

EXPLORING MOST INFLUENTIAL DIGITAL MARKETING ADS AMONG GEN Y

¹Tarun Babu Kandikupa, ²Dr. Y S S, Patro, ³V V Devi Prasad Kotni

¹Research Scholar, School of Management Studies, GIET University Gunupur, Odisha

²Professor, School of Management Studies, GIET University, Gunupur, Odisha.

³Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, GITAM School of Business, GITAM (Deemed to be University), Visakhapatnam, India

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to explore most influencing digital marketing techniques and also to find out the awareness levels of the consumers towards various digital marketing techniques. Digital marketing has reached new heights with the rise of smartphones and tablets. Even those who weren't even connected to this industry are now prepared to utilize it to promote their company. This age has practically everyone on social media, and those who don't have an account are literally looked down on for professional reasons. So, the question that comes up is how to examine how people act while they are shopping online. Based on what was revealed in this research, there are a number of strategic ideas that may be made to make digital marketing better. The most important thing to pay attention to are advertising that are based on competitions. These were shown to be the best at motivating people to make excellent judgments. Coupon deals also worked very well and should be a key technique to market. Email marketing didn't exhibit statistically significant outcomes at the typical level, but it showed potential and has to be looked into and tested further to determine how successful it truly is.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Digital Ads, Gen Y, Digital consumer behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing includes a wide range of strategies for promoting services, products, and brands. These strategies mostly utilize the internet as a promotional medium, but they also include mobile phones, conventional TV, and radio. The main goal is to use different types of digital media to promote companies. According to Techopedia, digital marketing is the use of digital technology to promote goods or services. This includes the internet, mobile phones, display ads, and any other digital media. Digital marketing is a broad phrase that includes a wide range of advertising methods that use digital technology to reach clients. According to the Financial Times, digital marketing is the use of digital channels to promote goods and services to customers. In the digital age we live in today, social media are a useful business tool for growth (Hoang et al., 2023), and people are motivated to follow virtual influencers (Shao, 2024). Virtual influencers, or computer-generated personas, are becoming more popular in marketing, but we still don't know much about how they affect how people think and act (Dinara et al., 2025).

Digital marketing has its roots in the 1980s. This was when new technologies were being

developed that made the computer system smart enough to keep track of client information. IBM built the first personal computer in 1981. By 1989, computers could hold 100 MB of data. In the 1980s, businesses also realized that it was important to build relationships with customers instead of merely selling goods. The marketers stopped doing certain things that were restricted, such list brokering, and switched to database marketing, which included. This was the year that it became common to keep a database of leads, clients, and business contracts. So, in 1986, the customer management firm Act was in charge of starting the database marketing software, which could now hold a lot of client information. Digital marketing is the use of digital technology to sell goods or services. This includes the Internet, mobile phones, display ads, and any other digital media. The growth of digital marketing during the 1990s and 2000s has transformed how companies and brands utilize technology to sell themselves. The aim of this research is to explore most influencing digital marketing techniques and also to find out the awareness levels of the consumers towards various digital marketing techniques.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Digital marketing is the use of digital technology like mobile phones, the internet, and other digital tools to promote and sell companies, services, and goods to the right people (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Companies are clearly moving from conventional marketing to digital marketing in today's world. Digital marketing is the use of online and internet resources to promote businesses, goods, and services (Kannan, 2017). Durmaz & Efendioglu (2016) spoke on how digital marketing is becoming the most important marketing technique in the previous few years. Digital marketing makes it easier for businesses to do business since it costs less for them to do it the right way. People's behavior as customers changes. As the market changes, so will the tastes and preferences of customers. This is because of new technologies and the way people want to meet their requirements and desires.

