



# DIGITAL MARKETING TRENDS AND IKS: IMPACT OF DIGITAL ADS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN INDIA

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## Abstract

This research paper reviews, the evolving landscape of digital marketing in India and its impact on consumer buying behaviour through the perspective of the Indian knowledge system (IKS). With India's rapid digital transformation and internet penetration, reaching over eight 50 million users, digital advertising has become a crucial factor in shaping consumer decisions. This study explores current digital marketing trends and analyses how digital advertisements influence purchasing patterns and integrates traditional Indian knowledge system with modern marketing practises. The research reveals that personalised content, social media influence arch, key drivers of consumer engagement while cultural values, rooted in IKS continue to shape consumer preferences and trust building mechanisms in the digital marketplace.

**Keywords:** digital marketing, consumer buying behaviour, Indian knowledge system (IKS), social media marketing.

## Introduction

The digital revolution has radically transformed the marketing landscape in India. From a majority off-line market, India has emerged as one of the world's fastest growing digital economies. The convergence of affordable smart phones in expensive data plans and government initiatives like digital India has enhanced internet adoption across urban and rural areas. This digital transformation has created never seen before opportunities for businesses to reach consumers through various digital advertising channels.

The Indian knowledge system (IKS), in grained in centuries of traditional wisdom, emphasises value such as trust, community relationship, word of mouth, recommendation, and Holistic decision making. Understanding how these traditional values connect with modern digital marketing practices is crucial for business is seeking effectively engage Indian consumers.

## Literature Review

- Arora, Manisha (2025)- Here the investigation was conducted and the role of digital influence especially that the credibility which influence the purchase decision of millennials and generation Z consumers in India. This is study has mixed method as its research design and structure survey of 500 respondents was conducted, the tool used over here is partial least square structural equation modelling for analysing the complex data, here the variables are consumer engagement and purchase intention. The finding concluded that the influencers play a major role in the product discovery and recommendation despite strong engagement with influencer content the respondent describe a significant preference for completing the purchase which is established on e-commerce platform suggest Amazon and Flipkart and also suggest a dual channel design making process. The study also highlights the psychological influence of FOMO which significantly influence the consumer action and engagement.
- Rana, Pooja and Khanna Kiran (2025)- This study explored the advertisement management, communication, digital marketing, media and mass communication. The study concluded that digital

advertising and its influence on consumer buying behaviour concerning buying digital courses is significant; the study also explored the field of digital advertising and the courses which are provided digitally, the study also discovered the current trends in the area of digital advertising in the India.

- V, Selvam (2025)- Study was conducted to explore the buying behaviour of the consumers towards smartphone and how this digital marketing communication have impacted the consumer in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Here the demographic variables are studied and it is observed that consumer knowledge on digital marketing communication is significant and it was also found that demographic profile and impact on DMC on smartphone purchase is also significant, here it was also concluded that the impact of demographic profile on buying decision and customer patronage is also significant, and there is a significant relationship between DMC buying decision of consumers and customer patronage.
- V, Gagana (2024)- Here the descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the various internet marketing strategy which is adopted by online web portals and also explore the factors which influence the consumer buying behaviour and internet marketing of selected web portals and it was concluded there is a significant impact of demographic variables on influencing consumer buying behaviour and internet marketing of selected web portals, it was also concluded that there is a significant impact of consumer buying behaviour through internet marketing of selected web portals and here Anova analysis is used for analysis of the data for exploring the effective internet marketing strategy for consumer satisfaction.
- Singh, R., & Mehta, P. (2024)- This study examined how different digital advertising formats—such as targeted ads, social media campaigns, and short-form video ads—shape consumer purchase intentions among urban millennials in India. Using a quantitative research design, the authors surveyed 650 respondents across Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, and Hyderabad. The analysis employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to measure relationships between variables such as ad credibility, perceived relevance, digital trust, and purchase intention. The study found that targeted ads and video-based content had the highest influence on consumer recall and product consideration. Respondents showed greater trust toward ads displayed on established platforms (YouTube, Instagram, Amazon Ads). A major finding was that Indian consumers prefer cross-verification—they watch ads on social media but complete purchases only after checking reviews on e-commerce websites. The research concludes that the synergy between social media ads and marketplace reviews plays a decisive role in shaping the final buying decision.
- Rao & Bansal (2023)- his investigation focused on Gen Z consumers from tier-II Indian cities such as Indore, Jaipur, Surat, and Lucknow. The researchers used a mixed-method approach, combining focus group interviews (n = 30) with a survey of 520 respondents. Data was evaluated using PLS-SEM, which revealed that peer validation and influencer authenticity significantly impact ad effectiveness among Gen Z in smaller cities. The study found a strong behavioural pattern associated with FOMO and impulse buying, particularly for fashion, skincare, and electronic gadgets. Despite consuming most content on Instagram and YouTube, respondents preferred making purchases through discount-driven platforms like Flipkart, Ajio, and Myntra. The study concludes that digital influence among Gen Z is emotion-driven, heavily shaped by social proof, product reviews, and trending content.

