marketing on Teens

While there are risks inherent in online marketing, there are also many potential benefits. Such as, social networking can provide opportunities in forming new relations in the form of friends, group, and influencer as well as making the existing relationships more strong which doesn't. It also worked for the global friends as distance is not counted here. Teens getting more aware and updated about the present trend.

- ✓ Teens are getting more familiar with the upcoming and emerging, through which they may compare them and follow the best among them. In this way,

teenagers may increase their media literacy and get exposure to many new terms of social media.

- ✓ Teens gain social confidence from interacting with other people online, which make them more social, confident, independent while joining the new college, roaming new places or in making new friends.
- ✓ Many teens find support in online communities; this is especially true for kids who have unique interests or feel isolated.
- ✓ Online communities is very diversified, versatile and gives an exposure to teenager's to be upfront and put their viewpoints, ideas, and opinions on which they want to put.

Meredith and Schewe (2002) found independence, self-expression, openness to new ideas and cultures, flexibility, mobility, and enjoyment of life as the forces behind converging values of global teenager's.

Conclusion

Teens often gravely underestimate the toll that their digital conduct can take on their reputations. The potential of online media is yet to be explored to its full potential in India. But the beginning has already been formed and raising its graph frequently. Social media is playing a crucial role in delivering the impact of online media on teenagers. And social media have met with considerable success. Companies can use social media as an asset and may use it for their benefits, though there must be some regulation and control for the further conversations. Though social media is having immense potential but it should not be used to manipulate by stealth marketing strategies of teenagers. As this segment belongs to curious among rest, hence the online marketing highlighting teenagers must be ethically driven. Pros and cons must be checked when it's implied on teenagers through online marketing. However the potential of online marketing is often debated. One can do further research to find out the opinions and perceptions of the teenagers as consumers specifically related to online

marketing. But in the meanwhile, one can safely assume that online marketing is here to stay and is an effective medium to bring about changes in the buying behaviour of teenagers.

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