Marcel Gommans et al (2001) found that the website of the company that sells goods and services will have a big effect on what customers choose to buy. Reinartz and Kumar (2003) discovered that the company's efforts to send more emails are likely to make it more profitable. According to Chi (2011), web ads have a big effect on people's decisions about what to buy. Trusov et al. (2009) concluded that electronic word-of-mouth, site popularity, and social media were the most effective digital marketing methods for changing how people behave. Shankar et al. (2011) found that social media and internet ads were the most effective digital marketing methods. Dashaputre (2012) discovered that personalized messages sent via digital marketing had a big effect on how people made decisions. Goel (2016) discovered that the best ways to do digital marketing are via social media and online content. The contemporary consumer has started to utilize digital marketing and internet marketing as sources of information since their behavior is changing every day as they become used to using information and communication technology (Yogesh et al. 2020).

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This research used the judgment sampling approach to choose the people who would fill out the structured questionnaire as part of the data gathering procedure. People who took part in this research are digital shoppers and smartphone users in Visakhapatnam, India, who utilize both commercial and non-commercial electronic sources of information to purchase online or in

stores. The number of people who could take part in this research was cut down to only 150 for a number of reasons. The researcher gave the data capture tool to 250 people, but most of them (smartphone users and digital consumers) didn't know about different digital marketing channels like Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Affiliate Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Viral Marketing, and so on. But they knew about things like content marketing, email marketing, viral marketing, and social media marketing. The researcher got rid of samples that didn't know about all the digital marketing channels. This was because the respondents wouldn't be able to see how digital marketing affects their buying behavior if they didn't know about the channels.

Profile of Respondents:

Age Distribution: The age distribution reveals that the largest group (44%) consists of individuals aged 31 to 40 years, followed by those aged 51 to 60 years (20%) and 18 to 30 years (18%). The smallest age groups are 41 to 50 years (11%) and over 60 years (7%). Cumulatively, 62% of respondents are aged 40 or younger, while 93% are aged 60 or below, indicating a predominantly working-age sample with relatively few elderly participants.

Gender Distribution: The sample is male-dominated, with 61% male respondents compared to 39% female, suggesting a gender imbalance that may need further investigation depending on the study context.

Income Distribution: A striking 60% of respondents earn less than Rs. 10,000 per month, while 21% earn more than Rs. 40,000. The middle-income brackets (Rs. 10,001–Rs. 40,000) are sparsely represented (3–13%), highlighting a polarized income distribution with most respondents clustered at the lowest and highest ends.

Occupation Distribution: Over half the respondents (52%) are students, followed by self-employed individuals (23%) and business owners (12%). Traditional employment sectors (private and government employees) together make up just 13%, suggesting the sample may reflect a younger, academically inclined, or entrepreneurial demographic.

Education Distribution: The majority hold an undergraduate (UG) degree (40%), with another 25% having a postgraduate (PG) qualification. Higher Secondary (20%) and SSC (13%) educated respondents form smaller groups, while Higher PG (2%) is rare. Cumulatively, 73% have at least a UG degree, indicating a relatively educated sample.

The sample is predominantly 31–40 years old, male, and highly educated, with a significant student population. Most respondents are either low-income (<Rs. 10,000) or high-income (>Rs. 40,000), with few in middle brackets. High student representation suggests the data may reflect academic or early-career perspectives, complemented by self-employed/business groups.

The analysis was done in two parts. PART A: Analysis on awareness of digital marketing techniques. PART B: Analysis on most impactful digital marketing techniques.

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DICUSSION

PART A: Consumer Awareness on various Digital Marketing techniques:

Table 1: Model-1 Variables Entered/Removed^a			
Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
Model 1	SEO, SEM, SMM, CONTENT_MARKETING, AFFILIATE_MARKETING, INFLUENCER_MAREKTING, EMAIL_MARKETING, VIRAL_MARKETING, MOBILE MARKEITNG. ^b	.	Enter
a. Dependent Variable: DIGITAL_MARKETING_AWARENESS			
b. All requested variables entered.			

