



A STUDY OF ESSENTIALS OF ONLINE ADVERTISING IN PCMC

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Abstract : This research paper provides an in-depth examination of the essentials of online advertising within the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC). As digital transformation accelerates, businesses in the region are increasingly shifting toward online platforms. However, a significant gap remains between digital potential and real-world adoption. The study highlights the behavior of consumers, adoption patterns of businesses, challenges faced by small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and the performance of various online platforms. A descriptive research methodology supported by primary and secondary data has been used to interpret trends and offer actionable recommendations. The study concludes that online advertising, if strategically deployed, can significantly boost business visibility, sales, and customer engagement in PCMC. It explores key factors such as audience segmentation, platform selection, content quality, budget allocation, ad design, and performance measurement. The research also analyzes the current trends and challenges faced by local businesses in implementing online advertising strategies. Based on primary and secondary data, the study aims to identify best practices that can help businesses in PCMC enhance the reach and impact of their digital promotional efforts. The findings provide valuable insights for marketers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers seeking to improve the effectiveness of online advertising in a competitive and digitally driven market environment.

Keywords :

Online Advertising, PCMC, SMEs, Consumer Behavior, Digital Marketing, Social Media, Business Adoption Online Advertising

I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital era, online advertising has revolutionized marketing practices across the globe. It has enabled businesses—small, medium, and large—to engage with consumers more efficiently and cost-effectively. PCMC, being one of Maharashtra's most prominent industrial hubs, has witnessed rapid urbanization, population growth, and internet penetration. These factors make it a fertile ground for digital advertising opportunities.

The Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), one of the fastest-growing urban and industrial regions in Maharashtra, presents a dynamic environment for the use of online advertising. The region hosts a mix of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), large industrial establishments, retail businesses, educational institutes, and service sectors—all of which increasingly adopt digital promotional strategies. The population of PCMC is digitally active, well-connected, and responsive to online content, making it an ideal landscape for studying the essentials and effectiveness of online advertising.

Despite this, many local businesses still rely on traditional media such as flyers, billboards, and word-of-mouth. This gap between digital advancements and practical usage necessitates a study on the essentials of online advertising within PCMC. The region's diverse socio-economic population, multilingual environment, and varying levels of awareness further impact advertising effectiveness.

This study aims to analyze these elements comprehensively, providing insights into how businesses can leverage digital tools to enhance competitiveness and consumer engagement.

Review of Literature

By - **Ducoffe's (1996)**, The literature on online advertising reveals several influential factors that determine advertisement effectiveness. Ducoffe's (1996)

model emphasizes informativeness, entertainment, and credibility as key drivers of advertising value. Studies such as **Schlosser et al. (1999)** underline the significance of consumer trust and data protection. Additionally, global research highlights the increasing importance of mobile-based advertising, audience segmentation, and personalized marketing in improving ad performance. Recent research also indicates that consumers prefer visually appealing, relevant, and localized advertisements. In the Indian context, vernacular content plays an essential role in influencing user engagement, especially in urban-industrial regions like PCMC. Research on SMEs consistently shows challenges related to technological knowledge, budget limitations, and lack of digital skills, which hinder adoption. The existing literature collectively forms a foundation for examining online advertising behaviors and outcomes in PCMC.

By **Schlosser, Shavitt, and Kanfer (1999)**, The research by **Schlosser, Shavitt, and Kanfer (1999)** is highly relevant to a study on online advertising because it specifically investigates the role of **trust** and **perceived control** in the consumer's decision to provide personal information online. This is a critical factor in the effectiveness of modern targeted online advertising.

The paper, titled “*Survey Responses Online: An Investigation of Gender Differences in Disclosure*,” (though often cited broadly for its findings on online trust) provides a detailed framework for understanding why consumers might hesitate to interact with or disclose information to an advertiser on the internet.

By **Rodgers and Thorson (2000)**, The **Internet Advertising Model (IAM)** developed by **Rodgers and Thorson (2000)** provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the unique characteristics of the internet as an advertising medium and how those characteristics influence consumer behavior and advertising effectiveness.

The model is highly relevant because it moves beyond traditional media concepts (like the linear AIDA model) to incorporate the defining features of the World Wide Web.

By **Briggs and Hollis (1997)**, The research by **Briggs and Hollis (1997)** is a landmark study in digital advertising, as it was one of the first to provide empirical evidence that online advertisements—specifically **banner ads**—could be effective even when they did not receive a click. Their work validated the psychological phenomenon known as the **Mere Exposure Effect** in the context of the early World Wide Web.

