The Social Media in Marketing

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Abstract: Social Media in Marketing refers to the strategic use of social networking platforms as powerful tools for promoting and enhancing a brand's visibility, engagement, and overall marketing objectives. This article is about the advantages of utilizing social media in marketing.

Keywords: social media, social networks, mass media, media space, linear communication, network communication, network interaction, network community.

SMM (Social Media Marketing) is a modern method of advertising goods and services, using social platforms and other media channels as a market. Today this is a rapidly developing direction in the market, but it has managed to prove its productivity. SMM helps to introduce consumers to a brand, advertise and promote their products/services, directly contact the target audience, identify their needs and receive feedback. Social platforms make the task of PR managers much easier, allowing them to quickly respond to customer dissatisfaction, showing people the human face of the company. In addition, they allow them to disseminate information about interesting events taking place in the company, thereby allowing the audience not only to get acquainted with the brand, but also to observe the activities of the company. [1,2,3,4]

Social media marketing stands out as the most accessible means to connect with a broad audience. Presently, an impressive 3.8 billion individuals, equivalent to half the global population, actively engage in social media. Furthermore, this figure is consistently on the rise, witnessing a 9.2% growth in users since 2019, with its widespread usage and remarkable versatility, social media emerges as one of the most potent and cost-effective channels for marketing your business in the contemporary landscape. Below, we outline some of the specific advantages of leveraging social media for marketing purposes:

➤ *Infuse a human touch into your business:* Social media provides a platform for transforming your business into an engaged participant within your market. Through your profile, posts, and interactions with users, you cultivate an approachable persona that resonates with your audience, fostering familiarity, connection, and ultimately, trust.

➤ *Generate website traffic:* Through the link in your profile, blog post shares in your content, and strategically placed ads, social media emerges as a primary channel for boosting traffic to your website. This traffic provides valuable opportunities to convert visitors into customers. Additionally, social signals serve as an indirect factor contributing to SEO.

➤ *Drive lead generation and customer acquisition:* Social media platforms offer direct avenues for lead generation and conversions. Features such as Instagram/Facebook shops, direct

messaging, call-to-action buttons on profiles, and appointment booking capabilities empower businesses to seamlessly attract and convert leads into customers.

- *Elevate brand awareness:* The visual-centric nature of social media platforms provides a powerful avenue for constructing and disseminating your visual identity to expansive audiences, thereby enhancing brand awareness. A strengthened brand presence contributes to improved outcomes across all your other marketing campaigns.

- *Foster relationships:* These platforms create opportunities for both direct and indirect communication with your followers, enabling you to network, receive feedback, facilitate discussions, and establish direct connections with individuals.

In support of the aforementioned benefits, let's delve into compelling social media marketing statistics that underscore its formidable impact:

- The average US adult spends 2.25 hours on social media every day.

- Over 70% of people who have a positive experience with a business on social media will recommend that business to their networks.

- Facebook users click on 12 Facebook ads on average every month.

- 81% of people use Instagram to research products and services.

- Nearly 80% of Twitter users feel more positive about a business when they get a response to their tweet.

- 4 out of 5 people on LinkedIn drive business decisions.

- 46% of TikTok users engage in the app without any other distractions.

While numerous individuals have transitioned to alternative social media platforms, Facebook remains a formidable player with a substantial 2.85 billion active monthly users, as reported by Statista. When considering the entire Facebook family of social media platforms, encompassing Instagram, WhatsApp, and Messenger, this figure expands to an impressive 3.51 billion monthly users. Looking ahead, projections indicate that the global count of social media users is anticipated to reach 3.96 billion by 2022. Notably, as of 2021, a significant 82% of the United States population boasts a social networking profile.

These statistics underscore the imperative for brands to strategically invest in social media marketing. Social media serves as a dynamic channel where consumers freely express their sentiments about a brand's products and services. It provides an invaluable platform to connect with customers on their terms, in a space where they feel at ease and regularly spend their time. According to a Global Web Index report covering January to March of 2020, consumers spent an average of 2 hours and 22 minutes daily on social networks and associated messaging apps. Significantly, the report highlighted that up to 50% of social media users leverage these platforms for researching products and services.