Table 2: Model-1 Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Model 1	.452 ^a	.204	.125	1.067
a. Predictors: (Constant), MOBILE_MARKEITNG, INFLUENCER_MAREKTING, SEO, VIRAL_MARKETING, SMM, AFFILIATE_MARKETING, SEM, EMAIL_MARKETING, CONTENT_MARKETING				

Table 3: Model-1 ANOVA^a results						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Model 1	Regression	26.277	9	2.920	2.564	.011 ^b
	Residual	102.473	90	1.139		
	Total	128.750	99			
a. Dependent Variable: DIGITAL_MARKETING_AWARENESS						
b. Predictors: (Constant), MOBILE_MARKEITNG, INFLUENCER_MAREKTING, SEO, VIRAL_MARKETING, SMM, AFFILIATE_MARKETING, SEM, EMAIL_MARKETING, CONTENT_MARKETING						

Table 4: Model-1 Coefficients^a				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.

		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Model 1	(Constant)	2.104	.539		3.906	.000
	SEO	.023	.103	.027	.220	.827
	SEM	-.195	.126	-.209	-1.553	.124
	SMM	.276	.117	.307	2.361	.020
	CONTENT MARKETING	-.008	.117	-.009	-.067	.947
	AFFILIATE MARKETING	-.048	.115	-.050	-.415	.679
	INFLUENCER MAREKTING	.090	.097	.108	.926	.357
	EMAIL MARKETING	-.135	.127	-.139	-1.059	.292
	VIRAL MARKETING	.198	.101	.237	1.971	.052
	MOBILE MARKEITNG	.244	.097	.261	2.519	.014
a. Dependent Variable: DIGITAL MARKETING AWARENESS						

This regression model examines the impact of nine digital marketing strategies on digital marketing awareness as shown in Table 1. The value of $R = 0.452$ which means Moderate correlation between predictors and the dependent variable. The value of $R^2 = 0.204$ (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.125$) where the model explains 20.4% of the variance in awareness, but adjusted for over fitting, this drops to 12.5% as shown in Table 2. As per Table 3, ANOVA (F-test) results indicate, the value $F = 2.564$, $p = 0.011$ indicates that the model is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), meaning the predictors collectively have some explanatory power. $F = 2.564$, $p = 0.011$ which indicates that model is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), meaning the predictors collectively have some explanatory power. Individual Predictor Analysis (Coefficients) reports while the overall model is significant, only two predictors show statistically significant effects ($p < 0.05$) as shown in Table 4.

Significant Predictors ($p < 0.05$): SMM (Social Media Marketing) with Beta = 0.307, $p = 0.020$ indicates that Strong positive impact on awareness. A 1-unit increase in SMM adoption is associated with a 0.276-unit increase in awareness. MOBILE_MARKETING with Beta = 0.261, $p = 0.014$ indicates that Significant positive impact. A 1-unit increase in mobile marketing efforts leads to a 0.244-unit increase in awareness.

Marginally Significant Predictors ($p < 0.10$): VIRAL_MARKETING (Beta = 0.237, $p = 0.052$) indicates Nearly significant positive effect.

Non-Significant Predictors ($p > 0.10$): SEM (Search Engine Marketing, Beta = -0.209, $p = 0.124$) indicates Slight negative trend, EMAIL_MARKETING (Beta = -0.139, $p = 0.292$) indicates Weak negative effect, INFLUENCER_MARKETING (Beta = 0.108, $p = 0.357$) indicates Minor positive trend, AFFILIATE_MARKETING (Beta = -0.050, $p = 0.679$) indicates Negligible effect, SEO (Beta = 0.027, $p = 0.827$) indicates No impact and CONTENT_MARKETING (Beta = -0.009, $p = 0.947$) indicates No effect.

Social Media Marketing and Mobile Marketing are the most influential strategies for increasing digital marketing awareness. Viral marketing also shows potential ($p = 0.052$) and may warrant further investigation. SEO, SEM, email marketing, influencer marketing, and affiliate marketing do not significantly affect awareness in this model. The Model Limitation is there, Low explanatory power (Adj. $R^2 = 0.125$) indicates other unmeasured factors (e.g., budget,

audience demographics, campaign creativity) likely play a bigger role. Potential multicollinearity (if some strategies overlap, e.g., SMM and viral marketing). Social Media Marketing (SMM) and Mobile Marketing are the only statistically significant drivers of digital marketing awareness in this model. While the overall model is significant, its predictive power is limited, suggesting other factors not included here may be at play.