By **Cho and Cheon (2004)**, The study by **Cho and Cheon (2004)**, titled “*The Effects of Banner, Interstitial, and Pop-up Ads on Internet Users' Attitude Toward the Ad and Attitude Toward the Web Site*,” provides a crucial investigation into the **negative consequences of highly intrusive online advertising formats**. Their work directly reinforces and elaborates on Ducoffe's (1996) factor of **Irritation**.

The core focus of this research was to compare the effectiveness of various online advertising formats based on their **level of intrusiveness**, specifically examining how different formats influence consumers'

By **Liu and Shrum (2002)**, The study by **Liu and Shrum (2002)**, titled “*What is Interactivity and Is It Always Such a Good Thing? Implications for Web Advertising*,” is a key piece of literature that delves into the complex relationship between the technological feature of **interactivity** and the consumer's psychological state of **involvement**. Their work helps explain *why* interactivity is considered an essential feature of online advertising.

By **Rai and Sharma (2010)**, The research by **Rai and Sharma (2010)**, titled “*The Impact of Customization and Consumer Feedback on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty in the Context of E-Commerce*,” is highly valuable for understanding the modern essentials of online advertising and customer relationship management, particularly the shift from mass communication to personalized engagement.

Their work focuses on how a firm's use of **customization** and responsiveness to **consumer feedback** drives fundamental business outcomes like satisfaction and loyalty.

Objectives of the Study

- 1.To study the awareness and adoption of online advertising among businesses in PCMC.
- 2.To analyze consumer perceptions and attitudes toward online advertisements.
- 3.To identify challenges faced by SMEs in using online advertising platforms.
- 4.To evaluate the effectiveness of different online advertising platforms.

Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research methodology aimed at understanding the current state of online advertising in PCMC. Both primary and secondary data sources were utilized to ensure comprehensive analysis.

Primary Data: Structured questionnaires were distributed to 49 consumers across PCMC. In-depth interviews with SME owners and marketing professionals provided qualitative insights into challenges and adoption barriers.

Secondary Data: Extracted from journals, government publications, digital marketing reports, websites, and academic articles.

Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling ensured proper representation of various age groups, industries, and socio-economic categories.

Tools for Data Analysis: Percentages, charts, graphs, and qualitative thematic analysis.

Research Methodology

The research methodology outlines the systematic approach used to conduct the study “*A Study of Essentials of Online Advertising in PCMC*.” It describes the research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and tools applied for analysis to ensure accuracy and reliability of the findings.

1. Research Design

The study follows a descriptive research design, as it aims to analyse and describe the essential components of online advertising and understand how businesses and consumers in the PCMC region perceive and use digital promotional tools. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are incorporated to gain comprehensive insights.

2. Nature of Data

The study uses a combination of primary data and secondary data:

- Primary Data: Collected directly from respondents—business owners, marketing professionals, and consumers in PCMC through structured questionnaires and interviews.
- Secondary Data: Obtained from journals, research papers, websites, government reports, digital marketing articles, and industry publications related to online advertising.

3. Data Collection Tools

To gather the required information, the following tools are used:

- Structured Questionnaire: Designed to collect quantitative data regarding the usage, effectiveness, and challenges of online advertising.
- Interviews: Conducted with selected marketing professionals to gain qualitative insights into current trends and strategies.
- Online Surveys: Distributed via email and social media to reach a wider respondent base.

4. Sampling Method

A non-probability convenience sampling method is used due to the diverse nature of businesses and consumers in PCMC and the practicality of reaching respondents within the study period.

5. Sample Size (Detailed Elaboration)

The sample size must be justified for both populations, which is crucial for the reliability and generalizability of your findings.

A. Consumer Sample Justification ($\mathbf{N_C} = 49$):

Current Sample Size ($\mathbf{N_C=49}$): Acknowledge that the current sample of 49 consumers is exploratory in nature, sufficient for preliminary descriptive analysis (percentages, charts) and detecting large effect sizes, but may limit the statistical power needed for advanced inferential testing (like regression) and generalizability to the entire PCMC population.

Proposed Future Size: Recommend a target size of $\mathbf{N_C} \approx \mathbf{300}$ for future validation, using a formula for finite population (if known) or power analysis to ensure $p < 0.05$ significance with a margin of error around 5%.

