

DIGITAL MARKETING: GENERATION NEXT MARKETING STRATEGIES

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Abstract: The cost-effectiveness and assorted qualities of Digital Channels encourage advertisers' to opt for this platform in comparison to other marketing techniques. Digital channels like the Internet, Email, mobile phones and digital television offers new prospects to customers and also allow marketers to strengthen their relationship with customers easily and effectively. The principal goal of digital marketing is enticing internet users and enabling them to communicate with the brand through digital media. This paper revolves around the significance of digital marketing and its related tools for marketing professionals working in India. This research paper will highlight the digital marketing parameters to measure the awareness and effectiveness of digital marketing among marketing professionals in India. To gain an insight into current practices, secondary data sources are referred and compiled in the study along with primary research studies. Suitable graphs and tables were used wherever necessary for making this complex topic much easier to understand for the readers and scholars.

Index Terms: Digital Marketing, Online Marketing, SEO, SMO, SEM, PPC

1. Introduction:

The concept of Digital Marketing is emerging rapidly and been adopted globally for better business and marketing results. In today's scenario, social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Google and other online networking firms, have effectively changed the outlook and impression of customers and benefited the firms in a great sense. The customers' interaction with online firms and websites through feedbacks, reviews, and surveys create lots of valuable data for the firms which can be measured to know the success and failure of customer satisfaction level offered by them. Online marketing is one of the prime ways through which firms may reach directly to the worldwide customers and can offer product and services at an optimal price. Through Online Marketing, it is now easier to get the real time responses and reviews from customers so that their demands and needs can be understood easily and served accurately. The power of Digital marketing is reflected by its usage rate as both customers and industry surf online platforms for seeking information, shopping or to connect globally. Our audit supplements ongoing review articles on digital marketing and its related aspects. The article by Yadav and Pavlou (2014) centers around marketing in PC interceded environment and review article in both marketing and information frameworks. The article by Lamberton and Stephen (2016) focuses on consumer behavior research, motivations, and articulations in the digital environment. The article by centers around modeling and methodological issues in marketing analytics required by the advent of computerized, social and mobile conditions.

1.1 Literature Review:

Digital marketing is one sort of marketing is generally used to market products or services and maximizing touch points utilizing digital channels. Digital marketing stretches out past internet marketing including channels that don't require the utilization of the Internet. It incorporates cell phones (the two SMS and MMS), social media channel marketing, display advertising, search engine marketing and numerous different types of digital media. However, the area of Digital Marketing is still a novice for many and especially for the firms who don't have online presence earlier and would now like to integrate their marketing tasks by going digital. They are more relying on digital platforms for promoting and reaching customers globally. Marketing has evolved significantly over the decades. Conventional Marketing techniques like Advertising, Sales Promotion, Bill Boards, and Publicity etc. have been adopted by marketers for conveying the message to its target market especially in the local environment since ages and looks older now. Digital Marketing, on the other hand, allows the marketer to fly higher and wider by using the broadest communication tool called the

internet for effective and efficient communication with their prospects. Firm Canon iMage Gateway enables buyers to share their computerized photographs with companions on the web. L'Oréal's image Lancôme utilizes email bulletins to stay in contact with clients and thus attempts to reinforce client loyalty (Merisavo et al., 2004). Magazine publisher can actuate and drive their clients with firm's newsletter and SMS messages to enhance re-membership rate (Merisavo et al., 2004). Google and Yahoo are the oldest search engines which are nowadays meritoriously utilized as marketing platforms for firms. Going global is a necessity for marketers as customers are living and migrating to different parts of the world, but still meeting together at the common place i.e. on the internet, to communicate with each other. A philosopher like Khan and Mahapatra (2009) remarked that technology plays an essential role in enhancing the nature of services provided by the business units. As per Hoge (1993), electronic marketing (EM) is a transfer of merchandise or services from the seller to buyer including one or more electronic methods or media. Seeking information on online search engines like Google and Bing are the most common aspect of modern customers. Similarly, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp are popular destinations for social belongingness and connectivity among people. McDonald's uses an online channel to reinforce mark messages and relationships. They have fabricated online communities for children, for example, the Happy Meal website with educative and entertaining games to keep customers constantly close to themselves (Rowley 2004). Reinartz and Kumar (2003) found that the number of mailing efforts through newsletter by the organization is positively linked with organization benefit over time. The essential advantages of social media marketing are reducing total costs to the company and enhancing the touchpoint. Waghmare (2012) pointed out that numerous countries in Asia are exploiting e-commerce through opening up, which is essential for advancing competition and dissemination of Internet technologies. By keeping in mind the power of the online market, marketers are using search engines, social media tools for promoting their brands. Google and Facebook are the favorite destinations for marketers to publicize their brand as the frequency of customers' visit to these pages are significantly higher than other social media and search pages. The space allotted to marketers on these social media pages are well occupied and utilized by marketers for customer enticement and statistics revealed that the result was very significant overall. The most common digital marketing tool used today is Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Its role is to maximize the way search engines like Google find your website. To gain more insight into this, detailed definitions, terms and framework are discussed in continuation.