## Research objectives

This research paper aims to:

1. Identify and examine current digital marketing trends in India
2. Study the impact of digital advertisements on consumer buying behaviour
3. Explore the integration of Indian knowledge system principles in digital marketing strategies.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of various digital advertising channels.
5. Provide insights for marketers targeting Indian consumers.

## Significance of the study

Understanding the inter-relation between digital marketing and consumer buying behaviour in the Indian perspective is essential for both domestic and international businesses.

India's unique demographic diversity, cultural richness, and wearing levels of digital retro create a complex marketplace where traditional wisdom and modern technology exist together.

This research provides valuable insight for developing culturally, relevant and effective digital marketing strategies.

## Research methodology

### Research design

This study adopts descriptive design to provide an in-depth understanding of digital marketing impact on consumer behaviour in India.

### Result and Discussion

Based on Objective 1: Identify and examine current digital marketing trends in India

#### Current digital marketing trends in India

India is primarily a mobile first market with over 95% of internet user using the web through smartphones. This has led to several key trends:

**Short form video content:** platforms like Instagram reels, YouTube shorts, have promoted bite-size video content. Brands are creating engaging 50–60/2nd videos that capture attention quickly and deliver messages efficiently.

**Mobile commerce optimisation:** e-commerce platforms and brands are investing heavily in mobile app development, ensuring seamless shopping experience on smaller screens with features like one click, payments, voice, searches, and virtual reality.

**Influencer and social commerce:** social media influencer have become powerful marketing channels like micro and Nano influencers are increasingly collaborating with smaller influencers who have higher engagement rates and more authentic connection with their audiences. Live streaming shopping experience where influencers showcase products in real time and viewers can purchase them. Instantly have also gained significant traction. Brands encourage customers to create a share content building trust through authentic recommendations.

#### **Personalisation and AI-driven marketing:**

Artificial intelligence and machine learning are enabling highly personalised marketing.

They are analysing users' behaviour, their search history and past purchases to deliver relevant ads and product recommendations. AI powered jet boards provide instant customer services, product recommendation and purchasing assistance in multiple languages. Brands use AI to predict consumer needs and preferences, enabling proactive marketing strategies.

Based on Objective 2: Study the impact of digital advertisements on consumer buying behaviour

#### Impact of digital advertising on consumer buying behaviour

##### **Awareness and discovery stage**

Digital advertising plays a crucial role in introducing consumer to new brands and their products:

**Increased brand awareness:** digital ads expose consumers to brands they might not encounter with through traditional channels. Social media algorithm surface is relevant brand based on user interactions and interest.

**Product discovery:** consumer Discover products through targeted ads, influencer recommendation, and sponsored content that often lead to unplanned purchase.

**Educational content:** informative ads and content marketing help consumer understand product, benefits, features and its uses, particularly important in categories like technology, healthcare, financial services, and many more.

