

## Digital Marketing Strategies: A necessity in today's world

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In the present age of technological advancement, digital marketing is not optional, if the organization wants its products and services to reach its potential customers. Digital marketing increases the visibility of the business manifold. Today, the customers are all online and if the organization wants to survive the cut throat competition, it has no choice but to be online. And it is not only for big corporate, but also for all small and big organizations. If the organization fails to align with customer demands the risk of being left behind is always there.

Digital marketing started taking wings since 1990's and by 2000's it had changed the way business and brands use technology for doing marketing.

With the advent of digital revolution, the expectations of the customers have enhanced greatly. It is important for the organizations to live up to the expectations of its customers by adopting digital transformation. Today, the target audiences are available on their phones, tablets, and computers. So, it is pertinent for the companies to focus on digital marketing to reach their customers.

This paper mainly focuses on conceptual understanding of digital marketing, how digital marketing helps today's business and the customers and how it is different from traditional marketing. It also discusses the pros and cons of digital marketing. The paper also explores the various contemporary digital marketing strategies and tools used and the role played by theme in the survival and growth of the organization.

### **Introduction**

Marketing is highly micromanaged field and this has made it a field which is constantly evolving and hence highly dynamic. The different parts of world are now within the reach of everyone because it has become highly digital and interconnected beyond the imagination of everybody. This has substantially

changed the way marketing is practiced now a day. From traditional print advertisements to social media influencers and everything in between, the world of marketing has undergone a significant transformation in recent years (Rana, 2023).

Marketing has now gravitated more towards digital marketing. Marketing managers are now busy making online marketing strategies as people spend more and more time online. Smart businesses have understood that they can't take digital marketing for granted. They have also understood that they can easily reach their target audience where they are most likely to be – on their phones, tablets, and computers.

In the present era, marketing is becoming more and more integrated and cohesive. Today the companies are reaching to their customers using multiple channels and platforms. Social media advertisements are used by companies to drive traffic to their website, where the customers may be prompted to purchase or sign up with his email id.

We have seen from our experience that internet is a very powerful technological tool at the disposal of human being in 21<sup>st</sup> century. Internet is used by It is considered as a part of basic infrastructure. Slow connectivity or internet outage is looked down by the users. They consider is a failure of the service provider and governmental agencies failure in developing the infrastructure.

It is very difficult to find out the exact number of global internet users. However, various reliable sources have put the number of internet users worldwide somewhere between 4.8 billion and 5.47 billion. That means that around 59.9% to 68.3% of the global population is online. The global internet penetration rate is 64.4%. The average daily time spent by the world population using internet is 6 hours 37 minutes which is quite substantial and it is going to increase in coming years. The global average for accessing the internet via a smart phone sit at 92.3%. India currently ranks second with its half of the population (49.15%) using the internet - those accounts for 692 million people (Petrosyan, 2023).

As per the (Kemp, 2023), the internet penetration in India stood at 48.7 percent. India is home to 467.0 million social media users in January 2023, equating to 32.8 percent of the total population. A total of 1.10 billion cellular mobile connections were active in India in early 2023, which covers 77.0 percent of the total population.

Marketing is all about making right connection at right time and at right place and digital marketing one of that marketing strategy that no organization can afford not to adopt. If they are not using digital marketing, then they are bound to be outdated very soon.

### **Digital Marketing and how it differs from Internet marketing.**

There are basically three terminologies which are widely used when we discuss about marketing using internet. These are Internet marketing, Online marketing and Digital marketing.

Internet marketing and online marketing are same. Internet marketing uses internet to market and sell goods or services by using electronic commerce. Electronic commerce is the market on the internet (Bala & Deepak Verma, 2018).

The difference between online marketing and digital marketing is very minute and delicate. The main difference is in their technicalities.