1.2 Definitions of Digital Marketing:

Digital marketing is the use of technologies to help marketing activities in order to improve Customer's knowledge by matching their needs (Chaffey, 2013).

According to American Marketing Association "Firm centric definition digital marketing may be seen as activities, institutions, and processes facilitated by digital technologies for creating, communicating and delivering value for customers and other stake-holders.

Digital marketing is an umbrella term for the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, mainly on the Internet, but also including mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium. (Financial Times, August 2015)

All types of social media provide an opportunity to present the company itself or its products to dynamic communities and individuals that may show interest (Roberts & Kraynak, 2008).

1.3 Facts about Digital Marketing

Digital marketing concept originated from the Internet and search engines ranking of websites. The first search engine was started in 1991 with a network protocol called Gopher for query and search. After the launch of Yahoo in 1994 companies started to maximize their ranking on the website (Smyth 2007).

When the Internet bubble burst in 2001, the market was dominated by Google and Yahoo for search optimization. Internet search traffic grew in 2006; the rise of search engine optimization grew for major companies like Google (Smyth 2007). In 2007, the usage of mobile devices increased the Internet usage on the move drastically and people all over the world started connecting with each other more conveniently

through social media. In the developed world, companies have realized the importance of digital marketing. In order for businesses to be effective, marketers will have to unite online methods with traditional methods to meet the needs of customers exactly (Parsons, Zeisser, Waitman 1996).

1.4 Merits of Digital Marketing

Even the brick and mortar firms are shifting towards the online portal and creating a dynamic website where customer feedback and interaction can be registered on a real time basis. The world is transforming digitally and the significance of social media and digital marketing is clearly visible in the business scenario. Digital Marketing can be blended with traditional marketing and can yield returns for the business. Here are the following benefits of digital marketing;

- **Fit for all:** Digital Marketing can be used for every kind of business without considering the level of business. Whether small or large, businesses with the crisp website having catchy content may apply arsenal digital strategies and get fantastic sales returns.
- **Reduced Cost:** Businesses can build up its digital marketing methodology with minimal cost and can possibly supplant exorbitant promotional channels, for example, Yellow Pages, TV, radio, and magazine.
- **Easy to quantify:** Unlike customary techniques, companies can find progressively what is or is not working for their business on the web and they can adjust rapidly to enhance their outcomes. For measuring traffic to their webpage, companies can utilize Google Analytics to measure particular objectives that the companies need to accomplish for their website.
- **Constant outcomes:** Companies need not wait long to improve their business performance. Marketers can track the visit of guest customers to their website site and their subscriber's increment, top exchanging times, conversion rates and much more just at the click of a mouse.
- **Brand Development:** An all-around website with quality content focusing on the need and increasing the value to the customers can give critical esteem and lead generation openings for the company.
- **More Exposure:** Business can be seen anyplace on the planet from one marketing effort, but the cost of utilizing traditional strategy would be high. But through digital marketing, once the company capitalizes the keyword search content in their website they ought to see a long haul return on their venture and will be a genuinely minimal cost to keep up their website page rank.
- **Analyze and adapt easily:** Since digital marketing gives genuine, real, opportune information, firms can watch and adjust trends & actions that genuine individuals are taking. They require not depend on sample data set or make any educated guesses.
- **Become more competitive:** Digital marketing is the manner by which organizations are working now and will keep on working later on. On the off chance that the business isn't as of now in the digital marketing game, at that point they are no place. Make sure that the business is focused on utilizing a smart digital marketing strategy.

1.5 Facets of Digital Marketing

Digital Marketing has evolved from e-commerce business somewhere, as the firms have to offer products to target segment through their web pages and often these pages are searched by customers through search engines like Google and Bing. These search engines can rank the website links on top or bottom depending upon the quality of digital marketing application applied by the marketers. The websites having quality content, dynamic pages, positive reviews and dominating page authorities would rank high and would be

called as Organic search results on search pages. And similarly gaining immediate ranks by paying money to the search engines would be called Inorganic search results. Thus digital marketing is the arena which encompasses of some of the auxiliary fields which helps the marketer to perform digital marketing. Let's discuss the few important aspects of Digital Marketing techniques;

