EXPLORATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING: AN APPRAISAL

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Abstract

Social media advertisement focuses on supporting brands and selling goods or services across dev eloped and emerging online platforms and linking new media elements to reach current and poten tial customers. Social media advertising encompasses many different mediums, including display advertising, content marketing, and social media promotions. The objective of social media advertising is to get consumers to interact with brands, engaging them in a way that increases awareness and associates with sales. This research assesses social media advertising. It illustrates how new media shake advertising. This research outlines and discusses issues raised into themes concerning social media advertising. The study concludes that social media plays a significant part in promoting products, services, and ideas.

Keywords: Social Media, Advertising, Product, Brand, Selling

Introduction

Social Media nowadays is gathering popularity. It is very important to understand the importance of social media in this competitive wold. Knowing the significance will help organisations, companies and businesses to reach target audience or potential audience in the market. Schroeder (2018) states that globalization via the use of social media platforms has a significant influence on our daily activities. Ever since the beginning of the World Wide Web (www), nations have become more connected with each other. The digital age is evolving into a time of high-tech changes. There are stable changes and addition to the available technical resources. As it advances, it also spreads globally. The worldwide blowout of technology generates vast connections that create new chances to a more substantial degree. The present focus of the globalization of technology is the networks created by the webs of new media (Dresang, 1999). Social media is a bright apparatus that can be easily used by those who have contact with it. The entrance of new Media gained globally; there is no part of the world neglected. It builds prospects for those who are first experiencing the use to farm ideas. Currently, the use of Social Media implements changes. Connecting to the social network helps people all over the globe to communicate for different purposes. For instance, we can connect with other people, organizations, ideas, and information that were not available to us before the invention of social media. This is a different way of understanding other people's

character and behavior, and it also helps in getting first-hand information without being distorted by mainstream media.

Ito et al. (2009) point out that online spaces allow young people to relate with their friends in new ways. Most youngsters surf online networks to spread the friendship that they come across in the familiar settings of schools, religious groups, sports, businesses, and other indigenous activities. They can always be active in constant contact with their associates through texting, instant messaging, mobile phones, and internet connections. A significant number of youths use social media to discover something interesting and look for other material that goes beyond what they can get in college, university, or their society. In these modern days, such network closeness is crucial because it bears on the ability of agents to form new links.

To sum it up, social media provide additional advantages better than what the Internet offers. People are connected; social media interaction allows for the accelerated flow of information for grassroots struggles as well as a free medium of communication to date. Social media sites are the place where millions of people interact and exchange ideas. Therefore, advertisers see social media as an avenue where they can meet their target or potential customers. Advertising aims to increase commercial profits and the demand of consumers.

This research examines the nexus between social media platforms and advertising, the way social media affect advertising and also the benefit of social media advertising to businesses.

Social Media Network

The importance humans attach to communication led to a search for avenues to communicate with people all around the world at the same time during any given time. Hence the invention of different technologies enhances communication both at the interpersonal and mass communication levels. The latest and recent of these inventions is the 'social media' (Baruah, 2012).

Social media sites are the place where millions of people interact and exchange ideas. Therefore, advertisers see social media as an avenue where they can meet their target or potential customers. Before the use of the Internet and social network became popular, communication over long distances was very minimal. Through the introduction of the World Wide Web, the Internet has become a global network, and the use of social media platforms played a crucial part in transforming the environment into the age of information (Alam & Ali, 2010; Steckman & Andrews, 2017; Tannen & Trester, 2013).

Social media is also a driving force of information because it enables users to generate and receive information instantly and disseminate it on the Internet, simultaneously allowing them to obtain and share information and content with friends instantly. Fuchs (2017) postulates that the critical attribute of Social Media is that it circulates media; users play an active part in the sharing of content. Thus, advertisers, marketers, and companies cannot afford to overlook the prominence of Social Media. If a company wants to survive today, it must compete in the phase of Social Media.

The word social media began at the time that companies started hitching what people were already undertaking online, revolving entertainment into income streams for venture capitalists and the people who were operating internet businesses (Baym, 2015). According to Edwards (2011); (Peña, Ramajo, & Arauz, 2014), social media consists of networks such as Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn. Social media is a large environment that comprises video sharing sites, photo sharing sites, search engines, and information searching sites like Wikipedia. According to Ryan and Jones (2009),
Social media is the umbrella term for web-based software and services that allow users to come together online and exchange, discuss, communicate, and participate in any form of social interaction. That interaction can encompass text, audio, text, audio, images, video, and other media, individually or in any combination (p. 152).

People discuss the most recent issue of the day through social media. Users also share and recommend products, services, and brands, as well as ratings and reviews. Not only that, users also share their experience and proficiency. Thus, the target audiences are now the active participants of debate. Social media is meant for networking and connecting by engaging in conversations through the Internet. People share ideas, happenings, and participate in discussions of interest to them. People do all the activities by connecting with other people who share things in common, like hobbies or skilled interests, high school classmates, family and friends, and co-workers, among others (Packer, 2011). Different categories of people engage in social media and discuss issues related to their interest, and sometimes creates community. Speedy expansion in the use of social media across the globe shows that companies can use it to develop their products and service consumers' interest (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013; Mir, 2012).

