

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND IT'S EFFECTS ON ONLINE CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN BENGALURU

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ABSTRACT:

The dawn of social media has opened a new avenue of marketing for corporations. The traditional 'word-of-mouth' publicity has been replaced by the 'word-of-web', we live in an era where consumers are increasingly referring to social media sites before making a purchase. Though companies provide product information through their websites, consumers usually engage with a company only after reading reviews and feedback from existing customers through social media. Companies have found social media as a new platform to advertise their products to the customers as part of their marketing mix. In recent days, especially in the geographical areas like Bengaluru, Social media has become a key factor in marketing mix in general and in promotion mix in particular. The purpose of this research is to understand the effects of social media on consumer behaviour as a marketing tool and to what extent it is going to influence the buying decision of Bengaluru people, Which may help the companies existed in Bengaluru region to weigh the effectiveness of their online marketing strategies.

Keywords: Word-of –web, Social Media, Marketing mix, Promotional mix, Marketing tool, Buying Decision.

INTRODUCTION:

The emergence of Web 2.0 has changed how consumers and marketers communicate. Web 2.0 is the name used to describe the second generation of the World Wide Web, where it moved static HTML pages to a more interactive and dynamic web experience. Web 2.0 is focused on the ability for people to collaborate and share information online via 'social media', blogging and Web-based communities. Social media, which came along with, is an evolution based on the Web 2.0, where it encourages & allows the customers to exhibit contents to share among networks. Social media provides virtual space for people to do transactions, which also enhances consumer socialization. Social media provide various values to firms, such as enhanced brand

popularity, increasing sales, sharing information in a business context and generating social support for consumers. The major advantages of social media is that, it enables businesses to reach customers worldwide and also allows customers to make survey, select products online and purchase products & services online from businesses around the world. In addition, the individuals being active in social media provide shared values, leading to enhancement of trust. With this research paper, researcher provides insights to the social media marketing and online consumer behavior. This paper provides a literature review of the evolution of social media marketing and various affects of social media marketing on virtual platform customers. The aim of this research is to empirically study and investigate if online customers of Bengaluru region get affected by social media or not. Particularly, we consider social media users regarding their perceived importance of using social media, and these social media users represent people living in Bengaluru.

A BRIEF HISTORY ON EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING:

Before the social media boom, marketers thought social media marketing was just another fad that would soon likely pass, something in the vein of pyramid and networking scams. But when Facebook started attracting attention from the year 2004, more and more social media marketing strategies were developed. Today, this marketing tool has allowed start-ups and established companies to gain attention without having to spend millions of dollars on advertisements.

Before there was social media, netizens in the 1970s and 1980s spent most of their time on social networks like dating sites and online forums. Six Degrees, Livejournal, and Friendster were the earliest form of social Medias. The dot-com bubble of 1995 – 2002 was a critical event that allowed the internet to become a viable marketing tool. It began with search marketing, prompting brands to create websites to establish an online presence. As Google, Yahoo and MSN's search engines evolved, companies turned to SEO strategies to remain at the top of search results. When web 2.0 sites – blogs in particular – increased in popularity, marketers began to recognize the potential of content marketing. Inbound marketing, where more value is added for the customer and business is earned, starts replacing age-old “buy, beg or bug” outbound marketing strategies. In 2003 – 2004, the arrival social media sites like Facebook, LinkedIn and My Space initiates the shift of internet users from multiplayer online games into social networking sites. Eventually, businesses picked up on the positive effects of a social media site presence on e-commerce and started creating their own profiles on the popular networking sites.

In the years that followed, customer's favorable attitude towards social media marketing slowly changed business marketing preference from the more aggressively-proactive outbound marketing to the more reactive inbound marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Data collection was achieved by using an online consumer survey (Google form). The data was collected with an online survey targeted at the people living in Bengaluru, especially who are involved in online purchasing. The online survey was aimed at studying people behavior and reactions on social media websites in order to provide a better understanding of their interactions in an online environment. The data collected from respondents via the internet, were gathered through online research, from February 5th to March 8th, 2019.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

The present research aims to observe whether social media in any way affects the Bengaluru consumer decisions and whether consumers make online purchase or not.