1.5.1 Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

In a layman dialect about Search Engine Optimization, at whatever point we enter an inquiry in an internet searcher and press enter key we get a list of website pages as results that contain the concerned question term. Website sellers regularly visit that SEO expert which assists a webmaster or a site proprietor with ensuring that a webpage is reachable to a search engine and create the opportunities that the website will be originated by the search engine. If a webpage organically ranks in organic results of a search, the chance to visit that site by the user will be increased. SEO is the method of improving the visibility of a website or a web page in search results. In common, the earlier (or higher ranked on the search results page), and more frequently a website reflects in the search engine results in a list, the more visitors it will receive more frequently. SEO may aim at different types of search, including image search, video search, local search, news search, academic search etc. As a great Digital Marketing Strategy, SEO studies how search engines work, what users search for, the actual keywords typed into search engines and which search engines are liked by their targeted audience. Improving an online website will include modifying its HTML, its related coding, and online content to build its significance to a particular keyword and to expel boundaries to the indexing activities of search engines. SEO may target various types of searches, including audiovisual search, picture search, local search, news hunt, scholarly search. SEO contemplates how Search engine function, what individuals search for, the genuine search terms or popularly known as Keywords wrote into search engines and which search engines are favored by their target audience. Enhance a website rank and position by building the number of quality backlinks or inbound links, is another SEO strategy. (May 2015-Google inside AdWords). The greater part of web activity is driven by the major commercial search engines like Bing, Google, and Yahoo. Though social networking and different kinds of traffic generators can produce sufficient visits to the company's website, search engines are the essential strategy to reach maximum Internet users. This is genuine whether the site gives content, product or services, data, or whatever else. Search Engines are one of a kind in that they give target audiences and customers (individuals searching for what you are offering). Search engines are the roadways that get this going. In the event that search engines can't discover your webpage or add your web page to their databases, you miss a great opportunity for amazing chances to drive customers to your website. Investment in SEO can have an outstanding rate of return distinguished with different kinds of marketing and promotion. (Dec.2015-Moz.com)

1.5.1 (a) Types of Search Engine Optimization: Search Engine Optimization techniques can be divided into two parts. First one is "On Page SEO" and another is "Off Page SEO".

On Page SEO: In this method, the optimization part would be done in the coding of the website. There are the following elements in On-Page SEO;

- **Title Tag:** The title tag is really noteworthy for search engine rankings. A page title is the first thing, a search engine will look. The search engine crawls the content of this tag on the significance basis.
- **Meta Tag:** Keyword and description tag are the two main Meta tags used in SEO.
- **Alt Attribute:** Search engine only reads the alt attribute on image tag scripted on the webpage.
- **Header tags (H1, H2, and H3):** Heading Tags are similarly vital for search engine ranking point of view.
- **Permalinks of Web Pages:** Permalink means a uniform resource locator of a webpage that can be explored on Search engines. It must have satisfactory keywords and SEO responsive structure.
- **Internal Linking:** Those hyperlinks which direct to the same domain are called Internal Links. This topic is equally significant for search engine results.

- **Keyword Density:** The total number of times a keyword or phrase seems on the webpage (in terms of %) whole content is called Keyword Density. Keyword Density is really noteworthy in terms of SEO.
- **Sitemap:** In the Sitemap, updated information of the page and all the important website links to a date is available properly. Search Engine will crawl the sitemap links on the significance basis.
- **Off Page SEO:** It is a method for creating backlinks. Backlinks are the links back from another renowned website to the owner's website. Backlinks are key for SEO since search engine algorithms give value if any website has a huge number of back links. When back links increase website popularity will also increase.

1.5.1 (b) Desktop Search Engine Market Share: The SEO relies up on search engines rankings. More popular will be the search engine, more SEO activity will be done on that. Research conducted by Statcounter Global stats (<http://gs.statcounter.com/search-engine-market-share>) (Fig.1) for the year 2017-18 reveals that 90.3% search engine market is dominated by Google Global and -considered as a favorite destination for most digital marketers around the globe.

