Research Paper

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**Introduction**

 Modern life spins around the elements of technology due to which it has become an indispensable part of our life. People regardless of their age use the internet in everyday life. Due to the rise in technology online marketing is evolving and increasing tremendously. The increase in online shopping has significantly impacted the brick and mortar stores. Although, many people still in favor of buying things after physically seeing them. This is because physical stores offer experiential shopping that is very different from online shopping yet still the percentage of these people is very low. People are more prone to buy things online as they find it a convenient way of shopping in less time. Thus, it is undeniably true that the internet has greatly impacted brick and mortar stores. This paper will discuss how online stores have affected brick and mortar stores along with the research findings regarding this issue. Moreover, possible solutions are proposed to mitigate the issue.

**Areas of interest, activity or issue**

Brick and mortar is a term that is defined as a traditional way of operating a business. Brick and mortar stores provide their products and services to the customer face-to-face rather than using an online platform (Li & Talebian, 2015). However, due to an increase in the use of the internet Many bricks and mortar stores are struggling to do business. This is because people are using online websites to shop for everything they need. Additionally, the internet provides several options on just one click so people find it convenient to use online websites to shop rather than going out and shop. Many stores and leading brands have utilized the online platform yet many companies still do not offer their services online. As the internet provides wide accessibility, stores can use this opportunity so that many people can view what services and products a brand is offering[[1]](#footnote-1). However, due to the lack, the exposure brick and mortar stores experience low sales. In many cases, the stores had to file for bankruptcy as well.

 Time is one of the major factors due to which brick and mortar stores are struggling. Usually, using online platform customers can choose from a variety of products and if they can buy things instantly. However, while shopping from the traditional stores if a customer desired product is not available then a retailer has to place an order that may take days to arrive. This is a reason that customers tend to shop online. Although, a trend of experiential shopping is reviving that may help retailers sell their product without the help of online websites yet still, online shopping is taking lead. If online shopping continues to increase, then chances are that after five to ten years the concept of traditional shopping will vanish. Thus to save the brick and mortar stores several interventions are required. If the issue is not treated timely then it may lead to severe consequences.

**Research findings**

Brick and mortar stores relied upon the concept of walk-ins in which a customer is attracted to the store due to the store’s presentation. However, due to several options available on the internet customers are more attracted to buy things online. This shift of customers’ choice results in decreasing sales at the brick and mortar stores. A lot of research is published regarding this issue yet most of the studies have shown that shopping of the customers determines which channel of shopping they choose (Schramm-Klein & Morschett, 2007). Thus, to predict the shopping preference of the customers it is necessary to understand which shopping channel is addressing customers' shopping motives. Typically, customers are more concerned about the post-purchase experience so they do consider buying things traditionally but due to lack of accessibility customers prefer buying online. Lack of exposure is one of the main issues that most brick and mortar stores are facing due to which traditional stores are struggling. Although due to a rise in technology brick and mortar stores are struggling yet due to various scams, people have several concerns while shopping online so they prefer physical shopping. Additionally, people are unaware of the footprints they are leaving while browsing due to which they face several privacy issues. Due to this people want to shop from stores yet the convenience of online shopping stops them from going out and shop for themselves. Thus, there is still hope for these stores to make a comeback as many people are many people prefer traditional shopping where they can see and touch things (Steinfield & Lai, 2002).

**Proposed solution and actions**

There are many ways retailers can play off the strengths of online and traditional shopping channels. Generally, the cost is a major factor that influences a customer to buy a product. Typically, on the internet, several options are available where customers can choose their desired product that is within their budget. Traditional stores should offer competitive prices so that a customer can be attracted to explore why the prices of some items are more as compared to others. Additionally, providing unparalleled services that are making a customer feel valued and welcomed can increase the interaction between store and customer which cannot be achieved by shopping online. Another issue with traditional stores is the lack of accessibility due to which customers are prone to shop online[[2]](#footnote-2). It is, therefore, necessary to design an infrastructure that will facilitate customers 24/7. Moreover, customers like to bargain and they cannot do it while shopping online. Traditional stores could benefit from this habit of customers by being friendly with them and offering them rates that they can benefit both the customer and brand. Furthermore, traditional stores must decorate the store to tempt customers as customers. Typically, customers have to pay the shipping charges as well while purchasing online. Brick and mortar stores can use this opportunity and take advantage of this by offering several in-store exclusives and invite regular customers to an event or provide incentives to the customers if they purchase above a certain amount. Traditional stores can also offer discounts to regular customers. This will ensure that customers return to purchase from the specific stores. However, traditional stores must incorporate technology in their marketing strategy because using both traditional and digital platforms will help in achieving desired sales.

**Conclusion**

Online marketing is growing day by day due to which brick and mortar stores that rely solely upon traditional business methods are struggling a lot. The wide accessibility of the internet is making customers buy products online. If this trend goes on increasing the traditional stores will vanish soon. Although, information technology also impacts online stores as there is a lot of competition in the market. However, the brick and mortar stores are more influenced because of a rise in the use of technology. Thus, there is a need for interventions to solve the issue. Several ways are there that can help brick and mortar stores to revive the place they used to have in the market yet still there is a need that both traditional stores and online markets coexist. Thus, brands must understand the importance of the internet and should use both traditional digital marketing techniques rather than relying on one method to increase their sales.

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