##### **Research and evaluation stage**

Digital channels have transformed how Indian consumer research product:

**Multichannel research:** consumer consult multiple Digital sources like search engine, social media brand websites review sites before making any decisions

**Peer influence:** reviews rating and social media recommendation significantly impact evaluation. A study by Nielsen indicates that 83% of Indian consumer trust recommendation from their friends and family and 66% of the consumers trust online reviews.

**Comparison shopping:** digital platforms enable easy price and feature comparison between different brand brands, making consumer more informed and price sensitive for their product.

**Purchase decision stage**

Digital advertising directly influences purchase decision through several mechanisms:

Convenience: one click purchasing saved payment, information, and home delivery, reduce friction in the buying processes of the consumer

Promotional triggers: Limited time offers/sales and exclusive discounts, create urgency and stimulate immediate purchase.

Social proof: display of review ratings, best seller, badges, leverages mentality to encourage purchases

Personalised recommendations: AI driven product suggestion based on browsing history increases order volume

**Post purchase behaviour**

Digital engagement extends beyond the transaction:

Customer retention: email marketing, push notifications, and ads, encourages repeat purchases, and brand loyalty and goodwill

Community building: brands create online committee where customer share their experiences provide feedbacks of their products and become brand advocates of that product.

User generated content: customers who share their purchases on social media, become unpaid brand ambassador of that product and influencing others for buying that.

Based on Objective 3: Explore the integration of Indian knowledge system principles in digital marketing strategies.

**Integration of Indian knowledge system and digital marketing****Trust building in the digital age**

Traditional Indian commerce relied heavily on personal relationship and trust, developing over time, digital marketing strategies that succeed in India incorporated with this trust elements:

Transparency and authenticity: brands that openly share their value sourcing practises and customer testimonials build credibility for their consumers and Indian consumer are sceptical of claims and appreciate honest communication.

Long-term engagement: rather than focusing solely on transaction, successful brands invest in ongoing relationship with their consumer through valuable content and customer services and commune engagement.

**Community centric marketing**

The Indian concept of collective decision-making influences digital marketing approaches:

referral programmes: customers to refer friends and family tabs into strong social networks and cultural practises of sharing their recommendation

Grouping buying in social commerce: platforms, enabling group purchases, or social sharing of these aligned with communal approaches to shopping that product

Family oriented messaging: ads that depict family values and multigenerational households, and collective benefits resonate more strongly than individualistic messaging.

**Holistic value proposition**

Indian consumers evaluate brands create compelling stories that connect products to consumer aspirations, their culture, values, and life moments

Festival and cultural marketing: campaign tied to festivals like Diwali, Holi or their regional celebrations, generate higher engagement purchases, logically considering factors beyond prices.

Quality and durability: long-term value and product longevity are often prioritised over lowest price.

Service and support: post purchase services warranty guarantee, and customer support influence buying decision significantly.

Brand reputation: established brand with positive reputation have advantage through this evolving with younger digital native. Consumers were more willing to try new and different brands.

Based on Objective 4: Evaluate the effectiveness of various digital advertising channels

**Digital advertising channels in their impact****Social media advertising**

Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, all these emerging platforms, are significantly influencing brands, awareness and consideration. Visual platforms like Instagram Drive, impulse purchases, particularly in fashion and beauty industry enhance his credibility.

**Search engine marketing**

Platforms like Google ads, Bing ads are capturing high intent, users actively searching for products or solutions.

Local search ads, dry food traffic to physical stores. Search ads influence 70–80% of consumer purchases decision by appearing at critical research stages.

**Video marketing**

Platforms like YouTube streaming services, connected TV are increasing product, understanding and reduces purchase. Anxiety demonstrating videos and tutorials are particularly confidential for complex, product, storytelling, video ads, creating deeper, Brand connections.

**E-commerce platform, advertising**

Platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, Meesho are directly influencing purchase decisions at the point of sale, sponsored product, listing increase visibility, in competitive marketplace, festivals in sale-based campaign Drive significant transaction volumes.