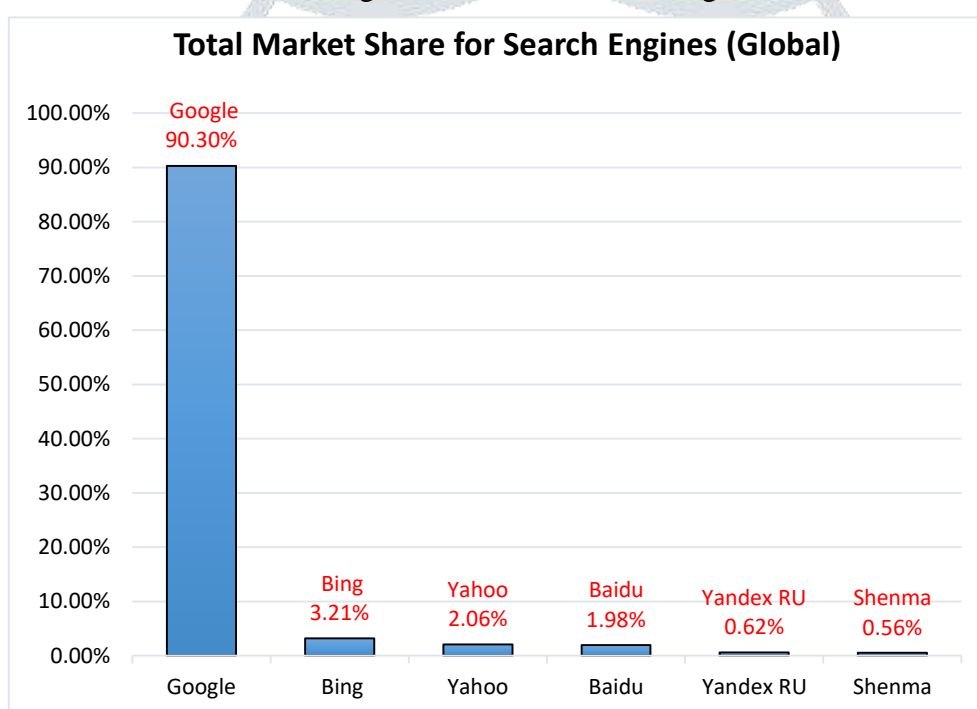


fig.1 (source: market share statistics for internet technologies 2016)

1.5.2 Search Engine Marketing (SEM):

Search engine marketing (SEM) is a type of Internet marketing that includes the promotion of sites by expanding their visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs) principally through paid marketing. Search Engine Marketing (or SEM) is a type of Internet marketing outfitted towards expanding the visibility of an online store in search engines. Basically, the more noticeable the companies are on the Internet, the more probable it is that search engines will rank the webpage higher than other, less visible sites. By expanding the site's positioning, a firm can focus on the customers actively searching for their product, drive more movement to their site, and fundamentally increment the conversion rate. There are numerous procedures the organizations can perform to streamline their webpage and make their website more visible on the Internet. There is no single method that will altogether build company's rankings. Or maybe, it's the blend of multiple techniques in view of your particular market that works together to increase company's rankings. In search engine marketing, Pay-Per-Click (PPC), Keyword Selection procedure, Search Engine Basics would work for firms to secure prominent rank on SERP (Search engine results page). Let's discuss these terms briefly;

1.5.2. (a) Pay-Per-Click: The other name of Pay-per-click (PPC) is the cost per click (CPC), it is an internet advertising method used to drive maximum traffic to the websites. In this process, an advertiser pays to a publisher when the ad is clicked e.g. company pays a certain amount to Google when their ad shown on google is clicked by the internet user. Pay-per-click is usually related to 1st tier search engines marketing paid network (such as Microsoft Bing Ads and Google AdWords). With search engines, marketers usually bid on keyword and keyword phrases applicable to their target market. In compare, content sites usually charge a fixed price per click instead of the bidding system. "PPC display ads", also identified as "banner ads", are publicized on web sites with associated content that have agreed to show ads and are classically not PPC advertising. Social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter have also adopted the PPC system as their marketing models. (Wikipedia 2016).

1.5.2. (b) Search Engine Basics: Search engines play an important role in the success of an online business. See the below results of one study that examines how consumers find products on the internet generally (Fig. 2). Those shoppers using search engines, most will explore only the first few pages of search results. In fact, 87% of all traffic goes to the websites listed within the top 20 results for any search.

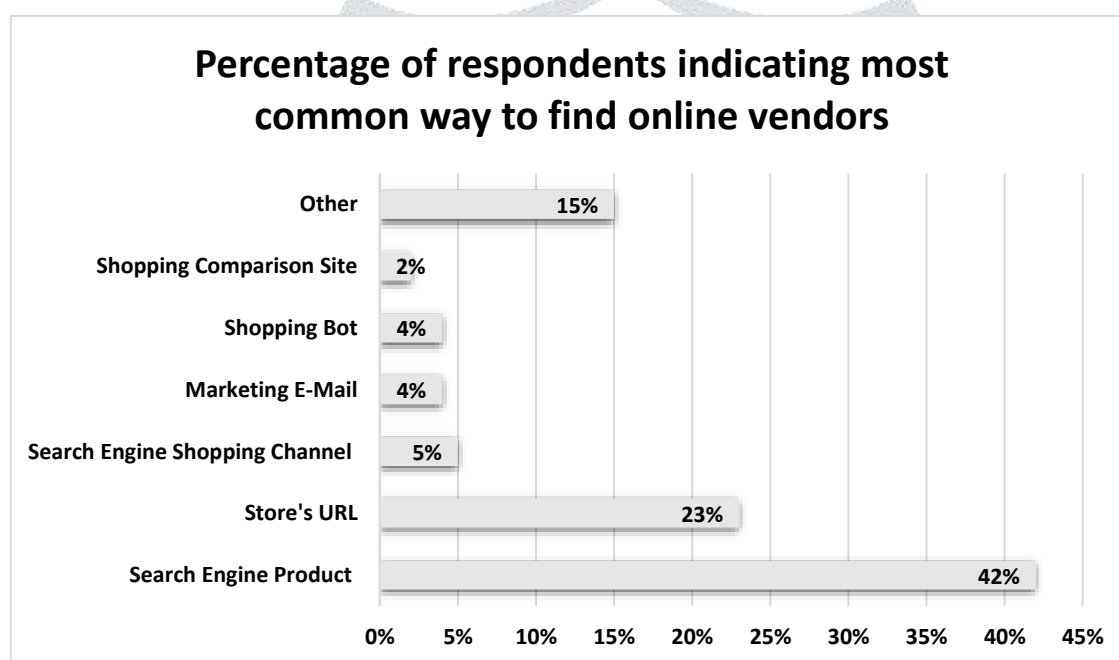


fig.2 (source: overture)

