Modules

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Modules

Social advertising is the term that is used synonymously with "social media advertising". It is generally referred to all the paid or unpaid means of advertising on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. Though this term is also used for the messages that pertain to corporate social responsibility. Social advertising takes two meanings, any ad that promotes the wellbeing of the community of society or educates people about certain social issues. The second meaning that is derived is advertising for the sake of promoting a product or a service so that regular feedback can be obtained from the customers to make some improvements in the products and services. This is not the case on the TV or radio commercials. This means of electronic communication has brought about a paradigm shift in marketing; besides advertising by companies to build their brands, they help elevate various potentially corrosive impacts for both the brand and the society.

The traditional form of advertising is largely being replaced by social media advertising, digital marketing or search engine marketing (Mulhern, 2009). Nowadays, human life is dominated by social networks and it is a hot topic in every gathering. With such a huge audience and the variety of benefits it offers, social media is way more effective than traditional media for advertising and marketing purposes, especially for B2C companies (Järvinen, Tollinen, Karjaluoto, & Jayawardhena, 2012). In traditional advertising, the marketers have to make a list of your target customers and visit them in person to encourage them to buy the product or use the service, or the traditional means such as print media. It surely takes a lot of time and it is also expensive since the companies have to hire many experienced marketers. Thanks to social media, companies can save a considerable amount of time and money when investing in online marketing. People will be more effortlessly attracted to them and sometimes even they can do the marketing for the brand by sharing their contents in online environments. Social media is full of influencers that can pave the way for the marketing by having an already established quality presence and accessing many of your target audience. So, in order to make sure not to fall behind, every business should make joining social media platforms or creating their blog a priority.

The advertising on Social media ads is a form of Pay per Click advertising. Once a company create the ad, the social network shows that ad to their target audience (impressions), and if the viewer of the ad clicks on it, the advertiser pays for that click. How often the ad is shown is based on the relevance of the ad as well as the user experience once the viewer clicks on the ad. In other words, whether the website or landing page is consistent with the messaging in the ads is also a factor in the number of impressions and how much the social platform pushes out the ad. Billboards and businesses still advertise, but the ROI is gone. It is good only for brand awareness. The big boards do not drive traffic and revenue. The print advertisements that arrive in the mail go straight to the garbage. Social media made one thing possible - precise targeting (Dwivedi, Kapoor, & Chen, 2015). As a marketer, one can target large members of a large family without the others knowing about it. So, they I can target husbands to advertise gift ideas for their wives. We are at the beginning of the digital transformation. Therefore, if a business want to stay relevant, they must have already jump on the social media wagon.

There are numerous examples of companies that are leveraging social media strategy to attain their marketing goals and objectives. Nike has one of the greatest social media strategies. Mostly because the brand keeps all posts consistent: highlighting the athletes that it partners with, using concise copy and a motivational tone of voice that works wonders among the fans and followers (given the numbers). Even though Nike has separate profiles for different product lines, it's clear to see that there is a well-thought-out social media plan for each of them. Domino’s may not be the first example of the best social media strategies that come to mind, but it’s definitely worth taking a look at. The brand is well-known for its creativity when it comes to marketing campaigns in general. Indeed, many of them revolve around social media, but Domino’s seems to be doing a pretty good job when posting on their profiles on a daily basis as well. The content might not be innovative, but it’s definitely coherent and often attracts lots of attention. Zappos is the most famous brand taking use of social media to build connections with their customers. It is the company that exists to deliver WOW to their customers through exceptional services. It seems like this is an era where a business cannot survive without the social media presence.

The use of social media has caused a new environment for both consumers as well as corporations. The average consumer will spend nearly two hours on social media every day which translates to an average total of 5 years and 4 months over a lifetime. As a result, corporations have started to shift their marketing strategies by directing their advertising budgets to online channels, specifically social media platforms. This will allow them to build their brand, increase consumer awareness, increase brand loyalty and eventually increase sales. Through social media company can build trust, personality, and their brand. In an ever more digital and online world, clients and customers are ever more wary of the dangers of the internet, therefore, a page with a strong online presence or following instils confidence in prospective customers and clients. Customer service is also increasingly handled through social media pages and chats allowing business to engage and grow customer relationships. Paid advertising allows a company to reach beyond their own network or even capitalize on people who have already visited their website and remarked to them, helping them along the buyers’ journey.