The present research aims at following objectives:

- Determining the reasons for which consumers purchase products online.
- To study Consumer attitudes toward other consumer feedback from online.
- Identifying the consumer age class that makes online purchase.
- To identify customer involvement level in social media.
- To understand the most preferred shopping platform by customers.

DATA ANALYSIS:

The following comments were obtained from analysis and processing.

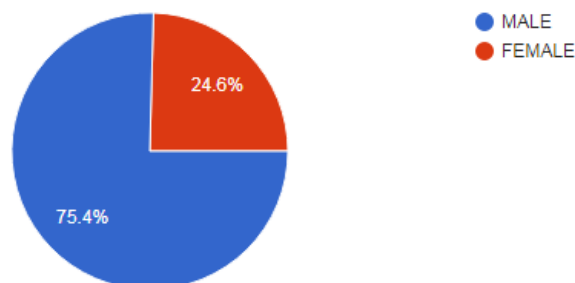
The total sample is composed of 118 respondents; all the respondents are aged over 15 years. Received responses were recorded and managed in the Google form platform and graphs & tables have been automatically generated based on responses. The questionnaire was uploaded on the host platform (Google form) as the research developed is an online research.

The questionnaire started with asking respondents name followed by their gender, place and Age group.

1. This question was asked to know the gender of the respondents

GENDER

118 responses

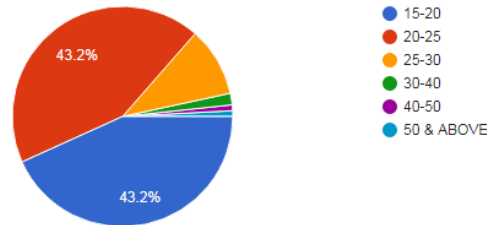


If we look at this question from the gender perspective of respondents, we could know from the data that, out of 118 respondents 75.4% are Male and 24.6% are female.

2. Next question was aimed at finding the age group of the respondents.

AGE GROUP

118 responses

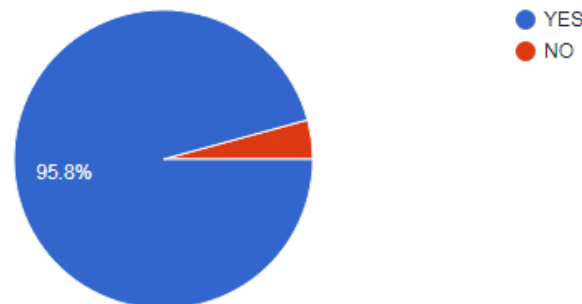


By the data collected on online platform , it is evident that people who belong to the age group '15-20', '20-25' are more active in social media compared to any other age groups like, 25-30, 30-40,40-50, 50&above.

3. The opening Question after the above mentioned questions aimed at finding if the respondents have a social media account.

DO YOU HAVE A SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT?

118 responses

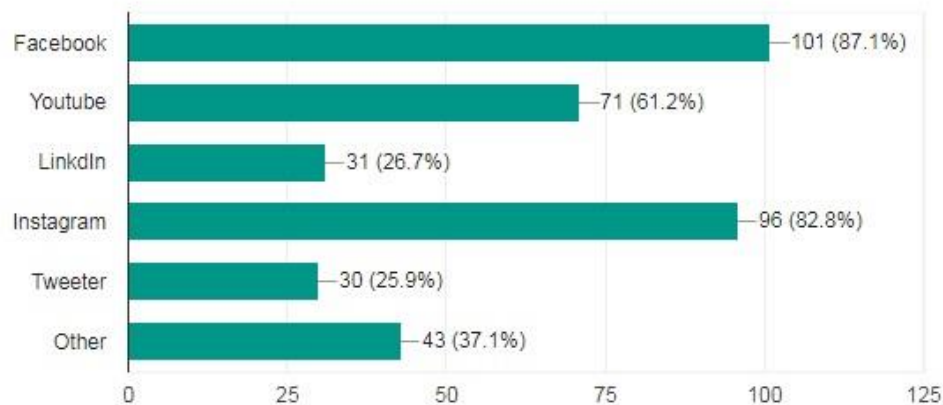


From 118 respondents, 95.8% confirmed that they have such an account, while only 4.2% of them have not yet created an account. So it is clear from the data that most of the people who live in Bengaluru region are active in one or the other social media platform.