Model 2: Most influential digital marketing Ads.

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
Model-2	KEYWORD_SEACH_ADS, WEBSITE_ADS, LOCATION_BASED_ADS, INTERNET_ADS, OPT_IN_OUT, COUPAN_ADS, EMAIL_ADS, ADS_IN_CONTESTS, VIRAL_ADS, ADS_IN_BLOGS, SAMPLING_ADS, MESSAGING_ADS ^b	.	Enter
a. Dependent Variable: MOBILE MARKEITNG			
b. All requested variables entered.			

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Model-2	.545 ^a	.297	.200	1.092
a. Predictors: (Constant), KEYWORD_SEACH_ADS, WEBSITE_ADS, LOCATION_BASED_ADS, INTERNET_ADS, OPT_IN_OUT, COUPAN_ADS, EMAIL_ADS, ADS_IN_CONTESTS, VIRAL_ADS, ADS IN BLOGS, SAMPLING_ADS, MESSAGING_ADS				

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Model-2	Regression	43.898	12	3.658	3.068	.001 ^b
	Residual	103.742	87	1.192		
	Total	147.640	99			
a. Dependent Variable: IMPACTFUL ADS						

b. Predictors: (Constant), KEYWORD_SEACH_ADS, WEBSITE_ADS, LOCATION_BASED_ADS, INTERNET_ADS, OPT_IN_OUT, COUPAN_ADS, EMAIL_ADS, ADS_IN_CONTESTS, VIRAL_ADS, ADS_IN_BLOGS, SAMPLING_ADS, MESSAGING_ADS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Model-2	(Constant)	4.448	.685		6.493	.000
	INTERNET_ADS	-.192	.107	-.179	-1.797	.076
	WEBSITE_ADS	-.017	.132	-.016	-.132	.895
	ADS_IN_BLOGS	-.114	.126	-.116	-.908	.366
	COUPAN_ADS	.206	.103	.204	1.995	.049
	SAMPLING_ADS	-.171	.115	-.198	-1.482	.142
	ADS_IN_CONTESTS	.359	.104	.431	3.463	.001
	EMAIL_ADS	.213	.125	.218	1.710	.091
	OPT_IN_OUT	-.066	.102	-.074	-.643	.522
	VIRAL_ADS	-.108	.118	-.116	-.915	.363
	MESSAGING_ADS	-.079	.126	-.086	-.629	.531
	LOCATION_BASED_ADS	-.021	.102	-.021	-.209	.835
KEYWORD_SEACH_ADS	-.119	.094	-.135	-1.271	.207	

a. Dependent Variable: MOBILE_MARKETING

The study examines *Consumer Decision (CONSUMER_DECISION)* as the dependent variable and evaluates the influence of twelve digital marketing strategies as independent variables as shown in Table 5. The model demonstrates a moderate correlation, with an R value of 0.545. The coefficient of determination, R^2 , is 0.297, indicating that approximately 29.7% of the variance in consumer decision-making is explained by the model, as shown in Table 6, while the adjusted R^2 is slightly lower at 0.200, accounting for 20.0% of the variance after adjusting for the number of predictors. The overall model is statistically significant, as evidenced by the ANOVA results ($F = 3.068$, $p = 0.001$) as per Table 7, suggesting that the digital marketing strategies collectively have a meaningful impact on consumer decisions.

As per Table 8, the model presents several limitations that must be acknowledged. First, it explains only about 20% of the variance in consumer decisions (as indicated by the adjusted R^2), meaning a substantial portion of influencing factors remains unaccounted for. This suggests the presence of additional, unmeasured variables—such as consumer attitudes, economic conditions, social influence, or brand loyalty—that likely play a significant role in decision-making. Additionally, the inclusion of twelve interrelated digital marketing strategies raises the possibility of multicollinearity. If these marketing inputs are highly correlated with one another, the stability and interpretability of the regression coefficients could be compromised, potentially inflating variance and obscuring the true effect of each predictor.

