


Chapter 16


Addressing Ethical Concerns in Digital Marketing: Challenges, Strategies, and Industry Participation

Gurloveleen Kaur Maan

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0018-4423>

Chitkara University, India

Navleen Kaur

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6858-9993>

Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University, India

ABSTRACT

The study comprises social and cultural issues pertaining to buying and selling on the digital platform. Ethics in marketing plays a vital role in building sustainable goals. The aim of writing the chapter is to throw light on the psychological influences of the customers while ethically imparting the product information through the marketers. The varied marketing strategies like remarketing, pay per click, demographic targeting, emotional and social bond connectivity, etc., are discussed with real cases of Abbot shoes, Surf excel, Red Label, Patagonia, and others. Market research, data collection, truthful branding, ethical digital advertising, regulatory compliances, and others are a few challenges observed in the proper execution of digital marketing. It is not just a mere saying by companies that we are following the right practices; they need to follow the same in their day-to-day operations. Tata Steel, Wipro, Just Water, Ocado, Hello Fresh, People Tree's and others are few renowned organizations using the sources of digital marketing in the right direction.

INTRODUCTION

Before the emergence of the word e-marketing, the 'digital marketing' term was utilized during period of 1990's. The swift advancement in digital world paved the way for fresh avenues and opportunities in advertising and marketing. The concept of Internet marketing, 'online marketing' or 'web marketing', digital marketing gained a prominent place gradually in some specific regions and were often used

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interchangeably. While 'online marketing' remains prevalent in United States of America and 'Web Marketing' is the norm in Italy, 'digital marketing' has become the widely accepted terminology in the UK and globally. When transactions involving products or services occur through computer networks via Internet, lead and is termed as E-commerce.

E-marketing encompasses a range of digital tools and strategies, such as, 'email marketing, website and micro site development, search engine advertising, SEO (Search Engine Optimization) & various methods which are technology operated. It involves facilitating website functionality, establishing virtual storefronts, managing customer databases, exchanging business-to-business data, communicating with customers via email or fax, engaging in business-to-business transactions, and other related practices within the digital realm.

When this practice of selling the products and services online has become so common, companies' distrust and unprofessional activities recognized by others, especially by customers, a term 'ethical digital marketing' coined. Ethics and values in the globe of digital marketing entails endorsing of tangible and intangible items on the internet in a manner that upholds principle of assurance & responsibility, while considering beliefs & ethics the target customer carry, especially 'Z' and 'Y' generation. In today's time the effect of environment is of utmost importance like the change in weather wherein the strategies of digital marketing resonate with the demographic's values. Hence building the trust and sustainable liaisons with their clientele.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chaffey (2002) expands on this concept, defining e-marketing as the application of digital technology to enhance marketing endeavors, with the primary objectives of profit generation and customer retention through augmenting customer understanding and fostering integrated communication via online channels tailored to individual customer preferences. Chaffey and Smith (2008) further assert that marketing via digital, electronic and internet media are interchangeable words referred to as marketing through web resources encompassing activities such as website utilization, online advertising, and engagement through various digital devices and interactive platforms.

Loyalty, the extent to which customers consistently patronize a business and maintain a disposition aligned with their preferences during making purchase decisions. And makes a deep impression on the customer's minds whereby leading to the commitment for a specific brand (Sudhahar et al., 2006). Kotler (2016) defined ethical marketing practices, which uphold ethical standards, encompass actions, regulations, and policies governing privacy, the collection of personal information, and the safeguarding of user data when employing digital marketing as a sales channel. According to Chen (2018), companies are expected to conduct their marketing endeavors with honesty, accurately representing their products and assuming responsibility for their claims.

According to Fauzan and Ida (2014), business ethics are founded on the principles of fairness, honesty, and trust. In digital marketing, interactions with buyers can indirectly lead to conflicts, which marketers aim to mitigate by offering high-quality products at reasonable prices. Limbu et al. (2011) conducted research highlighting four dimensions of perceived ethics in online marketing: security, privacy, absence of fraud, and fulfillment. Violations of any of these dimensions may be interpreted as a breach of ethics by the seller.

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