Brand building is known as increasing the voice and consumer awareness of a brand as well as providing a brand with an identity and worth. The success of any social media account for a corporation is measured by its engagement. Engagement is known as “the interaction between a brand and its audience that takes place in the form of likes, comments, shares, retweets and URL clicks” (Baasiri, n.d.). To increase brand engagement, companies must engage with their consumers to create an emotional appeal to them. For example, Pampers, a diaper company uses social media extremely strategically. Instead of marketing its products, it uses social media to attract to their niche market of soon to be parents. Pampers emphasize this market and creates a community that can come together to share advice, feelings, and memories. This emotional appeal is therefore leveraged and consumers feel a sense of community when engaging with their brand online (Yasmin, Tasneem, & Fatema, 2015a).

Brand building can also be done through the two-way conversations that occur between the consumer and the organization through social media. The conversations that take place on social media platforms focus on the idea that the corporation cares for its customers. For example, Royal Dutch Airlines or KLM focuses on this aspect by including the estimated response time in their Twitter header photo. This estimated time is even updated every five minutes to provide customers with an accurate response time. This tactic builds upon their customer engagement which results in their brand being put in positive light in consumer’s minds which results in brand building (Habibi, Laroche, & Richard, 2014). Consequently, some organizations have tried to monitor comments on their social media pages which has backfired. For example, consumers that used Smucker’s lip balm turned to their Facebook page to complain about their stance against labeling GMO’s. In response to this, Smucker’s started to delete some of their customer’s comments and this situation put them in negative light. As a result, their brand image weakened. Therefore, companies must always stay open, honest and respectful when it comes to customer’s complaints. It is evident that organizations must use social media in an appropriate manner in order to help build their brand. When building brands through social media, corporations must know their customers, must be active, must maintain one voice, must be original, must have great customer service and must engage with a consistent personality (Moro, Rita, & Vala, 2016). In the same way, corporations should not spam consumers, delete negative comments, ignore comments or questions and should not rely on automation. If corporations follow these guidelines, they will be able to build their brand through social media channels in an effective manner.

The hype of social media and advertising sometimes overlook the critical aspects of social media marketing. Businesses have to be aware that the overly hyped social media can be as dangerous as valuable for their brand image. To mention some of the demerits or vulnerabilities linked with the social media may involve risk to business reputation, difficulty in creating a cohesive brand image, and lack of control etc. Businesses face a major difficulty in maintaining the same voice and personality within each channel. It may not be relevant or important to keep that voice and personality consistent across channels so long as it is consistent with the brand. For example, as a written medium, Twitter messages should be sharp and unambiguous with an image to support the idea. Instagram and Facebook are visual media so the image speaks a thousand words and needs to stand alone; you can meme text is necessary. YouTube is video and you need to maximize interest and storytelling with coordinated images, sound, and motion. Taking images out of the video to make a Twitter or Instagram post may not be a good idea. A poorly executed brand campaign can disrupt the reputation of a company in a couple of minutes. The business reputation is at stake from many other sources.

Unhappy and dissatisfied customers are always free to criticize the brand and the issues they ever faced in dealing with a product or a service. It is not very easy to take corrective action in such cases(Vo, 2018). Furthermore, measuring the return on investment in social media advertising can be a tough task. To be very clear it is not very easy to calculate the benefit social media products are driving to the company. Companies these days also become overly independent on social media and end up prioritizing social media too much. In the absence of a social media analyst or the communicator, the social media strategy may fail and in some instances, they can also fail in bringing the right value for the company. Relying too much on social media means one is losing control over their social media messages. The number of interactions, shares, likes, comments, and tweets are endless and a business lacks control over what the audience is talking about the brand in response.