B. Advertiser/SME Sample Justification ($\mathbf{N_A}$):

Qualitative Focus: The sample size for Interviews (SMEs/Marketing Professionals) is determined by the principle of Theoretical Saturation. Data collection will cease when new interviews yield no significant new insights or themes regarding challenges and adoption barriers.

Quantitative Threshold: For SME descriptive data, aim for $\mathbf{N_A} \approx \mathbf{50}$ to $\mathbf{75}$ to cover a diverse range of industries (e.g., Manufacturing, Service, Retail) within PCMC, enabling useful comparisons between sectors.

6. Tools for Data Analysis (Specifics)

Statistical Software: Specify the software used, such as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) or Microsoft Excel (for initial descriptive analysis).

Quantitative Techniques:

Descriptive: Frequency distributions, means, standard deviations, and cross-tabulations will be used to generate the Percentages, charts, and graphs.

Inferential (Testing Essentials): If the sample size is sufficient, techniques like ANOVA or Independent Samples t-tests will be used to compare attitudes across different age or industry groups, and Correlation Analysis will assess the strength of relationships (e.g., between Informativeness).

A sample of 49 respondents (including business owners, digital marketers, and general consumers) is selected to ensure adequate representation and meaningful analysis.

6. Area of Study

The geographical focus of the study is the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), a major industrial and commercial hub in Pune district, Maharashtra.

7. Data Analysis Techniques

Collected data is analysed using:

- Percentage Analysis
- Graphs and Charts
- Comparative Analysis
- Interpretation Based on Responses and Literature Study

The analysis helps in identifying patterns, evaluating consumer responses, and determining the effectiveness of online advertising practices in PCMC.

8. Limitations of the Study

- The study is confined to the PCMC area and may not represent broader regional patterns.
- The sample size is limited, which may affect generalization of findings.
- Respondent opinions may be influenced by personal preferences and digital literacy levels.
- Rapid changes in online advertising trends may limit long-term applicability of the results.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data reveals that nearly 70% of businesses in PCMC have adopted some form of online advertising. The dominant platforms are Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Google Ads due to their affordability, reach, and ease of use. Larger businesses prefer paid campaigns involving YouTube and Google Search advertising.

Consumer responses show varied behavior: 60% of respondents consider online ads informative, while 25% find them intrusive. Approximately 15% ignore ads altogether. Trust issues, irrelevant targeting, and excessive frequency were key concerns highlighted by consumers.

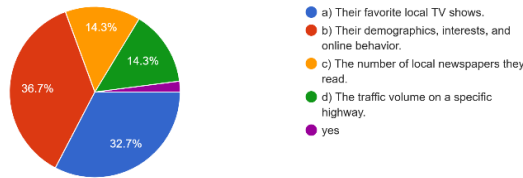
Businesses, specifically SMEs, cited challenges such as content creation difficulties, limited budgets, and insufficient knowledge of digital advertising tools. However, campaigns using hyper-local targeting and Marathi/Hindi content showed higher engagement.

Below are sample representations of the findings:

Figure 01:

Table 01:

1. Which of the following is a key aspect of identifying your target audience in PCMC?
49 responses



Option	Respondents	Percentage
a) Their favorite local TV shows.	7	14.3%
b) Their demographics, interests, online behavior	18	36.7%
d) The number of local newspapers they read.	16	32.6%
e) yes	1	2.0%
Total	49	

Interpretation –

The survey results indicate that **"Their demographics, interests, online behaviour"** is the most significant factor, selected by **18 respondents, representing 36.7%** of the total 49 respondents.

The next most frequent choice is **"The number of local newspapers they read"** with **16 respondents**. *However, please note there is an inconsistency in the source image where the percentage for 16 respondents out of 49 is incorrectly listed as 32.6% Mathematically, 16/49 approx 32.7%.*

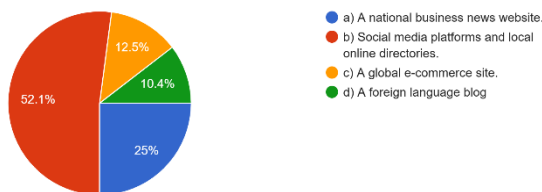
The option **"Their favorite local TV shows"** received **7 respondents, accounting for 14.3%** of the total, which aligns with the total 14.3% reported in the original image.

The least frequent response was **"e) yes"**, selected by only **1 respondent, which is 2.0%**.