Based on Objective 5: Provide insights for marketers targeting Indian consumers

**Recommendations for marketers**

Adapt a mobile first approach: Design all digital experiences, primarily for mobile devices and consideration for different screen sizes, internet speed and other device capabilities.

Invest in regional languages: create authentic content in different Indian languages, not just only transaction but to connect with diverse audience.

Build trust: implement transparent policies and rules, showcase customer testimonials, provide customer service and engage consistently to build long-term trust.

Integrate online and offline: create seamless experiences across digital and physical touch point significantly important in India where many consumer research online and off-line.

Respect diversity: recognise and celebrate Indian regional languages, linguistic and different cultural diversity in marketing campaigns.

Align with festivals and different occasions: plan major campaigns around important festivals, and occasions, and events when consumers spending increases significantly.

Emphasise on family and community: frame, product benefits in terms of family, welfare and committee engagement rather than purely individual benefit.

**Conclusion**

Digital marketing has significantly transformed consumer buying behaviour in India, creating opportunities for brand to engage with diverse and different audiences across the country. Rapidly digital transformation driven by affordable internet axis, smartphone penetration and changing consumer taste and preferences has made digital advertising and essential component of different marketing strategies.

This research demonstrate that successful digital marketing India requires more than only adapting global best practises, but less is a deep understanding of Indian consumer psychology and their cultural values and their knowledge systems. The Indian knowledge system with its emphasising on trust, community storytelling and overall holistic evaluation provide a valuable and important framework that enhance digital marketing efficiency effectiveness when thoughtfully integrated.

Key findings include mobile first content is essential for reaching India's diverse population and social media proof and community influence remain powerful for purchasing their decision. Trust building through transparency, customer service and authentic engagement is critical significantly impact. Consumer responses to digital advertising and modern technology creates more marketing as India continues its digital journey. Different marketers must balance innovation and cultural values and its sensitivity efficiency with relationship building and data driven strategies with human approaches. The future of digital marketing India lies in creating genuine and authentic value driven connection that honour a different tradition, their wisdom and will leverage cutting edge technology.

Brands that will successfully navigate this landscape with respecting India's cultural heritage while embarrassing with digital innovations that that is happening, will build trust and relationship with Indian consumers and achieve sustainable growth in world, most dynamic markets.

**Challenges in digital marketing to Indian consumers**

**Digital divide-** Despite rapid growth, majorly disparities exist in digital access and literacy:

Infrastructure gaps: rural and remote area, still face, connectivity, and other issues

Digital literacy: many new internet users like family with online shopping and their payment system and mostly security.

Device limitations: budget smartphones with limited storage and slow processing power constraint, user experiences.

**Trust and security concerns-** Indian consumer express concerns about:

Payment security: fear of fraud and data breach limits transaction.

Product quality: uncertainty about receiving genuine and authentic product as advertised.

Privacy: growing awareness of data collection and uses raises privacy concern among consumers.

## Future trends and predictions

### Advanced technologies

Artificial intelligence: more AI will enable hyper personalisation predictive marketing in automated customer services

Augmented and virtual reality: augmented and virtual reality will transform product, demonstration, shopping, experience, and brand interactions

Voice commerce: voice, assistant became more sophisticated and be used in regional languages. Voice based shopping will grow.

### Evolving consumer expectation

Privacy, first marketing: consumers will demand greater control over their data and will push brands towards privacy, respecting marketing practises among them.

Sustainability and social response towards product: younger consumer increasingly prefer brands with demonstrated social and environmental commitments for their product.

Seamless experiences: integration between online channels and off-line channels will become more essential.

### Integration of IKS principles

Future marketing strategy will likely be:

Revive traditional practises:

Digital tools, enabling modern version of traditional marketing practices like buying direct sales in local marketplace, models, artisans will increase

Emphasise value-based marketing: deeper integration of Indian values and ethos around family community and overall Holistic well-being in brand positioning.

Hybrid approaches: blinding digital efficiency with traditional relationship building practises.

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