



Marketing Over Time and Its Transition to Social Media

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Abstract

Over time, we have seen a drastic change in marketing strategies utilized by companies. Old strategies that may have been relevant in the past are no longer useful with the new digital age and constant innovation. Social media has simplified the marketing process, making it easier for brands to get their products in front of an audience. Instead of putting an advertisement in a newspaper that only a few hundred people would see, brands can make a social media campaign to gain thousands of views on their product. Additionally, because most social media platforms are free to use these strategies means that almost any brand has access to some form of marketing. Through the rise of social media, we have also seen the birth of “influencers.” Not only are influencers a helpful source to use for advertising endorsements, they are also more accessible for less established brands who still want to market their products. Although social media was originally intended to be a space for people to create connections, it has taken other forms for brands to use as a marketing tool and has proven to be successful.

Introduction

When was the last time you saw an advertisement on TV that made you inclined to purchase a product? Have you ever seen an enticing advertisement, clicked on it, and found you have been misled into a marketing scheme? Marketing has evolved immensely over time, especially in recent years. With the emergence of social media platforms, marketing has taken new forms, becoming more effective. Social media has also developed the power to influence culture because of its immense popularity. For many, it is a main source of information, as well as a way for users to share aspects from their lives to others, thus having a big impact on ways of life and popular trends. Marketing through social media has become more and more popular because of its mainstream use. There are an estimated 4.95 billion people on social media*, making a large audience for brands to market their products to consumers. Without social media, many companies would not be able to create revenue because their products are unable to be put in front of consumers.

The goal of this paper is to look at the evolution of digital marketing through social media, while examining some of its drawbacks. Marketing as a field has greatly evolved over the years, moving away from traditional marketing methods into the digital realm. There are various questions being examined throughout this paper. In asking the question of how digital marketing has evolved over time it is crucial to look at old methods to gain a sense of where media today has developed from. It is also important to look into social media's intended use and what it has evolved into today. This paper carefully examines recent progressions in social media such as “influencers” and their impact on marketing, as well as the ethical drawbacks to several marketing tactics used by companies. This paper also looks at social media usage beyond its intended use and how it affects the market. Findings in this paper include the evolution of social media and its usage for marketing purposes and connections seen between unethical marketing tactics and consumers attitudes.

The Evolution of Marketing



Marketing is all about teaching people and influencing their buying habits. It can be described as the way in which consumers are educated on why they should make certain choices (Lucius, Hanson, 2016). Traditional marketing tactics like newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, mail, and telemarketing are no longer able to be utilized as effectively by companies (Appel et al., 2019). It is to be noted that old forms of marketing were successful, but with digital innovation old methods are no longer as productive. Companies across all sectors are turning to social media to market their products to their specific target audience. A popular marketing method from the past is blog marketing. "Bloggers" are known as people who often update an online journal about dilemmas or their daily lives, sometimes offering advice. Blogs gained immense popularity because they were seen as real and authentic. Blogs make it easier for consumers to discuss a product and work out any issues that may occur, as well as give reviews. Giving viewers the opportunity to see how other consumers like a product greatly helps companies. Mobile marketing was also a popular marketing tactic previously used. Phone operators would call telephone numbers from a list and advertise their products to people. Although this strategy allowed customers to ask any questions that may have risen about a product, this method could be simplified with social media. Instead of having to call 100 different people to tell them about a product, one social media post could reach over 100,000 people with the click of a button (Morozan et al., 2009).

With the digital age, it is typical for consumers to want to do research on a product before purchasing it. All of this has been made easier and simplified with social media. This is an example of how the evolution of social media has allowed its usage to be for something other than social connection. In today's age, the way brands are able to engage consumers in buying their products is by keeping constant communication. This communication is key in creating revenue because companies are able to keep consumers updated constantly. A study conducted in 2022 showed social media's impact on buying decisions through the use of online questionnaires. SMMAS are different marketing styles or tactics a company may use, and this activity success could be measured depending on how much traction the advertisements gain. The results from the study demonstrated that SMMA'S (social media marketing activities) have an effect on social identification. This exemplifies that consumers are no longer relying on traditional media to derive information about a product (Jamil et al., 2022). Instead of calling a company with a question about a certain product, a consumer could easily look at the company's social media page to gain insight on the product they plan to purchase. In doing this the consumer could also see helpful comments about the product. Social media was not originally created for companies to market their products; its original purpose was to create an outlet for users to share photos with others and to be a realm for connection. In the recent past, companies have been able to simplify the marketing process through social media.

