

# Social Media Marketing Strategies of Online Food Delivery Platforms in India: Will the Choice of the Right Channel Matter?

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## ABSTRACT

*The rapid expansion of e-commerce in India over recent years underscores the increasing prominence of online services within the digital economy. Factors such as urbanization, widespread internet penetration, rising disposable incomes, enhanced accessibility to digital payment systems, and evolving hybrid work arrangements are key drivers of growth in online food delivery services. This study aims to examine the role of social media marketing in scaling these businesses and enhancing their profitability. Social media platforms serve as critical tools to support the sales and marketing strategies of food delivery providers, with the choice of platform significantly influencing the effectiveness of promotional campaigns. The findings indicate that social media channels are effective in delivering targeted messages to specific audience segments. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, characterized by extensive reach and high user engagement, can be instrumental for food delivery services seeking to optimize their promotional efforts.*

## INTRODUCTION

Online Food Delivery Apps are growing in popularity in India. They are redefining experience, delivering customers the convenience of having their favourite meals and snacks delivered to their doorstep. While some food delivery apps have a pan-India appeal, some apps cater to a specific city, preferring to dominate one particular geographic area in the country. The seamless and reliable approach of food delivery apps has endeared them to customers (Pushwoosh, 2023).

These food platforms cater to diverse tastes, preferences, and budgets. They offer a wide range of cuisines. The flexible payment options add to the allure of these services. These apps serve as gateways to culinary delights, showcasing India's rich tapestry of food options (Kouzina FoodTech, 2023).

In the year 2023, the revenue of the online food delivery market in India amounted to 36.3 billion U.S. dollars. The lion's share of this came from the meal delivery segment. The revenue is forecast to increase to over 81 billion U.S. dollars by 2028. In the financial year 2023, Swiggy recorded a revenue of approximately 86 billion Indian rupees. Its competitor, Zomato, on the other hand, reported a revenue of nearly 71 billion Indian rupees that same year. Both companies were leading players in the online food delivery market in India. The online food delivery market is projected to experience significant growth in the coming years. By 2025, the revenue is expected to reach \$54.87 billion, with an annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13.75% from 2025 to 2029, resulting in a projected market volume of \$91.88 billion by 2029 (Upper Inc, 2023).

Online food delivery services provide cooked meals and food items ordered online through mobile apps. Deliveries are handled either by restaurant-run or platform-run delivery teams. The number of online food apps is rapidly increasing, facilitating both delivery and pickup options (Addweb Solution, 2023).

The growth is driven primarily by increased access to high-speed internet and rising smartphone sales. Additionally, the growing working population and higher income levels have fueled demand for online food delivery services. Rapid digitalisation and growing acceptance of online food delivery in Tier I and Tier II cities are driving market growth (InfoStrides, 2023).

The trend towards on-the-go food items and quick home delivery models offering ready-to-eat and affordable options has also contributed to market growth. In 2024, a Statista survey conducted among Indian consumers about online food delivery bookings by brand found that 85 per cent of respondents had used Zomato in the past 12 months to order food. Swiggy took second place, with 80 per cent of those surveyed using the food delivery platform. These results are based on a representative online survey conducted in 2024 among 1,814 consumers in India (Wonkrew, 2023).

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