Social media network is almost everywhere in the world; if a company carries their customers along, the customers will talk about the product. But when the

customers' interests are mistreated then the advertising will not go viral. Social media is far beyond providing a platform for persons to stay in touch with their family members, peers, and school or workmates; now, it is an avenue where buyers can learn additional information about their desired companies and the products. Marketers and retailers are applying Social Media as an alternative way to reach potential and existing customers and offer a different approach to shop (Husain, Ghufran, & Chaubey, 2016; Opreana & Vinerean, 2015). The use of Social Media nowadays is incredible. (Hensel & Deis, 2010) indicate that the massive size of data provided by social media would offer challenges and opportunities.

Meanwhile, social media provide avenues and opportunities that tally with the interest of twenty-one century. Imagine life without social media; some of the benefits or the aims of globalization would not be achieved. Many industries use social media to boost their marketing and also help to meet the request of their customers. Social media technologies are disrupting the broadcast 'one-to-many' media model, and consumers have the opportunity to give feedback (Barefoot & Szabo, 2009). It is indicated that Social Media is reciprocal communication in which sometimes customers participate in the company's decision process.

Social media is multiple arrays of Internet-based apparatus and platforms that improve the sharing of ideas or information. This innovation of press increases transfers of data among internet users; the large group of internet tools increases every day; and social avenues to reach various and widespread population is also growing (Muchuki, 2017). As a result of this, it is vital, if not necessary, for the company to engage in social media activity, not just engage but to make proper use of it to compete with other competitors around.

Classification of Social Media

There are a lot of social media platforms; some are out-of-date, while new ones are yet to come. Every day we may come across with the new ones. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) believe that there is no logical means in which different Social Media platforms can be classified. Grahl (2013) narrows down social media networks into six; in his view, all categories of social media fall into the following categories.

i. Social Networks: These allow users to connect with people of similar interests and backgrounds. Social network sites usually contain profiles, allow users to create groups, and share information with other users. Typical examples of Social Network sites include *Facebook* and *LinkedIn*. Millions of people use social network sites, and the figure is increasing

everyday. Social Network sites provide flexible advertising options for businesses and allow organizations to set up personal pages or profiles.

ii. Bookmarking Sites: These allow users to save 'bookmark' favorite web pages and organize the pages by using a tag. Also, they allow users to access the sites quickly and share them with friends. The most common examples of bookmarking sites are *delicious.com*, *ma.gnolia.com*, and *stumbleupon.com*.

iii. Social News: It allows users to publicize different news kinds of stuff or links, and users can vote on the issues; the more vote for a specific topic, the higher up the rankings it rises. And the items with more top votes are displayed on the home page. The most famous example of Social News sites is *digg.com*, *reddit.com,* and *sphinn.com*. Social News helps organizations or advertisers to find out what people need.

iv. Media Sharing: The site allows handlers to upload, share, and comment on photos and videos. Examples of media sharing sites are YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, and Picasa.

v. Micro-blogging: Micro-blogging site is the site that allows users to share short messages to their friends to keep them up-to-date; the text is usually not less than 160 characters. The most famous example of micro-blogging is Twitter.com*;* Twitter allows handlers to send a short paragraph of 140 characters.

vi. Blog Comments and Forums: Blog is the earliest form of Social Media; individuals use blogs to report local news, express opinions, vision, and experiences. Forums allow users to converse by posting messages. A famous example of such Forums is the *Yahoo groups*. Panels give a company insight into what consumers are talking about, what makes them tick.

It is complicated for the company to involve in all forms of social media sites. The maximum importance for the company is to know which one their target audience used most. Some industries believed that if you are not participating in Social Media, you are not part of the Internet anymore (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Social Media Advertising

Social Media advertising is the newest advertising concept, and every trade vendor needs to know how Social Media can bring significance to their businesses. Social Media advertising is is leveraging how digital technology is making it easier for individuals to link socially with their social linkages and how

a company can make turnover from that perception (Hudson, Huang, Roth, & Madden, 2016; Packer, 2011; Tuten & Solomon, 2017).

Social Media advertising is an innovation that forces companies, business tycoons, and advertisers to change their marketing strategies from traditional way to modern way or from mainstream to new media because people shun the conventional press. When a company is advertising its product on Social Media, they are doing two things: that is promoting the product and the company. For example, many company holders produce different products. When advertising a single product of the company people are likely to know more about the company and its other products.

Social Media advertising is one of the viral advertising or word-of-mouth marketing. For instance, online users use to communicate with their offline friends concerning the product or services they come across in Social Media and share the page or product to online users; as a result of this, the advertising will go viral. Social Media advertising is a commanding communication vigor and a valuable advertising tool to sell products, services, and ideas. Companies use Social Media for publicizing their products and services and reach a broad audience at a relatively low price (Icha & Agwu, 2015).