1.5.2. (c) Keyword Selection: Internet shoppers find the products that they are searching for by typing keywords or search phrases into popular search engines. It is very important to choose keywords that shoppers will use when searching for merchandise or store. Make a list of every keyword that a firm can imagine a shopper might use to find their online store. Keywords for apparel store

1.5.3 Social Media Marketing (SMM)

SMM is the usage of social media stages/websites to market a product or service. Most of the social networking platforms have their own analytics tools, which empower companies to track the progress, engagement, and success of ad campaigns. Firms try to build strong relationships with its stakeholders through SMM (social media marketing) including current & potential customers, employees, bloggers, and the general public. The most popular Social Media platforms among audiences are Pinterest, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, WhatsApp, Yelp, and Foursquare. (P.A.; Hinsch, Felix, R., Rauschnabel, C. 2016). These social media stages allow firms to market them and their web pages through SMM.

2 Research Methodology

- **Objective:** To find out the digital marketing parameters to measure the awareness and effectiveness of digital marketing among marketing professionals in India.
- **Sampling:** Marketing Professionals (Managers and Executives) are picked as sample units from different cities of India like Lucknow, Indore, Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai. These professionals (sample units) are working in different organizations related to media, pharmaceutical, e-commerce, entertainment etc. A sample of 80 professionals was taken through the snow-ball sampling (non-probability) technique. 95% were men and 5% were women.
- **Research Instrument:** Electronic Questionnaire was used to collect the data. All measures were adapted using five-point Likert and dichotomous scales. Various non-statistical validity checks (through pilot study) were made prior to the questionnaire's actual implementation.
- **Data Collection:** The strategy of using colleagues and relatives have worked really well during the research in terms of questionnaire administration and completion by creating a suitable environment necessary for target participant's involvement, motivation, and convenience. Every questionnaire was accurately filled and 99% response rate is achieved.

3 Analysis and result:

- The survey revealed that out of 80 professionals 73% was the digital marketing experts (of which 4% were women) while 18% are the amateur digital marketers and 9% were other respondents. (Fig. 3)

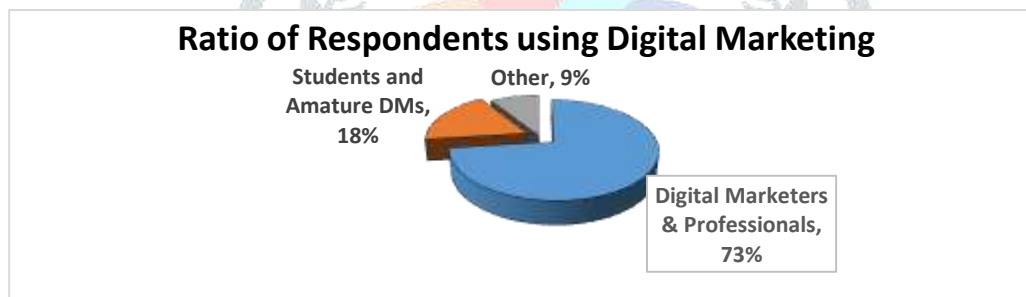


fig. 3 ratios of respondents

- Desktop/Web-based digital marketing is slightly more preferred method over mobile digital marketing. While few are preferring both options. 75% of respondents using Web digital marketing strategies through desktop, while 15% are switching to mobile and 10% using both. (Fig.4)

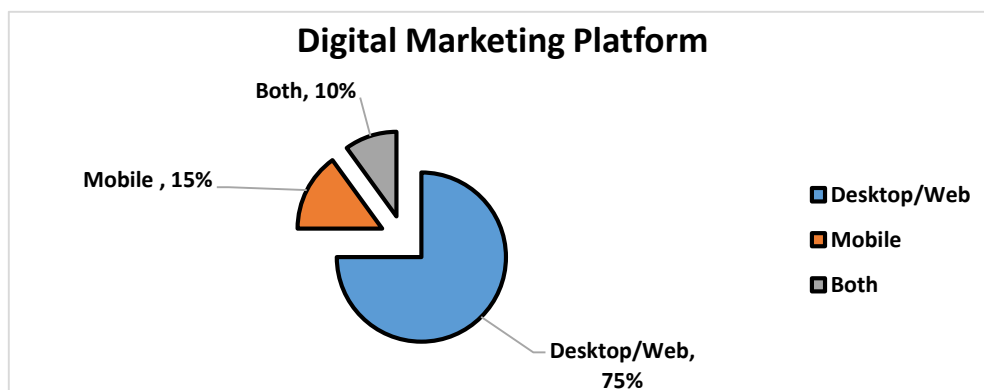


fig.4 digital marketing platform

- Professionals accepted that the firms are still reluctant to invest more in digital marketing strategies. 38% of the professionals said that in marketing budget only 0-25% money is reserved for digital marketing activity. Whereas 24% professionals believed that its budget has been improved and companies now investing 25-50% of the marketing budget on it. 14% believe that 50-75% investment in digital marketing is required nowadays to look competitive. 13% & 11% believe that a complete marketing budget is required for digital marketing activity as customers are now more digitally savvy and globally connected. (Fig.5)

