ABSTRACT

In today’s hi tech world, Social Media is professed as “the media”. It has changed the concept of journalism; discovered rare and raw talents; and social networking sites have sparked revolutions. From the entertainment industry to political affairs, it has left its marks. The purpose of this research is to explore the role of social media in sharing information. Social media includes all types of web services that allow the users to create their profile and correspond with each other. With the evolving popularity of Social Media, some arbitrarily selected cases were studied and investigated in order to determine the role and function of Social Networking Sites. The study depicted that people have got their own media to heave their say and stand for their own rights. It is a symbol of true democratization of information. The unique nature of participation of Social Networking Sites cuts through all religion, caste and class barriers and yet does not perturb the typical eccentricity integral to various groups within the masses. The bottom-up communication is followed by masses these days than the top-bottom approach and hence, in a way, it is a Complete Media.

Keywords: Social Media; Social Networking Sites; Complete Media; Bottom Up approach

INTRODUCTION

When the web portals became popular in the mid-1990s, it enabled people to share information in ways that was never possible before. But as limitless as the possibilities seemed, there was a personal aspect that was lacking. In the early 2000s, the Web became much more personal as social networking websites were introduced and embraced by the masses. Social Networking sites are defined as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and, view and transverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

The research question in this paper is ‘What is role of social media in sharing information’ The present study intend to comprehend the social media environment and the impact of common social media tools used in practice. To solve the research question, cases have been taken to assess how business managers and IT managers in leading organizations use social media.

OBJECTIVE

To Explore the Role of Social Media in Sharing Information

Evolution

There are many ideas about first occurrence of social media. Social Networks have developed over the passage of years to the modern-day techie masses that prefers digital media.

People started using emails to convey messages in 1960 through the Internet was available to the masses only after 1990.
Multi-User Dungeon (MUD) developed by Roy Trubshaw included role-playing games, interactive fiction, and online chat was the first and the oldest virtual online community.

Bulletin Board System (BBS) developed in 1978, is a computer system where users can upload and download software’s by just logging in and can read news and info, or communicates with other masses.

During 90s hordes of networking sites were introduced like Six Degrees, Black Planet, Asian Avenue, and MoveOn.

In 2000, social media acknowledged an enormous increase in users and websites. Sites like LunarStorm, Sixdegrees, Cyword, Ryze and Wikipedia were developed for the users who shared common interest in music, education, movies and friendship based on social networking.

Fotolog, sky blog and Friendster were launched in the year 2001 and in 2003, sites like MySpace, LinkedIn, lastFM, tribe.net, Hi5, etc were introduced.

In 2004, popular names like Facebook, Harvard, Dogster and Mixi were evolved.

During 2005, sites like Yahoo! 360, YouTube, cyword and Black Planet were developed and soon gained popularity amongst the masses.

Keeping in view the growing popularity of Social Media, following cases were studied and analyzed in order to determine the role of the Social Networking Sites during the 2014.

CASES

Selfie Campaign by Axe, Turkish Airlines, Keneth Kole, Ponds and T-Mobile: The word Selfie was developed in the year 2013. Selfie contests were organized by various organizations to create awareness and brand identity.

Axe: When Axe launched AXE peace, they kept the launch of their new product as the main idea and ran their selfie contest on various social networking sites like Twitter, Instagram & Facebook from February 2014 to June, 2014. They included four themes– Kiss your loved one, kiss your rival, Pucker up and Kiss your AXE. The basic idea of this contest was to arouse awareness about the new product.

Turkish Airlines: They took celebrities Kobe Bryant and Lionel Messi clicking selfies to promote the campaign via a YouTube video. The Selfie Shootout contest continued for 3 months. Two winners were announced who received the maximum likes on social platforms and were rewarded a Turkish Airlines roundtrip flight ticket. The video on the YouTube received more than 130 million clicks within just two weeks after its release.

Kenneth Cole: The brand started their selfie contest on January 31st 2014 and it ended on 31st March 2014. To participate, the contestants were supposed to follow their Instagram account by taking a selfie with the message band and post it with the hashtag #Dress For Your Selfie. Winners got the chance to win free shoes a year!

Ponds: Ponds ran the selfie contest from 18th April – 12th June 2014 on Twitter in which followers had to upload selfies with the hashtag #Ponds Selfie Ready. The campaign was also promoted on Facebook. Winners stood a chance to be showcased on a billboard across six cities. Three winners were selected on 12th June and the ones who were shortlisted, were offered with a Ponds hamper.

T-Mobile: T-Mobile has launched its back-to-school selfie contest #Grade Up in which the participants have to follow T-mobile on their Instagram account, they are supposed to vote daily for their favorites and have to post their selfie on the assigned day on Instagram. Five 5 winners were announced for each entry period and were rewarded with a prize package.

CCD Campaign: With people around the world wrapped up by the #Worldcup 2014 football fever, Twitter amongst social website is on the top. Twitter promoted the people to tweet while watching the match. This is an appropriate time for brands to influence this moment, talk about the game, connect
with people and keep conversing with them about various matches! Cafe Coffee Day was amongst the first to be part of the World Cup 2014. It created a football quiz for the fans on 11th June 2014 for Indian Residents. The participants had to follow @CafeCoffeeDay page on Twitter using the hashtag #CCDFootballQuiz. Ten winners were announced and each one of the winner won Rs.1000 moments card from CCD.

**Trident Campaign:** This campaign started at Mumbai’s Hotel Trident at BKC for two days - 29th March and 30th March, 2014. Three social media Influencers were invited to participate in this campaign, where they had to spend two days in the hotel using Twitter and Instagram to take all the benefits of the hotel by using the hashtag#TridentSocialHotel. The campaign focused on two activities: #Tweesurehunt and #Instachallenge. In the #Tweesurehunt task the participants were given clues and the answers where in the hotel itself and they were required to reach each destination in order to unlock the subsequent clue. In the #Instachallenge, they were tweeted the clues and the participants were required to click pictures and post the same. They even ran a contest at the same time on Twitterhandle on 30th March 2014 which was open to all. The participants had to answer 10 questions correctly by using their twitter #TridentSocialHotel. The winners stood a chance to win a free night stay at the Trident BKC Hotel.

**Maybelline India:** Maybelline India ran a Twitter Contest on February 25th 2014 in order to promote 30 shades of Pink in which the participants were encouraged to tweet about why they love colour ‘Pink’ with the hashtag #ILovePinkBecause. The winners stood a chance to win Maybelline products. Twitter was occupied with The hashtag #ILovePinkBecause the whole day for solid 24+ hours.

**CONCLUSION**

Social media plays an important role in influencing users. They actually act provided they get some benefit. Social networking sites keeps its users connected and updated about the latest happenings around the world. These are easy platforms to express ones opinions. Cases examined during the study show that helps us share our beliefs and ideas. it’s the People’s Media. It has the character of democratization of information in a true sense, where the prevailing prototype of communication loses its control. The participating nature of SNS cuts through religion, caste and class obstacles and yet does not upset the typical peculiarity intrinsic to various groups amongst the masses. These websites show a movement of masses moving towards individuation of information where the content does not just deals with the masses in general but also with each entity as a unit. The bottom-up approach of communication is followed and therefore it can be called as a complete media. In a nutshell:

1. Major part of Internet users know about social media and it can be an excellent tool for brand promotion, if used proficiently.
2. Social media not only make customers’ conscious about organizations and brands.
3. Customers have positive opinion about social media marketing practices; they consider it to be more personal, fascinating, innovative, educational and interactive.
4. Brand image and gifts attract users

**REFERENCES**