Digital marketing is the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, not only using Internet, but also using mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium (Dr. Mrs. Vaibhava Desai, 2019)

The marketing strategies that use digital services such as social media platforms or TV ads to promote products or services is called digital marketing. It is evident that digital marketing is not limited to just the internet. Online marketing is the subset of digital marketing. Online marketing leverages digital channels and are exclusively carried out via the internet. There is not much difference between these two terms, but we can recognize that online marketing is a specific form of digital marketing. There are certain services that overlap since online marketing is a sub set of digital marketing, but some strategies are solely one or the other. Few services that only fall under digital marketing are TV ads, digital billboards, radio spots, SMS texts. Strategies that fall under both digital marketing and online marketing are content marketing, web design, Email marketing, advertising and SEO (Tartsah, 2021).

	Digital Marketing	Internet Marketing
 SEO	✓	✓
 Content Marketing	✓	✓
 PPC	✓	✓
 Social Media Marketing	✓	✓
 Web Design	✓	✓
 TV Ads	✓	X
 Digital Billboards	✓	X

**Figure 1:**

Difference between digital marketing and Internet marketing

(Tartsah, 2021)

According to (Ms. A.Lavanya and Mrs.M.Radhikamani, 2021) , digital marketing is the component of marketing that utilizes internet and online based digital technologies such as desktop computers, mobile phones and other digital media and platforms to promote products and services.

Digital marketing is broader and wider term than internet marketing. It includes both online and offline digital technologies and multiple channels under it. Internet marketing solely depends on internet. Digital marketing is the umbrella term for a group of marketing strategies which effectively uses all available digital channels and Internet technologies for the promotion of branded products and services. The development of digital marketing depends on development of internet technologies, usage of increased electronic data and digital media. From the above information, it is clear that the development of digital marketing is primarily followed technical advancement of internet. As the Internet technology is continuously evolving, hence the digital marketing field also (Grubor & Jaksa, 2018).

Digital marketing extends to non-Internet channels that provide digital media, such as television, mobile phones (SMS and MMS), callback, and on-hold mobile ring tones. The extension to non-Internet channels differentiates digital marketing from online marketing (Ms. A.Lavanya and Mrs.M.Radhikamani, 2021)

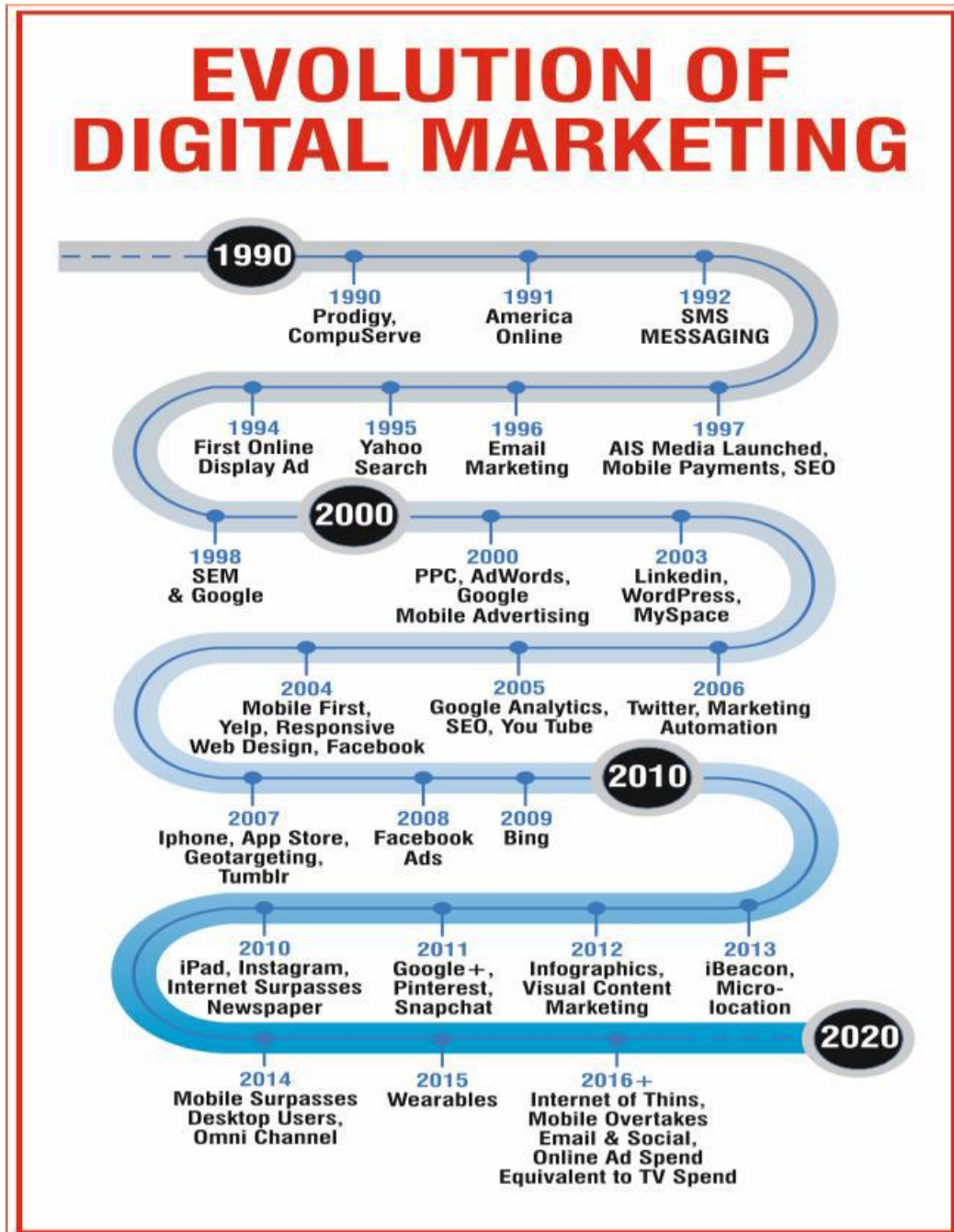
The growth of digital marketing has changed the way brands and businesses use technology for marketing (Dr. Mrs. Vaibhava Desai, 2019). The scope of digital marketing is expanding everyday with the evolution of Internet technology.