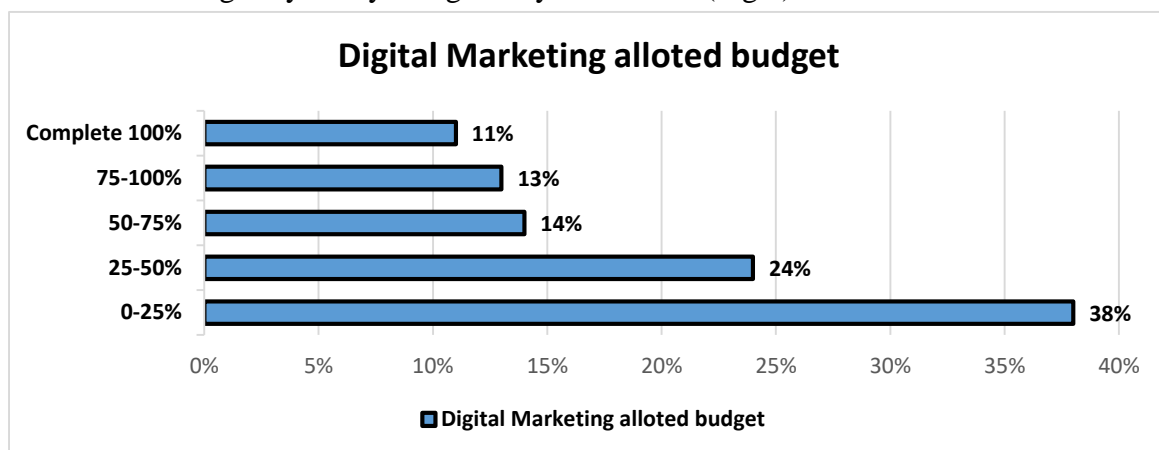


fig. 5 digital marketing allotted budget

- Almost 65% of our respondents still apprehensive and invest less than ₹10,000 monthly on digital marketing techniques (among that majorly is on Pay Per Click). 25% are averaging between ₹10,000-₹25,000 monthly. And 7% are investing around ₹25,000-₹50,000 monthly on digital marketing method (having business and customers overseas) and just 3% are investing more than ₹50,000 monthly on it. (Fig.6)

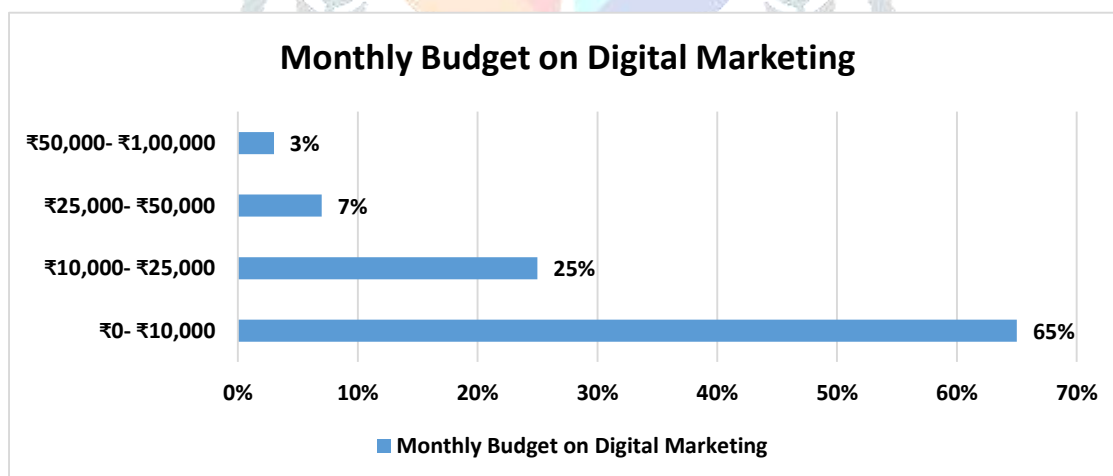


fig. 6 monthly budget for digital marketing

- 40% of the marketers are relying on PPC marketing as it has fast returns in comparison to other Digital marketing methods while 27% are giving more weight to generic SEO activity. 19% are getting results from E-Mail marketing and 14% are active on social media and getting lucrative results as well. Different digital marketing methods have a different set of advantages. On one hand, Search Engine Marketing (PPC) gives early responses and results, whereas SEO proves to be an amicable solution for sustainable ranking on SERPs over the longer period of time. (Fig.7)