Social media is sometimes considered as a "one size fits all" marketing solution owing to its amplifying effect. A Forbes article highlights the negative impact of social media by sharing the example of McDonald’s when a hashtag became the bashtag. Consumers started using the hashtag #McDStories to share the negative stories about the brand (Barbara, n.d.). This is a perfect case of how social media can create a negative impact and the campaign was unstoppable for the brand. The risks of using social media are also greater like the risks of not using social media and successful businesses try to mitigate the risks while embracing rewards. The article further highlights how social media has the power to create bad customers since it provides a relatively anonymous and guilt-free environment that lacks accountability. The world of social media is this where one takes the calculated risks so as to leverage the pluses this technology can bring to the business. Every post on social media is an opportunity to create an impact or to attract a potential customer but at the same time, it gives more voice to the customers. Blogposts are very common for the customers this share what they feel about a product or a brand. This consumer power can be leveraged by the competitors to raise a negative issue against the company to damage business reputation. Refraining from the negative publicity is very hard for companies due to excessive consumer power.

The hype of technology and social media let technology optimistic assume that technology will always bring positive outcomes for society. The social media strategies adopted by the companies generate many corrosive effects unknowingly. Advertisers are leveraged by the personalization techniques that social media platforms offer in terms of personalization. They can now target their message with unprecedented accuracy (McNamee, n.d.). These companies using social media advertising are eating the world economy, according to scholars. The philosophy of “move fast and break things” prevails in the society at large. Social media allows the business and even political parties to manipulate a large minority of citizens, referred to as ‘Brain hacking’. The convenience of these platforms and the psychological addiction may take a generation to create a change effect. The absence of an effective regulatory strategy also leverages this approach and the internet platform monopolies creates numerous challenges.

To sum up, this research essay has discussed the use of social media in communicating with customers in the form of advertising and marketing messages. Social media that was initially invented to provide means to on-line communication and socializing has turned into a great marketing tool by the brands. Companies use social media to target a large number of customers as it allows to personalize the marketing message and targeting only relevant audience. Social advertising has taken over the traditional means of communication, and companies have leveraged these tools to build their brands. It is no doubt an ultimate way to engage customers and to maintain a rewarding customer relationship. However, this overly hyped medium has also resulted in many negative consequences for the companies as indicated by the example of McDonalds. The consequences are not limited to the brands but the societal impacts of social media are also disruptive. Such an outcomes stances the need of strict regulatory framework and policies to limit the negative influences on people, organizations, and society at large.

**Final Essay examination**

1 Please explain how social media has the potential to blur communication boundaries. After you explain this, please offer anecdotal examples from your own experiences to help illuminate this issue.

Social media is essentially applications or platforms which allow a user to create content, share content and participate in discussions or other social activities on the internet. It is a very 2-way system where people can communicate with one another. The popular social media that people often refer to our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and some might consider Snapchat social media as well. Social media has made it easier for society to communicate wherever and whenever. Given the fact that social media is accessible 24/7, users can easily communicate at any time and at any location (given that there is internet access). Communications is instant and free. During my parents' generation, the only way you would be able to communicate with someone living far away was to send mail or to call them. There may be other methods that I may not be familiar with, but social media now allows you to conveniently reach people instantly and costs nothing (as far as I know). Talking to people has become somewhat "easier". There is a counter-argument for this which I will share later. Since we have no need to care do social cues, it makes it easier to tell a person something that could otherwise be hard to tell in person. For example, confessing your crush on someone.

Communications are made easier through social media, it also makes us lazy and to a certain extent, desensitized. We are humans and (in my understanding) tend to always look for the easier way out of something. We would rather message someone online than to ask personally because it is easier and we do not have to get out to do it. When I say desensitized, I mean that when we get too comfortable with communicating through social media, we tend to forget social cues and when it comes to face-to-face communications, we can end up struggling to understand some of these cues. At one point in my life, it was easy for me to communicate with people online but I struggled with talking to people in real life.

