

Branding White Goods Through Social Media - An Overview

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ABSTRACT

White goods are the goods that are painted white or enameled white. These products were previously manufactured with a white enamel finish but are now colored. White goods include household appliances, such as, Water Heater, Refrigerator, Clothes Dryer, Air Conditioner, Dish Washer, Microwave Oven, Washing Machine etc. This paper describes the theoretical concepts of white goods, branding and social media marketing in context. The paper also studies the theory contributed by researchers in the area of Indian consumer durable market catering urban, semi-urban and rural areas. The study depends on the secondary sources of data contributed by researchers/authors in journals, magazines, edited volumes, articles etc. The main purpose of this study is to understand how white goods business firms use social media marketing as a tool to brand themselves in consumer durable sector.

Keywords: Consumer Durable Goods, White goods, Branding and Social Media Marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Internet marketing is the fastest growing and most exciting branch of marketing today. As the world becomes ever more connected, keeping up with developments and trends is vital for marketers trying to reach new audiences who are more discerning, fragmented and cynical than ever. Technology and software are changing at such a high rate that it seems almost impossible to keep up with trends. Products and services are evolving and adapting to the online sphere. The web is constantly shifting, growing and changing everything is fleeting. Internet marketing often called online marketing or e-marketing is essentially any marketing activity that is conducted online through the use of internet technologies. It comprises not only advertising that is shown on websites, but also other kinds of online activities like email and social networking. Every aspect of internet marketing is digital, meaning that it is electronic information that is transmitted on a computer or similar device, though naturally it can tie in with traditional offline advertising and sales too.

MARKETING MOVES ONLINE

The first marketing activity online started in the early 1990s with the creation of simple, text-based websites with basic information about a product or company. These were complemented with basic emails often unsolicited spam that shared information in a rudimentary way. As web tools evolved, so too did the websites, incorporating images, sounds, videos and more advanced formatting styles. Advertising takes off as regulations fell away in 1995, internet marketing and especially advertising boomed. Companies began thinking about advert placement and started buying

advertising space on related websites, with links back to their pages and often accompanied with data-gathering measures such as asking customers to enter their contact information. online search portal Yahoo capitalized on this trend and offered advertising space on its massively popular home page, quickly developing extra software for tracking user preferences so it could target the advertising more effectively; it became one of the few “dotcom” companies to earn a tidy profit from online advertising. Google took the idea, streamlined it and improved the advert-targeting algorithms. As the social media platforms grew and people created exponentially more connections with each other, the vision of viral marketing – the online equivalent of word of mouth became real.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jae-Eun Kim and Jieun Kim (2012) in their research has found out that, the influence of other customers, including the number of customers and social relations, is a significant source of human-related environmental cues. The study suggests that retailers need to effectively manage, control and manipulate human-related environmental factors in order to generate a positive influence on consumers' perceptions towards stores and their behaviors.

Research by Azim et al (2013) shows the importance and effect of preferential treatment by salespersons and customers-salespersons relationship and trust for store loyalty. Providing preferential treatment and building trust of customers on salespersons can be very helpful for the managers to make their customers loyal. The result also shows that trust on salesperson has more impact on making the customers committed towards the salespersons and hence create them loyal towards the store. The finding of this study has proven that the relationship between customers and salespersons is very critical to build store loyalty, providing the competitive edge in the competition. Trust on salesperson is also found to be the critical in building this customers-salesperson relationship, and in turn store loyalty. When a customer have trust on the salespersons and consider him/her a good adviser in various occasions, while choosing among the different alternatives, will also contribute to bringing that customer again and again and to increase the basket size. Hence, our study proves that this extra benefit, preferential treatment, and the customers trust on the salespersons will enhance the customers' commitment with the salespersons in maintaining long term favorable relationship, which is the key to success of any store.