4. Respondents were asked to indicate in which all social media of a given list they have an accounts.

IN WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA OF GIVEN LIST YOU HAVE ACCOUNT?

118 responses

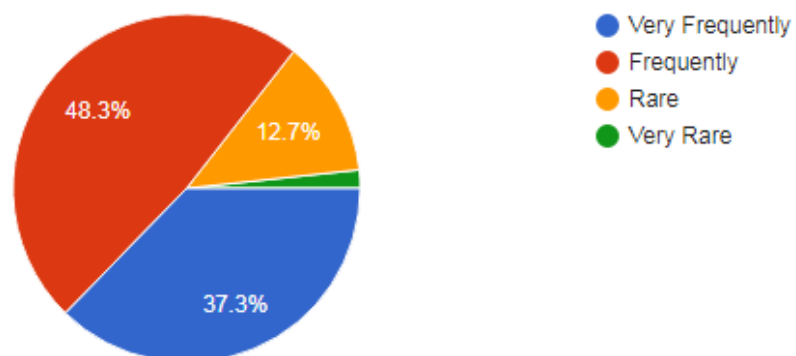


101(87.1%) of them said they have Facebook account, YouTube 71(61.2%) and 96(82.8%) have LinkedIn account, 30(25.9%) access Tweeter, and 43(37.1%) have an account in other social medias. So it is clear from the survey that most of the respondents use facebook more than any other social medias.

5. This question was regarding the frequency with which respondents access social media.

HOW FREQUENTLY YOU USE SOCIAL MEDIA IN A DAY?

118 responses

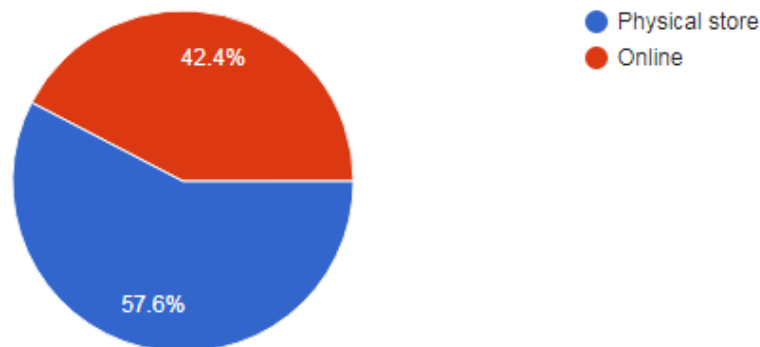


37.3% of them use social media very frequently, 48.3% access frequently, while 12.7% said that they access rare and only 1.7% very rare. By this data we can say most of the respondents are frequently uses or access to social media in a day.

6. This question is framed in-order to understand the most preferred platform by the customers,

WHICH PLATFORM IS BEST PREFERRED BY YOU TO BUY THE PRODUCT?

118 responses

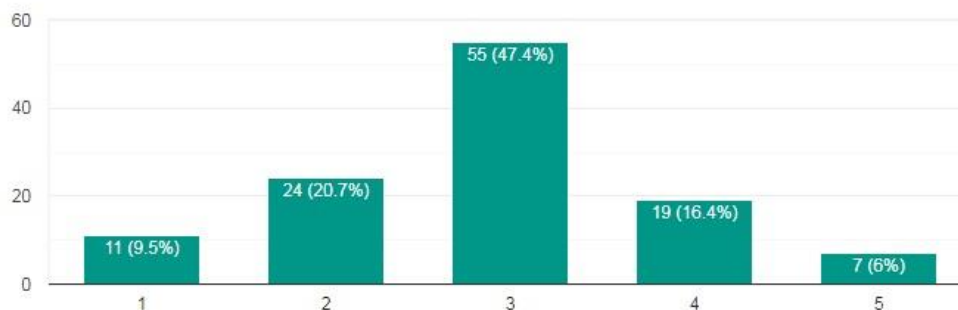


Another question in the survey refers to if they prefer to buy products from the physical stores or online platform", the percentages were divided as follows: 57.6% of answers were prefer physical stores, and 42.4% said they prefer online platform to make the purchase.