Among the twelve digital marketing strategies analyzed, two emerged as statistically significant positive predictors of consumer decision-making at the 5% significance level. *ADS_IN_CONTESTS* demonstrated the strongest positive influence, with a beta coefficient (β) of 0.431 and a p-value of 0.001, indicating that for each unit increase in this strategy, consumer decision scores increased by approximately 0.359 units. Similarly, *COUPAN_ADS* had a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.204$, $p = 0.049$), suggesting that coupon promotions play a notable role in influencing consumer decisions.

In addition, two variables were found to be marginally significant at the 10% level. *EMAIL_ADS* showed a near-significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.218$, $p = 0.091$), indicating potential effectiveness of email marketing in shaping decisions. Conversely, *INTERNET_ADS* exhibited a marginally significant negative effect ($\beta = -0.179$, $p = 0.076$), suggesting that generic internet advertisements might slightly deter consumer decisions.

All other digital marketing strategies evaluated—including website advertisements, viral marketing, and location-based promotions—did not show statistically significant effects on consumer decision-making.

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

Based on what was found, there are a number of strategic suggestions that can be made to improve digital marketing. First and foremost, ads that are based on contests should be given the most attention because they were found to be the most effective at getting people to make good decisions. Coupon promotions also had a big effect and should be used as a main way to promote. Email marketing didn't show statistically significant results at the usual level, but it showed promise and needs to be looked into and tested more to see how effective it really is. Marketers should be careful with generic internet ads because they had a small negative effect on how people acted. Lastly, it would be a good idea to look at the other digital marketing strategies in the model again, like website, viral, and location-based ads, since they didn't have any statistically significant effects in this study. In addition to the corporate, commercial, and management effects listed above, the research also has economic effects. The study's conclusions will be helpful for both major businesses and small and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs). They will be particularly helpful for new businesses who don't have a lot of money to spend on advertising. The study made a theatrical contribution to the field of digital consumer behavior by showing that location-based ads have the biggest effect on digital consumers. This means that digital marketers can plan their product or service offerings based on how close they are to the target customer, since customers always try to get the product for as little time, money, and effort (both physical and mental) as possible.

CONCLUSION

Digital marketing helps businesses stay one step ahead of their competitors. Digital marketing is the best way for a business to obtain a big edge over its competitors. Organizations need to contact as many people as possible, and this is easier to do online than in person. Digital marketing is also cheaper than traditional marketing. Contest-based advertising and coupon promotions are the best ways to get people to buy something, according to the data. This analysis shows that other common digital marketing methods, like website ads, viral marketing, and

location-based promotions, don't have a big effect or don't have any effect at all. This means that marketers should focus on strategies that are fun and offer rewards, while also looking at how well more traditional or broad digital tactics are working. Traditional advertising, whether it's on TV, radio, in newspapers, magazines, or ordinary mail, can be quite expensive. Entrepreneurs may now get a little copy of it online. Some of the most sophisticated alternatives to traditional advertising are free, and all of them may be a lot cheaper than their traditional counterparts if the organization has someone to manage and improve its strategies.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The following steps are suggested to build on what this analysis found. First, we need to look more closely into why contest-based ads work so well. This could mean looking into things like consumer psychology, how engaged people are, or how much they think the ads are worth. Second, it would be helpful to look into how the best strategies can work together, like combining contests with coupon promotions, to see if they can have a positive effect on how people make decisions. Finally, to make the model better at explaining things, future analyses should look at other factors that might have an effect, like consumer demographics, brand loyalty, social media use, or trust in digital platforms. These steps can help us get a better idea of what really makes people act in digital spaces. This research only looks at twelve digital marketing techniques. There may be more digital marketing practices in real life, thus future studies should take that into account. The research just looks at Visakhapatnam city, but it may also be done in other big cities and nations. The study's biggest problem is that it only looked at 150 people, which means there is a significant probability of sampling error.

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