Paulo Silveira and Cristina Marreiros (2014) in their paper - Shopper Marketing: A Literature Review has pointed out that, Shopper marketing is a recent concept and it has been gaining importance and attention among managers and researchers. Due to its youth and increasing relevance, the purpose of this paper is to analyze, categorize, compile and analyze the existing knowledge concerning shopper marketing. Besides that, the paper presents a structural common trace on the literature, recognizing that shoppers are citizens with specific needs beyond consumption, which should be effectively analyzed and satisfied, adopting a shopper marketing approach. The main contributions provided are the compilation of shopper marketing literature, its analysis and the identification of major issues and directions for future research. They have further quoted from various sources that, since the last decade there have been profound changes in shoppers' behavior due to changes in the technological and business landscape, such as the emergence of new shopping tools.

3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Social Media Marketing increases the brand's awareness. It helps to validate the brand. A company's social media presence, when done correctly, tells consumers that their brand is active and focused on thriving communication with consumers. There are a number of benefits and opportunities for using social media in business, including Brand development, attracting customers, Revenue, Research, Networking etc., The present study is made an attempt in order to explore how business organizations brand their white goods through social media marketing as a tool in the market. Furthermore, this study provides recommendations that can be considered by other business firms to create brand and brand loyalty.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are

- To understand the theoretical concepts of white goods, branding, and social media marketing.
- To understand how business firms, use social media marketing as a tool to brand themselves in the Indian consumer durable sector.
- To offer suggestions for promoting the sale of white goods through social media.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research paper is descriptive in nature. This study depends on the secondary data contributed by researchers/authors in journals, magazines, edited volumes, articles and Wikipedia. This present study also extracted some information through internet.

WHITE GOODS

Consumer behavioural changes make “Yesterday’s luxuries are today’s necessities”. India is emerging as an attractive market for consumer durables. But the vibrant environmental factors and fierce competition is making it imperative to understand the dynamics of consumer durable market. Consumer durables are a category of consumer products that do not have to be purchased frequently because they are made to last for an extended period of time (typically more than three years). They are also called durable goods or durables.

CLASSIFICATION OF INDIAN CONSUMER DURABLE GOODS

<i>White Goods</i>	<i>Brown Goods/Kitchen Appliances</i>	<i>Consumers Electronics</i>
• Air Conditioners • Refrigerators • Washing Machines • Sewing Machines • Watches and Clocks • Cleaning Equipment's • Other domestic appliances	• Microwave Ovens • Cooking Range • Chimneys • Mixers • Grinders • Electronic Fans • Irons	• T.V's • Audio's and Video system • Electronic accessories • PC's • Mobile Phones • Digital cameras • DVD and Camcorders

BRAND CONCEPT

In today's brand wars, creating a brand and adding value on it requires a long planning process. Branding cannot be thought only as the name of a firm. It also means a product, an existing name for a new product, an advertising campaign, a marketing motto and a logo. Brands are key players in developing customers' life and strengthening the economic condition of companies. According to American Marketing Association (AMA), "a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to separate them from those of competitors".

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social media marketing is the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media marketing programs usually center on efforts to create content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it across their social networks. The resulting electronic word of mouth (eWoM) refers to any statement consumers share via the Internet (e.g., web sites, social networks, instant messages, news feeds) about an event, product, service, brand or company. When the underlying message spreads from user to user and presumably resonates because it appears to come from a trusted, third-party source, as opposed to the brand or company itself, this form of marketing results in earned media rather than paid media. Social networking websites allow individuals to interact with one another and build relationships. When companies join these social channels, consumers can interact with them directly. That interaction can be more personal to users than traditional methods of outbound marketing and advertising.

INTERNET MARKETING

Today, the Internet appears to be a powerful weapon, especially for businesses in the area of promotion. This process of operation of Internet marketing is through the promotion and sales of company products using the Internet as the main instrument. The internet marketing offers many benefits for the art of sales marketing and media to a wider audience. This method is one of the

best ways to promote a product and has a direct response to customers. Internet marketing allows the marketer to reach consumers in a wide range of ways and enables them to offer a wide range of products and services. Effectively, Internet marketing makes business hours 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for every week of the year.