Dwivedi, Kapoor, and Chen (2015) observe some critical reasons for using Social Media to advertise products, brands, or services. These are to:

i. Personalize interaction: Engagement by interacting with customers directly and enhancing customer feedback.
ii. Boost brand awareness: By using Social Media, companies create awareness and create a presentation of the same platform that customers use in their daily activities.
iii. Protect reputation: By using Social Media, the company can quickly respond to any rumor or negative publicity concerning the company and give a clear version of the issue.
iv. Inexpensive: Using Social Media is relatively cheaper; it helps the company to save time and money.
v. Problem-solving: Users can use their knowledge to provide a new idea to the company or help in solving the company's problem.

An active Social Media advertising movement is planned to create a quick move. Social Media advertising is an entity that works along with a variety that is ever emerging. The achievements of campaign advertisements depend entirely on the marketer's ability to convince social network users to discuss and promote a

product (Naidoo, 2011). When the advertising message is instrumental users will talk more and more about it, and this will make the advertising message to become viral. Whatever type of business you have, i.e., the small, medium, or big business, you can reach your target customers or potential customers via Social Media because Social Media consists of different caliber of people. Whether you are part of a small, medium, or a large business, or are an individual entrepreneur, your target audiences are using Social Media, and there is no reason you should not, too. It costs almost nothing, it's easy to get started, and it can have an enormous financial impact on your business (Zarrella, 2009).

Social Media advertising is relatively cheaper; a small and medium entrepreneur needs to use Social Media to create awareness and boost their business because customers use Social Media to seek information about the product or service. You don't need to have a big company before joining social media platforms, the medium and small company also count.

Types of Social Media Advertising

SM advertising is very operational and useful to businesses. It is no longer an exaggeration when we say it is hard for companies to survive in the 21st century without being on social media. Take, for instance, if the product is targeted at young adults, the best technique to reach them is through social media. Young adults are not patronizing mainstream media. Online advert allows companies to advertise their brand, product, and services in a way that catches the attention of customers.

Banner Ads

It is a form of advertising done on the web, and it is a small Ad on the web page; when the users click on it, it takes a user from one site to another. Banner Ads appear on top, bottom, or sides of the web page. This type of Ad is called 'Click Through.' Banner Ads usually appear horizontally on the web page.

Skyscrapers

Skyscraper Ads are tall and do appear on the web page usually placed on the right or left side of a web site. When handlers connect on a skyscraper ad, they are redirected to the advertiser's website. Skyscrapers are contrary to a banner advert; it appears vertically on the web page on either the left or right sides.

Pop-ups and pop-behind

Is an ad rush open on the computer screen in front or behind the opening page of the web site.

Mini-sites

Mini sites Ad allow marketers to advertise their brand without redirecting users to other sites.

Advertisers use such online advertising to make users visit their page. Online Ad allows advertisers to reach significantly more people than traditional media at a low rate.

Benefits of Social Media Advertising

Ryan and Jones (2009) discuss some possible benefits of social media advertising:

i. Stay informed: The most important of advertising on Social Media is to stay up-to-date. A company can easily understand what its customers think concerning the brand, product, or services. What customers are saying about the entire company will help the company to create an active marketing campaign based on customer's interest.
ii. Raise your profile: The Company can protect its reputation and lift its name by engaging customers proactively via Social Media.
iii. Level the playing field: By using Social Media, the company gives everyone the same advantages or opportunities, and receive customer's feedback with little or zero amount.
iv. Influence the influencers: The people who are the most active users in Social Media circles will be the element of your target market. They are 'influencers.' Influential individuals have already gained respect and trust from their online friends, and mentioning their opinion about the product can bring a more significant impact to the company's status or reputation.
v. Encourage brand advocacy: By appealing wisely and confidently with people who already have an optimistic approach towards the product, such people can boost the company knowingly or unknowingly by advocating through Social Media.
vi. Pass it on: Another benefit of social media is its ability for viral circulation. The circulation is similar to word-of-mouth; apart from that, the word online can travel further and faster. A prominent news story about a company or a post on a blog that is picked up and distributed by the readers, if it hits the right note, has the potential to suddenly be everywhere.
vii. The wisdom of the crowd: When using Social Media, the company is getting input from online communities. This input can help in the company output. For example, online communities can help the company to solve business dilemmas and provide answers to some of the company's most challenging problems. By going through customer's feedback, the company can make proper research design, and development decisions

based on what customers want. It is said that 'two heads are better than one'; this means that two people may be able to solve a problem that an individual cannot.

Conclusion

Any company that wants to grow nowadays must not ignore Social Media. (Balo & Shawon; Bendor, 2014) indicate perfect benefits of Social Media ads. These include: improved sales, increased traffic, increased exposure, established faithful fans, enhanced search ranking, increased business partnerships, reduced marketing expenses and improved marketplace insight. Social media is playing a vital role in how customers participate and share information online. The practice of Social Media is far beyond the broadcasting brand, product, or services; it also makes a good rapport between the company and its customers. Without a doubt, companies that use Social Media for advertising their products are getting quick attention compared to those offline. Based on the literature, the success of medium and small businesses relied on social media advertising.

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