False/Fake news is easily shared. As mentioned earlier, social media is an application or platform which allows users to create and share content or participate in online discussions. At some point in life, I am sure everyone has come across hoaxes and lies spread through social media. Given the nature of how easy it is to spread the news on social media, some people have used it as a means of spreading lies and rumors or fake news. I also think that social media isn't very heavily regulated, so there are many things that can happen online. Sometimes people share without checking their sources and that can be really bad.

2 Please explain some specific innovative social-media strategies that organizations and businesses can employ in order to better engage consumers and the public. Within this, please also explain some advantages that social media has over traditional forms of marketing and communication.

Though it's impossible to become perfect in anything, however in order to gain an edge in Digital Marketing strong appreciation for data has become inevitable. Appreciation of data by a digital marketer or a businessman helps to engage with a consumer or public. The following are the steps to gain an edge in Digital Marketing through data appreciation.

• Find a compelling problem in the digital marketing space, where there's either not a very good answer or the answer is lacking in some way. This could be connecting offline to online advertising attribution, in a way that shows the relative impact for both, or determining the ROI on social media spend as it relates to sales forecasting.

• Leverage tools you have in your digital marketing tool belt to begin mining for data that would help you address this issue. If you were helping a company define its online brand, for example, you'd get every piece of data on their existing social media networks (hits, trends, etc.).

• Learn the ropes around Data Mining & Data Analysis - there are tons of threads on how to start down this road, but I'd consider digging into Business Intelligence using the Microsoft stack (PowerBI, Excel, etc) or see what you can do with Google numbers.

• With data analysis skillset, apply what you are learning to the data you've identified, and begin looking for novel approaches towards the digital marketing area you've identified. This may not prove THE answer but will give you enough insight to have something unique and interesting to share with your co-workers or clients.

• Continue seeking out problems you can solve with data, and as you become smarter about both the digital marketing space and data analysis, you'll differentiate yourself a considerable amount from the typical tool hounds that bound from one SaaS tool to another, without doing any unique analysis or problem-solving in the space.

• Get online, get on social media, and share with the world your unique and interesting work - then rinse and repeat (Yasmin, Tasneem, & Fatema, 2015b)

Traditional Marketing can be said as the thing of the past or if you have seen people doing the same thing, then they might be doing the wrong thing. In this era of digitization, when everything is going online and are available at shorthand distance or I would rather say, one click away, why one needs to go for all the tacky and complicated procedures involved in traditional marketing. When one can make a good amount of money in less investment that why they should look for an option that demands higher investment and comparatively lesser returns.

Also, traditional marketing is limited to a few groups of people but the reach of digital marketing is limitless and can be extended up to the utmost possible extent. Digital marketing is not limited to any region but traditional marketing certainly is.

3 Please explain how the "Attention Economy" helps us to understand the challenges facing contemporary advertising and marketing. Your answer should demonstrate an understanding of the attention economy, and it should be supported by examples.

In broad terms, the attention economy is the concept of a (largely) post-scarcity information/content market where the most valuable resource is people's attention. "Competing for eyeballs" or similar phrases are used to describe the activities in which enterprises participating in the attention economy might typically engage. This term was introduced in the 90's, and it was definitely being tossed around during the internet bubble. The bubble itself was arguably a result of over-eager anticipation and misunderstanding of the attention economy. Companies were receiving insane valuations based purely on the number of views of or anticipated interest in their content or platforms.

The attention economy has posed many challenges for advertisers and marketers. There was a time when the land was considered as the scarce resource but in this age of the internet, the attention economy, the scarcest resource is attention. The information flows from multiple sources, the surplus of information does not even let one understand that we are living in an economy based on attention (Manson, 2014). Attention is more like wealth and accumulation of such wealth allows one to grab anything that the economy offers (Goldhaber, 1997). The success of a marketer is based on the fact that how good is one in grabbing the audience's attention. In this way, marketing in the attention economy is one of the major challenges for companies. Since, the world has become a lot noisier, getting buyer’s attention is a very hefty task, and marketers not only have to compete with the rival brands but also with every marketing message out there. Not only grabbing attention is tough but ho0lding on to attention is even tougher.