Joe Sinkwitz, CEO of Intellifluence, said that social media has finally realized the potential that has been promised since the first social networks debuted. There are now rich communities of individuals that self-segment into audiences, with analytics attributed to various actions. At Intellifluence we dog food everything we do, so a significant portion of our traffic comes from having our own community of influencers share their experiences on Facebook in order to engage that audience, on Twitter to expand reach, on LinkedIn to appeal to professionals, and so much more. [5,6,7]

A plethora of widely-used social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, WeChat, Tumblr, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, Twitch, and VK, provide diverse avenues for engagement. Additionally, platforms like Reddit and YouTube, while not traditional social networks, remain crucial for social media marketers. Brands must grasp a fundamental

concept: each social media platform is unique, necessitating tailored content creation. What resonates on one platform may not suit another, highlighting the importance of strategic adaptation for effective brand communication.

Furthermore, social media marketing encompasses various facets worthy of exploration. Influencer marketing stands out as a key element within this domain, constituting one prong, while another significant aspect involves paid social strategies. In some cases they can work interchangeably; for instance, a brand could commission an influencer piece on Facebook and then if that influencer exists in Facebook's creator system, the brand could amplify the post as a boosted ad unit. The third prong of social media marketing is direct promotion via social channels through a brand's social media presence. For instance, Wendy's does an incredible job on Twitter engaging with their audience via their own account…sometimes they'll amplify the work of influencers as well and will utilize paid ads, but their focus is on delivering snark. [8,9,10]

Hyper-connectivity through social media has changed the way people feel about family, friends and peers, as well as their thoughts on what is 'trending' and current. [3] The pandemic precipitated a notable surge in social media usage, as individuals sought refuge in secure online communities during widespread lockdowns, school closures, and business shutdowns. With an increased amount of time spent online, people underwent a shift in their perspectives on recreation, business, and work. Brands recognized the potential to leverage social media platforms to broaden their access to information, engage with key target audiences, and enhance interest, ultimately converting leads into sales.

With the evolution of discourse on social media, people are seeking more authentic, transparent and informative exchanges" said Raad. Social media marketing doesn't have to be difficult or complicated, but it must be genuine. "People are seeking more authentic internet exchanges, and this means, they're looking for brands with genuine personas that can add value to their interaction experience". [11,12,13]

Similar to other mediums, the content shared by brands on social platforms must align consistently with the brand's voice and values. Social media provides a unique space for brands to showcase personality and character. Incorporating humor and lighthearted, enjoyable content allows customers to connect with the human side of a brand. While customers acknowledge that brands are profit-driven entities, they prefer not to be inundated with constant sales pitches or advertising gimmicks. Overuse of social media for promotional purposes, rather than fostering brand loyalty, may lead to customer disengagement.

Social media marketing can be as simple as a pre-scheduled content with a certain attainable/measurable business objective, e.g. to increase reach, brand awareness, convert users to sales, drive more traffic to websites. Social media marketing can also be as in-depth as creating a full campaign, with and without advertising, focusing on several different themes and components at a time, to engage with users in, and measure those metrics of success as to how well they were engaged. [14,15,16]

Effective social media marketing campaigns incorporate social listening as a crucial component for assessment. Social listening involves actively monitoring social media platforms for mentions of a brand, its competitors, products, services, or relevant keywords. This proactive approach not only provides the brand with insights into customer sentiments and perceptions but also serves as a means to discover potential pain points in the customer journey, offering valuable feedback on how customers perceive and interact with the brand.

Before embarking on social media marketing campaigns, brands should first articulate clear goals and subsequently identify the most effective strategies to achieve those objectives on the most suitable social media platforms. Kelvin Chan, CMO at Training.com.au, highlights the common mistake of brands attempting to market across all social media platforms instead of

concentrating on those that align most effectively with their target customers or specific segments. Many brands make the mistake of trying to tackle all the social media giants at once, but it's best to focus on one or two. That way, you can focus on driving engagement from audiences on that platform. The same person behaves differently on Facebook and Instagram.

A growing number of individuals choose social media platforms as their preferred channel for cultivating and fortifying connections with friends, family, coworkers, and even brands. Brands that share content aligned with their values, maintaining consistency while allowing their character and personality to shine, discover that social media platforms serve as exceptionally effective marketing channels. Recognizing that various social media platforms appeal to customers for distinct reasons, brands must judiciously select the most fitting platforms based on their specific customer segments and overarching goals

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