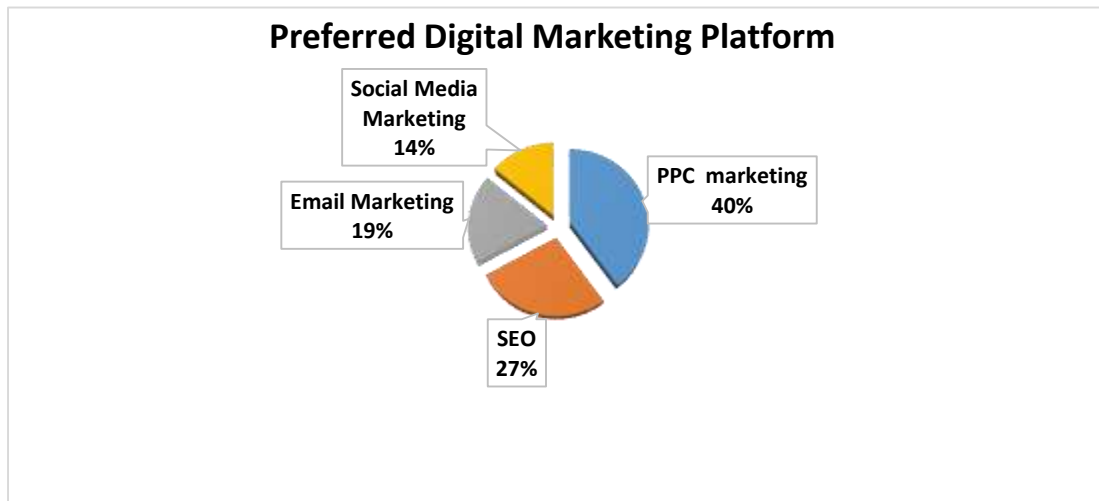


fig 7. preferred digital marketing platform

- 58% of the respondents believe that Conversion rate is the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for any digital marketing activity. However, 24% believes social media followers is the KPI for the firm as it reflects the brand popularity among the target market. Application installation is also one of the KPIs nowadays and 16% considered as an important benchmark. 2% give credits to Daily Active Users (DAU) and Monthly Active Users (MAU) rate these are used for measuring the success of an internet product e.g. online social games. (Fig.8)

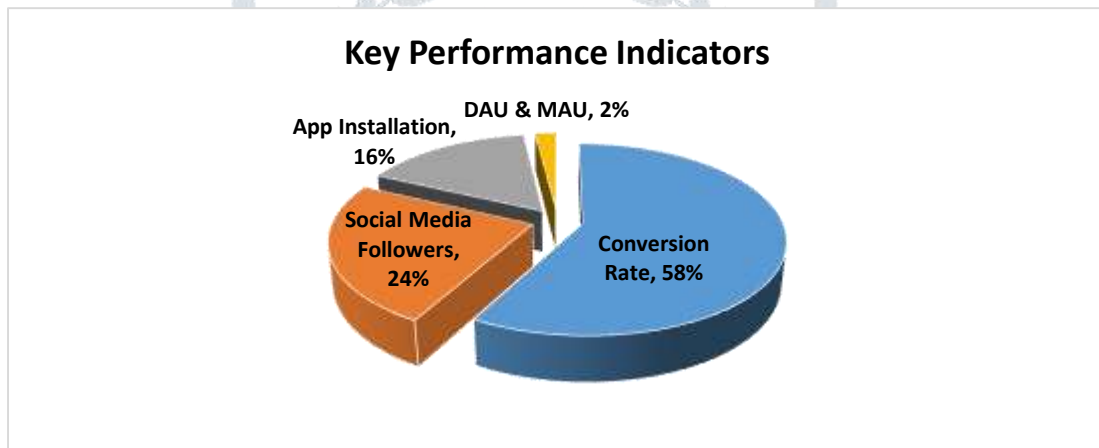


fig 8. key performance indicator

- As far as A/B Testing is concerned still many professionals rarely use these techniques, although A/B testing improves the conversion rates (*A/B testing involves comparing two versions of a web page to see which performs better. The two web pages are compared by showing the two variants to similar visitors at the same time, and the one that has a better conversion rate is the winner*). One of the reason is that this technique is still not fully understood by many. Same applies to cohort analysis which is also an important tool to gain critical insight from data. What it does is break down users into related groups (i.e. cohorts) for analysis. This, in turn, shows how user behavior patterns evolve over time, thus providing insights into customer retention and the site's overall performance. (Fig.9)