### **Evolution of Digital Marketing**

Ray Tomlinson sent the first mail in 1971 using ARPANET system thus developing a framework using which people were able to send and receive files through different machines. ARPANET is the precursor of Internet.

In 1973, Motorola, introduced hand held mobile phone, which revolutionized the way the world interacts. This is one invention which forced the marketers to seek alternate ways to entice the customers. The first personal computer was launched by IBM in the year 1981. At that time, Channel Net Soft Advertising Group, an advertising firm, developed many advertisement campaigns in soft form, thus developing the digital marketing concept. The terminology was first coined in 1990s. In 1992, SMS messaging was developed. The first clickable advertisement was introduced in 1994 by AT&T by the name "You Will". In the first 4 months of its introduction, 44% of the people who saw advertisement, clicked on it.

At the beginning of 2000s, as the Internet users started to increase rapidly, marketers had to face a new problem. Consumers started to search for the products online before visiting the physical store(Dr. Mrs. Vaibhava Desai, 2019) .



**Figure 2:**

Evolution and history of digital marketing

(Kumar, 2019)

With the introduction of innovative devices capable of accessing digital media, Digital marketing also evolved further. Further, with the launch of social media websites like LinkedIn, Facebook, You Tube and Twitter, digital marketing has become an essential marketing strategy for any marketer as consumers started to spend considerable amount time on internet.

### Traditional Marketing and Digital marketing

Traditional marketing refers to kind of marketing that uses offline media and not online media to reach its customers. It is one of the oldest very well-known form of marketing. Newspaper advertisement and other print advertisement like billboards, letter advertisements, and TV and radio advertisements are some the examples of traditional marketing.

A comparison is produced below to understand the difference between traditional marketing and digital marketing.