SOCIAL NETWORKS (FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, TWITTER, FRIENDSTER)

The current trend of the Internet is social interactions, and the trend is here to stay for a million corporations are in the hunt to acquire popular social networking sites because they understand the potential and the impact social networking has on Internet users.

SOCIAL BOOKMARKS (DEL.ICIO.US, STUMBLE UPON, DIGG)

Social bookmarking is a way for people to store, organize, search, and manage “bookmarks” of web pages. Users save links to web pages that they like or want to share, using a social bookmarking site to store these links. These bookmarks are usually public, and can be viewed by other members of the site where they are stored. Examples of social bookmarking sites include del.icio.us and digg.com. Most social bookmark services are organized by users applying “tags” or keywords to content on a Web site. This means that other users can view bookmarks that are associated with a chosen tag, and see information about the number of users who have bookmarked them. In many cases, users can also comment or vote on bookmarked items. Social bookmarking is also interchangeably sometimes referred to as folksonomy, collaborative tagging, social classification, social indexing, and social tagging. “Folksonomy” is a combination of the words folk and taxonomy, hence a folksonomy is a taxonomy generated by a person or group of people.

Social bookmarks enable users to share, organize and store URLs of websites they like and or find useful. And because social bookmarks are created by users who understand the content of the website they bookmark, it makes it easier for other users to find stuff related to an interest.

SOCIAL MEDIA (YOUTUBE, FLICKR, PODCASTS)

Social media is any website that allows social interaction. Social media is growing rapidly throughout the world. More adults and teenagers are joining sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter to interact with friends, family, and strangers. The introduction of social media has changed the world in many ways. It affects each individual in different ways. Today it can be used as a very helpful tool in changing a person’s life, but at the same time cause such conflicts which can negatively impact a person. While there are some negatives associated with social media, the positives in communication all around, has made the world stronger and a better place to live in. As with social networks and social bookmarks, social media has become increasingly popular among Internet users for the same reasons. Using a social media like YouTube or Flickr as a medium to promote the brand could bring a lot of traffics to the website.

BLOGS

Blogs are popular because they provide up-to-date information and enables readers to engage in discussions via comments. By using blog as promotional and branding, businesses can build a loyal readership and interact with their customer base. Blogs are indeed social media, despite the fact

that people tend to put them in a category all on their own these days. In fact, blogs are one of the oldest forms of social media that dominated the web long before we were finding and following everyone on social networks. The key features that make blogs part of social media are their user accounts, comment sections, and blog networks. Tumblr, Medium, Word Press, and Blogger are just a few examples of big blog platforms that have very active community blog networks.

7. SUGGESTIONS

- It is suggested that offline and online marketing strategies be brought into alignment to prevent mixed messages and to promote the availability of the online forums for interaction. Offline advertising should be used to complement the online media. Adding “visit us on Facebook” and other such texts to promotional material will help to raise awareness.
- The social networking strategy should sufficiently flexible to allow it to adapt to new developments and to determine what works and what does not work.
- A dedicated social media co-ordinator is recommended to monitor the impact of any changes implemented. A dedicated co-ordinator would also allow for consistency in communication. At the very least a profession agency experienced in social media marketing should be consulted at from the earliest planning stages.
- The reviews and complaints raised by the customers should be effectively managed and proper actions should be taken by the management and the action taken should also be communicated to the customer.
- The promotional offers during season on should be displayed on regular basis, so that large number of customers can be captured.

8. CONCLUSION

The consumer durable industry in India is set for sustained growth over the long term, fuelled by favourable consumer demographics, overall growth in services and industrial sectors and infrastructure development in suburban and rural areas. The consumer durables sectors in India, especially for the white goods sector, the business firms largely depend on social media for creating brand awareness, promoting and to establish brand loyalty among Indian urban sector with a majority share. The social media like Facebook, Twitter and even Youtube are largely used to brand their white goods. LG and Sony have done some feature introduction cum-promotion videos, but they need to go much beyond that to make full use of YouTube.

9. REFERENCES

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