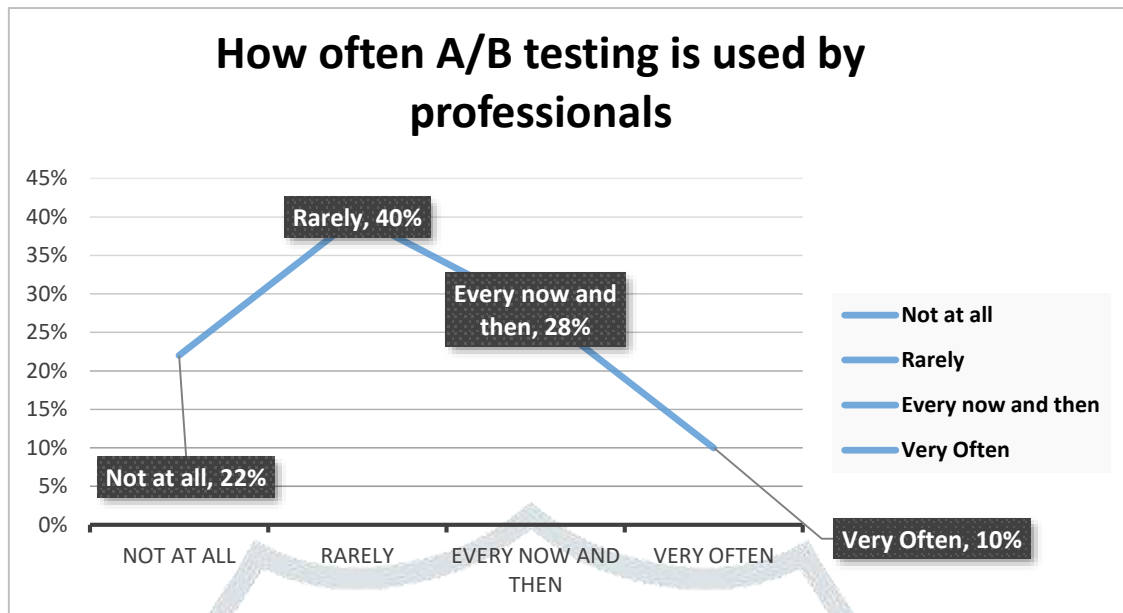


fig 9 how often ab testing used

- 86% of the digital marketing users said Google Analytics remains the most popular digital marketing tool. Other tools like, SEM rush, Hootsuite, Marketo, and Flurry are well beyond it and not very popular. (Fig. 10)

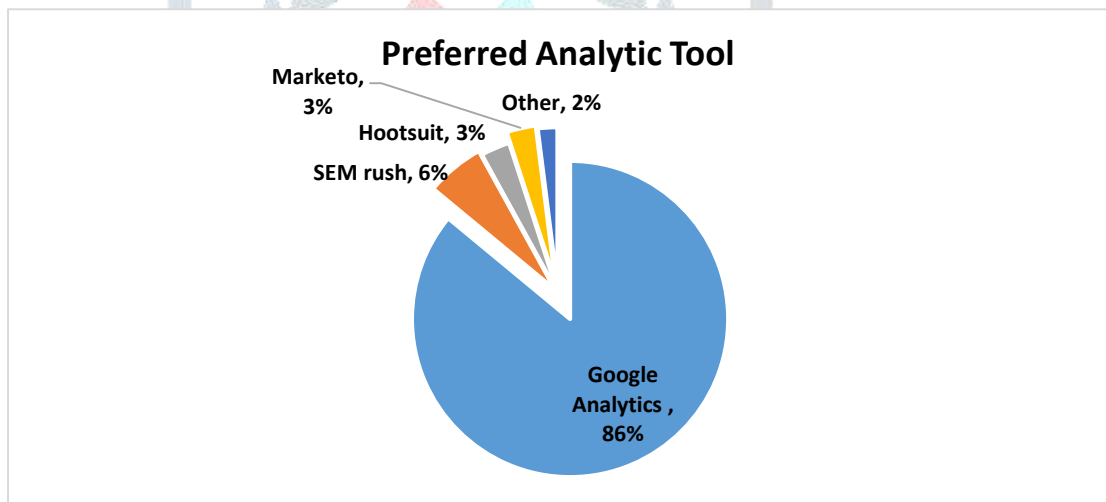


fig. 10 preferred analytic tool

- It is the reality that still people are not aware of this magnificent field that’s why there is a scarcity of human resource in the field of digital marketing. Rare talent of good digital marketers in India. 68% of the respondents feel that in India there is a rare talent in the digital marketing field.

Conclusion: Our key target in this paper is to set a plan for a look into the reach of Digital marketing among marketing professionals. We have tried our level best to define digital marketing in the broadest sense and also scrutinized the usage of digital marketing strategies and the awareness among today's marketing professionals in India. Through the primary research way we have sorted out furthermore, looked into the touchpoints of Digital Marketing. However, we still feel that awareness of digital marketing and its tools perhaps is still not significant in India and that may be enhanced only when users keep using it more often especially marketing professionals. And there is an enormous scope for a research scientist to conduct a scientific and conceptual research for exploring new dimensions and scope under the verticals of Digital Marketing.

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