7. Another question in the questionnaire refers to the online feedback trust of the respondents and if they bought the products of a company posted/recommended on their social media page

WHAT IS YOUR TRUST LEVEL ON PEER CUSTOMERS FEEDBACK AND REVIEWS ABOUT PRODUCTS?

118 responses

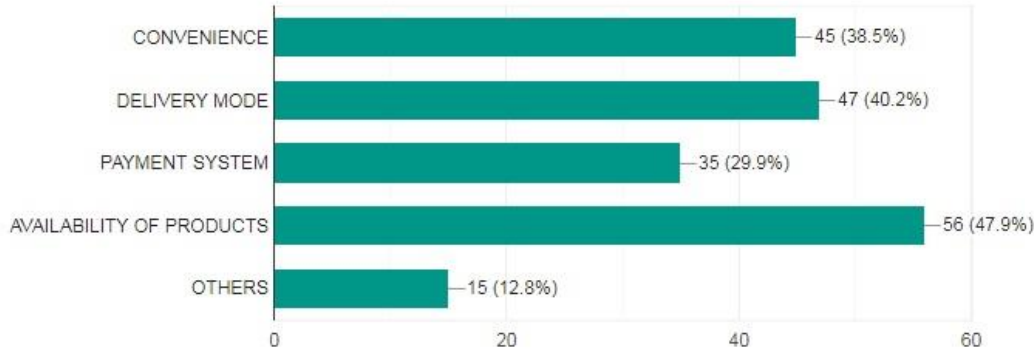


Respondents were asked to rate their trust level on feedback given by peer customer groups about products, 1 being highly trusted and 5 being highly distrust. 11(9.5%) of respondents are highly trusting the feedbacks given by the customers where as 7(6%) of the respondents highly distrust feedbacks given on online platforms.

8. Respondents were requested to say the reason why they prefer online platform to purchase the products.

OUT OF THE GIVEN LIST, WHAT COULD BE YOUR DRIVING FORCE TO PURCHASE ONLINE?

118 responses

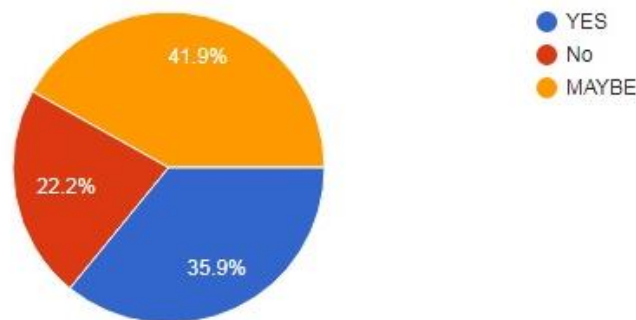


45(38.5%) of respondents prefer online purchase because of the convenience, for delivery mode 47(40.2%) , and 35(29.9%) of prefer because of payment system, for availability of products 56(47.9%) of respondents prefer online purchase, where as 15(12.8%) prefer online purchase for some other reasons.

9. Last question is asked to check if respondents provide information to others on online platform about their experiences after using the products.

DO YOU SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES AND FEEDBACK OF PRODUCTS ONLINE?

118 responses



Out of 118 respondents 35.9% answered that they are going to share their experience and feedback of products online, 22.2% are not going to share their experience and 41.9% of the respondents are not sure if they are going to provide feedback or not.

CONCLUSION:

After the analysis of the data collected from the 118 subjects, we can conclude the fact that most consumers who buy online are in fact young, between 15-25 years. From this research we could do a consumer profile of the people who buy online in Bengaluru region.

The consumers that usually buy from online are young, most of them are males and has at least an account on social media. Before purchasing a product on online platform they usually inform themselves from forums, company's websites, Facebook accounts or peer reviews.

Most consumers prefer online transactions because of the reasons like, availability of resources 47.9% . So it is suggested for the companies who operate Most consumers are accepting information posted by other clients who had bought the same product which they wish to buy.

To conclude, we can say that social media marketing plays a vital role in influencing the behavior of consumers and attracting the customers to make purchase in virtual environment. If we look from a company's point of view, it should successfully back track mixed marketing policies in order to boost sales. By improving the details of the product or by developing the concept of a total product, the company strengthens the relationship between potential buyers who constantly follow social media.

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