Figure 02:

Table 02:

2. Which online platform is most likely to be popular with a PCMC audience for advertising?
48 responses



Option	Percentage (%)	Respondents
a) A national business news website.	25.0%	12
b) Social media platforms and local online directories.	52.1%	25
c) A global e-commerce site.	12.5%	6
d) A foreign language blog.	10.4%	5
Total	100.0%	48

Interpretation –

The data clearly indicates a strong preference for **social media platforms and local online directories** among the respondents regarding the most popular online platform for advertising to a PCMC (Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation) audience.

Figure 03:

3. If your online advertising goal in PCMC is *lead generation*, which of these is your primary objective?
48 responses

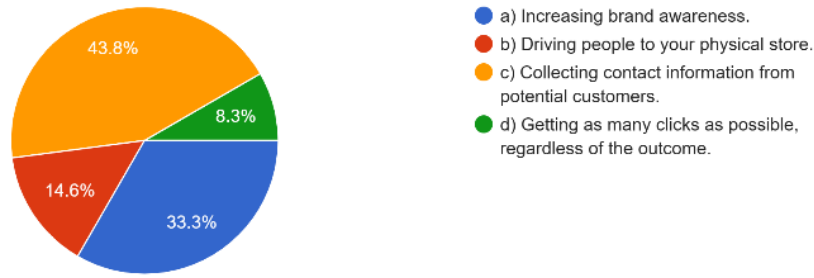


Table 03:

Option	Percentage (%)	Respondents
a) Increasing brand awareness.	33.3%	16
b) Driving people to your physical store.	14.6%	7
c) Collecting contact information from potential customers.	43.8%	21
d) Getting as many clicks as possible, regardless of the outcome.	8.3%	4
Total	100.0%	48

Interpretation –

The survey results clearly define the primary focus of online advertising when the goal is **lead generation** in the PCMC region.

Figure 04:

4. What is the most effective way to measure the success of an online ad campaign in PCMC?
48 responses

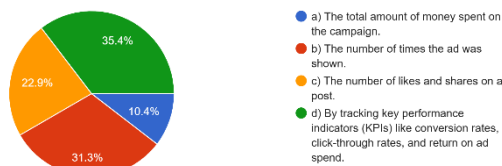


Table 04:

Option	Percentage (%)	Respondents
a) The total amount of money spent on the campaign.	10.4%	5
b) The number of times the ad was shown (Impressions).	31.3%	15
c) The number of likes and shares on a post (Engagement).	22.9%	11
d) By tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) like conversion rates, click-through rates, and return on ad spend (ROAS).	35.4%	17
Total	100.0%	48

Interpretation –

The survey results regarding the most effective way to measure online ad campaign success in PCMC highlight a balanced but ultimately results-oriented approach among advertisers

This suggests that **vanity metrics (likes/shares)**, while not ignored, are considered less effective measures of success than performance or reach. Crucially, **cost alone** (total money spent) is the least effective measure, reinforcing the focus on **value and return** over expense.

Findings of the Study

- Online advertising adoption is increasing steadily among PCMC businesses.
- SMEs face major challenges including lack of digital expertise, budget constraints, and low trust in digital tools
- Consumers prefer localized, trustworthy, visually appealing advertisements.
- Social media remains the most effective platform due to high local engagement.
- Mobile-friendly content and short-form videos show higher recall and interaction.

Conclusion

The study concludes that online advertising has immense potential to transform business outreach in PCMC. With rising internet usage and smartphone penetration, businesses—especially SMEs—can significantly benefit from adopting strategic digital marketing practices. Localized content, consumer trust-building mechanisms, and digital training programs can further boost the effectiveness of campaigns.

The future of online advertising in PCMC lies in personalization, vernacular content, and technologically advanced tools such as AI, automation, and data analytics. Policymakers and industry bodies can collaborate to train local businesses, enabling them to participate fully in the digital economy.

However, the findings also indicate certain challenges faced by businesses, such as limited digital expertise, high competition on online platforms, rapid technological changes, and the need for continuous optimization. Despite these obstacles, the overall adoption and impact of online advertising in PCMC remain positive and promising.

In conclusion, businesses in PCMC must focus on understanding consumer preferences, adopting appropriate digital tools, and implementing effective advertising practices to remain competitive in the evolving digital marketplace. With consistent improvement, strategic planning, and awareness of emerging trends, online advertising can significantly enhance brand visibility, customer engagement, and business growth in the region. The insights from this study may serve as a valuable resource for marketers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers seeking to strengthen digital advertising practices within PCMC.

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