Owing to these challenges, marketers continue to invest in the production and promotion of unique content. The examples are around us, the companies, brands, celebrities that have acquired attention globally are the ones considered as stars of the economy. In an attention economy, money flows with attention. The prospect about the future can be the domination of attention transactions over the monetary transactions (Goldhaber, 1997). It seems like the money economy is fading with the desire for attention everywhere. The attention economy is here and the future is even going to be more challenging for the marketers who will be struggling hard and spending wealth to grab the attention, the scarcest source ever.

4 Please explain the differences between product integration and product placement. Use examples to support your explanation. Also: Please explain how the contemporary communication and media landscape makes these innovative strategies so necessary.

Product Placement and product integration are the two most common marketing techniques that involve the incorporation of a product in movies, songs and TV shows to grab customer's attention. Product Placement is the appearance of a product in the movie scene, for instance, showing the box of a cereal brand on the table while a family in the movie is having breakfast (Neer, 2004). On the other hand, when the product or service of the company is integrated into the dialogue of a movie or a show. For instance, in this case, the name of the cereal will be taken by one of the characters of the movie. The product name is somehow integrated into the script. The main point that distinguishes both is the inclusion of name that is why the lines between both the marketing techniques can be easily blurred. Almost every music video, social media post, TV series, movie, video game, live event, college party, etc. has one or more brands in a scene. From the clothes people wear to the devices they use to the furniture they're surrounded by, brand integration is weaved into nearly every thread of everyday life in our society. It shapes the way we perceive the world and others. The contemporary landscape of media has been highly influenced by the digital age (Kaul, 2012). As this new media landscape has altered everything, the marketing practices have also changed. The traditional marketing practices are no more effective, and the attention economy demands marketers to use subtle ways to grab consumer’s attention. Product Placement and product integration provide marketers great ways to reach their target audience, to increase brand awareness and to draw customer attention. It is the new way of targeting customers rather than the print and TV media that are considered less effective. In addition, these strategies allow brands to create a positive image by displaying the product in different settings. Moreover, it allows the film makers to associate a story with a product, an effective advertising technique. Thus, the use of these marketing techniques is essential in the contemporary periods of marketing, where grabbing customer attention by merely designing an advertisement is not adequate.

5 Please take one of the below key concepts and apply it to news media, explaining as thoroughly as possible how it helps us to understand journalism in this age of digital innovation.

Journalism and the media have a great impact on our society. In fact, it plays a vital role in eradicating the old superstitious way of thinking. Generating social awareness in terms of health, business, politics, and economy. But these things only applicable to unbiased media which provides all the facts unaltered. Nowadays, most people are affected by the journalism and media, and whatever the stories they publish. Nowadays Media works only for TRP. Media is ready to do the coverage for the political fight or footage manias to raise their TRPs. Fortunately, children or youngsters are not watching the news but they bring the same logic in talent shows. A lot of real talents are going waste because of their TRP motive programs and also make the people believe that they found out new talents. Media shows off to help their career but what the price that talent paid for that we don't know. The media's negative influence on society is huge. The media and journalists have quite a considerable influence on the way society thinks. Sometimes, it is just the way something is communicated that can change the entire ball game. In the history of the world, nobody has consumed content the way it is currently being consumed. Every day there are people consuming boat-loads of content which means there is a clear gap in the ‘supply/demand' chain. Although this trend is changing, one thing this content phenomenon has done is to reduce the filters. The filter reduction sees a plethora of stuff coming through on social media.

Popular media is almost completely a reflection of our culture. If it weren't, we'd be seeing very different stuff on television, hearing different music, reading different books, etc. For the most part, journalism is no different, at least mainstream journalism isn't. That's how it gets to be mainstream. All media is basically just a little bit behind the curve. Society is progressive, which means it's always moving forward (with a few steps back here and there). Media is always reflective of what has solidified in the collective conscience. Meanwhile, society actually moves forward again and leaves that collective conscience slightly behind the times. Media has the opportunity to have an impact on our culture outside the mainstream when it presents alternate views and encourages thinking outside the box. Inside the mainstream, its impact is mostly just to confirm what's already known, or, more often, what's believed.

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