Influencers/Celebrities and Marketing

In current times, people on social media who have a great quantity of followers have an influence over consumers and their purchasing habits. They hold this influence because they are able to market to a large number of people. The products that they choose to market to their followers will have a larger audience, therefore brands want to leverage these strategies. These people coined the term "influencers." The higher engagement that influencers have, the amount of impact they have increases. Influencers are often known to self-brand themselves when creating their content. Self branding is the way in which a person chooses to present themselves to others regarding their personality, habits, or physical appearance. An example of

self-branding on social media could look like a person only posting cosmetic content. All the advertisements they share and content they make would surround cosmetics. A person's "brand" usually stays consistent (Sivesan 2013). Brands often utilize the services of influencers rather than well known celebrities because it is more affordable.

Utilizing influencers also makes it easier for a brand to personalize their ads, making them more effective. They are able to do this by carefully crafting the way influencers will speak about the product to their target audience, making sure they present the product in the best possible way. This would not have been able to be achieved in past times through old forms of marketing. For example, if a product was being marketed through mobile marketing, the brand would not be able to keep track of each operator making sure they properly advertise the product. Brands will often try to use the marketing services of influencers if the "self brand" of the influencer aligns with the product being marketed. When a person is looking to buy a car, they may take to social media groups to find out which car best fits their needs before even entering a dealership (Appel et al., 2019). Social media has proven to be a great source of information as well. For less mainstream brands who are unable to afford using a celebrity endorser, "influencers" are used.

Celebrity endorsements are a common form of marketing to help bring in more customers if they are seeing a well-liked person as the face of a brand. For more well established brands, they are able to utilize celebrity endorsements. When a celebrity is endorsed to market a product for a brand, the success of the advertisement is based on many factors. The celebrities' personal attributes are being judged along with the product being marketed, such as their personality and physical appearance. Although, if the celebrities' attributes and qualities do not align with those of the product being marketed, it could have a negative effect on both parties (Sivesan 2013). A study conducted in 2013 acknowledged that when a celebrity endorser is being used for a brand, the person's qualities should be studied before the endorsement is made. This would allow the company to be able to make precise notes on how effective the endorsement could be. Brand equity is also considered when utilizing celebrity endorsements. Brand equity is known as the value that a brand holds according to the perception from the mind of a consumer. When a celebrity endorser's personal brand properly aligns those attributes of the brand, it can boost their brand equity greatly.

Digital Marketing Drawbacks

The constant evolution of digital marketing technology does not come without its drawbacks. There are various aspects of social media marketing that consumers are opposed to such as constant pop-up ads and spam emails. A study conducted in 2017 showed the numerous drawbacks that come with these tactics. One main drawback discovered in the survey was the use of misleading advertisements. Oftentimes, companies will display an enticing advertisement on a website that leads to viewers wanting to click on it. After the viewer clicks on the advertisement, what the company is trying to sell has nothing to do with the advertisement shown. This tactic is used by countless companies as yet another way to bring in more views, thus bringing in more revenue. Although social media has made marketing more mainstream, this exemplifies how this evolution can be negative.

Another tactic used by companies that was found to be disliked was hidden advertisements in the media. This tactic can be seen if an opinion is overtly exaggerated in a video or news article. Many times advertisements are not disclosed and are hidden to viewers. According to the group being surveyed, this tactic was highly disliked and viewed as unethical if



the advertisement was not disclosed (Singla et al., 2017). Many companies will create fake news articles or product reviews to gain more viewership on their product. For example, a consumer could be reading an article about how a certain hair product is extremely effective and sees reviews of customers saying how amazing the product is. A viewer may see this and be inclined to purchase the product if the advertisement was not disclosed. Another disliked marketing tactic discovered through the survey was spam emails. Emails are a way for a brand to contact customers to advertise their products or let them know about upcoming sales. While this method can be effective, if the window of time between emails is small, it can cause customers to want to unsubscribe from a brand's emailing list, therefore the brand loses potential customers and potential revenue. Although marketing through social media comes with its drawbacks, it has opened the marketing sector to a wide variety of brands.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper it can be concluded that marketing has taken many forms over time, but its current, most successful form, is through social media. Through the rise of social media and utilizing it for marketing, we have seen the rise of “influencers.” It may be assumed that marketing is at its peak with its use of social media platforms, but there is always room for growth and increased transformation. In the future we may see marketing move away from social media platforms to different sources, making information about products more accessible to consumers.



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