<i><b>Traditional marketing</b></i>	<i><b>Digital marketing</b></i>
For small business units, it is difficult to compete with established players using traditional marketing due to the cost involved.	Using digital marketing, through a crisp website the small business units can reach target customers with wider reach.
Traditional marketing is costly compared to digital marketing.	Business house can create its respective digital marketing strategy with very little cost and replace conventional costly advertising methods such as print media, radio coverage, television and magazine.
The customer engagement and involvement are comparatively low.	The customer engagement and involvement are comparatively high.
It is more static in nature.	It is dynamic in nature.
Communication is unidirectional. The business communicates about its products and services with a group of people in a unidirectional manner.	Communication is bidirectional. The customer also can ask queries or make suggestions about the business products and services
It is conventional way of marketing and it is best suited for reaching local audience.	It has a global reach.
It is difficult to measure the effectiveness of a campaign i.e. ROI cannot be measured easily. The results of the campaign can't be measured on real time. There is always delay in measuring the outcome of the campaign.	It is easier to measure the effectiveness of a campaign through analytics. The results can be measured real time.
Under traditional marketing, campaigning takes more time for designing, preparing, and launching. Tweaking is also not possible once the advertisement is placed.	There is always a fast way to develop an online campaign and carry out changes along its development. Even after placing the advertisement, if necessary, changes can be done and released again. With digital tools, campaigning is easier.
It is developed for a specific set of audience throughout from conception of campaign ideas up to selling a product or a service.	The content is developed to reach global audience. It is then made to reach the specific audience by employing various digital marketing techniques.
The consumers cannot skip the advertisement even if they are not interested. They are bound to see them.	The consumers have the option to avoid or skip the advertisement if they are not interested in a particular advertisement.

(Mishra & Rath, 2022; Sathya, 2015)

### **Advantages of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing is affordable and the outcome can be easily quantifiable, brands, business and marketers are embracing it. It helps in serving targeted audience and helps in increasing brand loyalty and sales volumes. It has changed the buying behavior of today's customers.

### **Other advantages are mentioned below**

It works 24X7 and hence the customers can purchase at any point of time.

The reach of digital marketing is global and to gain foothold one has to be globally competitive. You have to be globally competitive. Businesses need to grab attention, with distinctive messages, of the target audience to stand out against competition.

A well planned and targeted digital marketing campaign can be executed at a low cost compared to traditional marketing.

The customer remains updated about the products and services of the company by going to the company website. It is very important for the company to always keep its website updated. Up to date information on company website has a positive impact on the brand image.

With digital advertisements, the advertisers can gather information like who is watching the advertisement, for how long and how often, whether the advertisement is effective or not.

The prospective customers can compare different alternatives of the products and services sitting at the comfort of his and decide on acquiring it. He need not go to the stores for this. If required, afterwards he can go to the store to order it.

Business can leverage the use of social media to engage with the customers in an easy way and develop customer loyalty.

Digital marketing enables the customers to purchase instantly from online stores. In traditional marketing, the customers need to move to physical stores to complete the action of purchase.

The customers use digital media to transmit information about the characteristics of the product or services to others.

### **Disadvantages of Digital Marketing**

In spite of highly innovative and constantly evolving, digital marketing has demerits also. Few of them are listed below:

It is entirely dependent on technology. So, data security and data privacy issue crops in always.

Speed of the internet connection also plays a big role in use of the digital marketing channels by the customers.

If the websites take long time to open, the brand image of the business gets negatively impacted.

Customers use a variety of digital gadgets. Marketers have to develop applications and platforms for a number of digital gadgets in order to match competition.

A rival can easily copy the digital marketing campaign and with some tweaking, the rival can launch their own campaign.

There is nothing called improving online advertising. More so it is same as creating a new online advertising. So, the businesses have to go through all the procedures again to improve online advertising.

The customers can't physically touch the product before purchasing it.

The business keeps on incurring maintenance cost of digital marketing as technological, business and related legal environment is constantly changing.

In digital marketing the prices of the products and services are readily to everyone. This leads to fierce price rivalry.

A critical review or negative review about the products and services spreads like wild fire with the power of internet. For example- negative review of a new movie severely impacts the collection.

### **Different Trends of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing trends are various digital marketing channels which connects the customers with the brands and businesses. We are producing below the various marketing trends which we read, dissected and analyzed.

#### **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**

It is the process of optimizing website in such a way that it ranks higher in search engine result pages. Google, Yahoo, Bing, Baidu, etc. are few search engines. This is one of the most cost-effective ways of increasing the organic traffic i.e. free traffic to website. SEO is a kind of Search Engine Marketing (SEM). Another Search Engine Marketing is paid search.

#### **Paid Search Marketing (PSM)**

It is also a way to divert traffic to your website, but through paid efforts. The various models of PSM are PPC (pay-per-click) or CPC (cost-per-click) model, or CPM (cost-per-thousand impressions) model. There are different platforms for SEM. Google Ad Words (on Google Network) and Bing Ads (on Yahoo Bing Network) are the most popular. SEM also includes Display Advertising, Search Retargeting & Site Remarketing, Mobile Marketing and Paid Social Advertising (Bala & Deepak Verma, 2018).

#### **Content Marketing**

It is all about doing marketing by creating quality, valuable, consistent and relevant stories and contents about the brand targeted towards clearly defined audiences. The content about brand should be authentic, original and inspiring. It should help in customers interacting with the brand and thus retaining the customer (Grubor & Jakska, 2018). Quality and relevant contents do not waste money on advertising campaigns that do not bear fruit (Margarita Išoraitė, 2020). Content marketing helps in generating brand awareness, traffic growth, lead generation, and customer retention. The channels that can play a part in content marketing strategy include Blog posts, EBooks and whitepapers, Info graphics, Online brochures and look books (Dr. Mrs. Vaibhava Desai, 2019).



***Affiliate Marketing***

In affiliate marketing, the parent company pays affiliates for each customer or website visitor they bring to the parent company's website. According to Pat Flynn's Smart Passive Income, "Affiliate marketing is the process of earning a commission by promoting other people's (or company's) products. You find a product you like, promote it to others, and earn a piece of the profit for each sale that you make".

Affiliate marketing involves 4 components- the merchant, the affiliate, the client and the network.

Affiliate Marketing is a win-win situation for both the merchants and affiliates. Websites like Amazon, eBay, LinkShare and Flipkart run Affiliate Programs.

There are two approaches to affiliate marketing: You can offer an affiliate program to others or you can sign up to be another business's affiliate (Priya, n.d.)

***Social Media Marketing (SMM)***

This marketing practice leverages the reach and use of social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, etc. It involves driving traffic to one's website by engaging with customers on social media sites through various contents. Under this strategy, the business has to develop content specifically for each social media platform. The content should encourage user interaction and sharing.

***Email Marketing***

It is the easiest, simplest and most cost-effective way of communicating with the existing and potential customers. It can be used to promote new product launch, discount sales, year-end sales, follow up mail to website visitors, blog contents etc. and to push people to company's website. Sending personalized mail to customers greatly helps in building lasting relationship.

***Online Display Advertising***

Online display is the online variant of traditional marketing practice of placing a billboard or banner advertising about a company, product or services on either side of the road, as well as placing an advertisement in a magazine or newspaper. Display advertising comes in a variety of forms, including banner ads, interactive ads, rich media, and video commercials. Due to the graphics in the adverts, display advertising is excellent at catching the eye. An audience can be targeted by an online display advertiser depending on factors such as website content, geography, gender, age, and device type. As a result, the marketer can display an appropriate advertisement to the appropriate customer, reducing the expenditure and improving sales (Mishra & Rath, 2022).

**Conclusion**

In the coming decades, Digital marketing is going to be the main pillar of organizations marketing activities as customers are available online. It is the best platform to engage with the customers as majority of us connected online. The growth and acceptance of digital marketing is unbelievable. Its evolution is directly proportional to the technological advancement of Internet.

Digital marketing should be an integral part of any organization's integrated marketing strategy and should not be taken for granted. It is very cost effective and helps in reaching the target audience with minimal efforts. Digital marketing is necessary utility which helps the business to reach any corner of the world digitally and at an incredible speed. Digital marketing require less manpower than traditional marketing and hence more business saving.

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