DIGITAL MARKETING AND ITS IMPULSIVE ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Digital marketing provides a unique opportunity of communication to marketers to interact instantly with customers. Digital marketing or online marketing is effectively used well ahead in education sector and it has significantly changed traditional approach of institutes and even students vies-versa. Moreover, popularity of online marketing is constantly increasing in education sector because of its easy accessibility. In addition its introduction of new way of communication to publish information worldwide web (www) completely transformed the trend to communication with students and parents as use of smart devices and internet connectivity are accelerate the success rate to meet customer requirements on priority level. Digital marketing provides innovative platform to easy approach, communication, Information, Transaction and admission process of Institutes. It also changes traditional learning pedagogies, syllabus, exams and evaluation system. The need of time is to provide a new approach towards the students and to address their learning and other requirements in a better ways. In today’s transforming economy education sector has rated one of the most information technology intensive sector. Also the modern administrative structure and delivery system of most of the organisations and education institutes changed because of advancement of Information Technology.

The increased use of internet has a great influence on education sector. For students when information and data of institutes is available on line can be helpful to take decision to analyse and choose college/institute, course and subjects as well. Now a day’s majority of students are internet users and internet has become major search platform for all like course, school/college, study material, staff, facility and even major methods including payment has become online. This trend indicates the education institutes must have their presence online to reach more students.

This paper summarises key findings on present status of use of Digital Marketing technology in education system and learning paradigms. It also addresses the use of innovative technology for the development of collaborative and interactive learning and Marketing communication.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Educational Institutes approach, Innovation in education, e-commerce

INTRODUCTION

Digital Marketing is the promotion of products and services through various digital channels to reach the target audience. It is the key of effective promotion of brands with minimum cost. It is the best way
to send right message to right person at right time. It’s two way communications to interact with customer. In this world, World Wide Web’s internet age online presence is must to specify existence of any business, online presence is compulsory. So it applies to educational institutes as well to help them to grow to next level. Education sector have challenge to deals with new audience every year. To reach to new audience every year budget is the most constraint to promote educational institutes to attract prospective students every year. Every parent searches online for best schools and colleges in spite of personal visit to every education institute. They are expecting entire information about institute like course curriculum, intellectual capital, facilities, fees, intake, extracurricular activities and admission process and online forms and query solving. Moreover parents started judging institution by their website and online presence. So use of digital marketing in education sector is the effective way to reach audience and to aim for new opportunities.

Modern technique of education provides the promise of knowledge based economy and rapid national economic growth. This era of education bring hope to use new technologies to overcome many complexities in ‘21st century skills’ such as creative thinking and problem solving. Students are aspiring for various innovative course and curriculum at par at international standard as the competition become global. Opportunities are available at global level and to meet the requirements of international market the syllabus, curriculum and courses also going to become global standard. Not only in higher education but also in school education the introduction of boards likes International Baccalaureate (IB) is providing uniform and international standard education throughout the world. Apart from this formal education various private institutes and private bodies are providing various autonomous courses professionally. Parallel to all these new era of online education, online courses and online training is grabbing space in education sector.

India is one of the largest networks of higher education institute in world with 822 universities 42000 plus colleges and 3.48 crore students enrolled for higher education. India’s education sector offers great opportunity in future as 29% population is in the age group of 0-14 years ( by IBEF) and to accommodate and provide quality education. Government also introducing ‘skill development’ programs with the initiatives of private sector. Central government formed separate Ministry of Skill development & Entrepreneurship. Through this ministry launched various programs like ‘Pradhan Mantri YUVA Yojna’ to provide entrepreneurship education and training in the country. Skill India Mission like, STRIVE and SANKALP schemes also launched to provide skill education in country. The major decision taken by government is 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in education sector through the automatic route since 2002. The Govt. of India is working on New Education Policy to address the changing dynamics in education industry. It means government dominated education sector became open for foreign competition to meet the requirement of population. Considering this situation Education Institutes using advanced Technology in education and to promote Institutions.

The environment of higher education completely changed and increased the level of competition, availability of information and changing trends in job market shifted the focus of education industry towards technology enabled education system across the world. With this technology centric education and increasing pressure to keep enrolment rate high in colleges, institutes and universities are opting for more business centric approach in education sector as well. Indian school education also holds an important place in the global education industry. India has more than 15 lakh schools with over 26 crore students enrolled. However there is still a lot of potential for further development in the education system. Also India has become the second largest market for e-learning after USA. The market size is at 14000 crores and is expected to reach 38000 crore by 2020. The distance education Market in India is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of around 11% during 2016-2020. The aim of the government to raise its current enrolment ratio of 24% to 30% by 2020 will also boost the growth of distance education in India.

According to survey common educational institutes spending 11% of yearly budget on digital marketing activities. Educational institutes are spending on digital marketing to differentiate themselves from competitors. Effective digital marketing can help institute to increase their reach and
enrolment rate. It’s not only good marketing strategy for educational institute but it can help to strengthen their fundraising capabilities and market position.

MARKET SIZE OF EDUCATION INDUSTRY IN INDIA

The education market in India witnessed major growth in the years and India will have world’s largest tertiary-age population and second largest graduate talent pipeline globally by the end of 2020. The current education market size in India valued is 650000 crore and expected to reach nearly double in 2020. Currently school education market segment share is 52% of education market in India; higher education contributes 15% of the market size, text book, e-learning and other supportive services contributes 28% and vocational education in manufacturing and services contributes 5%. Higher education in India is going under rapid growth and expansion phase. Currently higher education system in India is largest in world enrolment over 3.48 crore students within last two decades with spending of Rs 46200 crores. The total amount of Foreign Direct Investment in education sector in India is 10000 crores from April 2000 to March 2017 [data released by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)].

The government’s initiative ‘Digital India” is growing affordability and usage of smartphones and internet penetration in rural India. Rapid growth of digitization strengthened the digital infrastructure.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE OF DIGITAL MARKETING AND EDUCATION SECTOR

Growing internet penetration and data consumption is resulting to increase digital advertisement spending in India at a compound rate of 30.8% between 2016 and 2021 according to KPMG report. In addition to this mobile advertisement and social media aided digital video spending’s expected to grow at 50.9% and 40% annually in 2016-2020 respectively (By Digital First Journey Report by KPMG). Internet users in the country will double by 2021 to 829 million users from 373 million users in 2016 according to a recent report. This means roughly 59% of the Indian population will use the internet. Also, there would be 200 crore networked devices in 2021 up from 140 crores in 2016.

In today’s global environment education sector became competitive and sophisticated than ever before. Privatization of education industry increased a market potential of “education Industry” as something of favourite among Wall Street in New York USA and all over the world. For this reason education institutes turn their attention now to the potential effects of these marketing activities on the psychological and physical wellbeing of students and on the quality of education they receive.

“Individuals are controlled through the power of the norm and this power is effective because it is relatively invisible. In modern society the behaviour of an individuals is not regulated trough overt repression but through a set of standards and values associated with normality which are set into play by network of beneficent and scientific forms of knowledge” Mc Nay, L.(1994). Foucault: A critical Introduction. Cambridge: Polity (94-95); “So the images, the values, the ideas of advertising are loaded inside us because that’s the way all culture works. To not be influenced by advertising would be to live outside of culture. No human being lives out of culture.” The third person effect refers to the phenomenon that people tend to think that advertising and other such communications influence others more than themselves. See Davision, W.P. (1996).

Digital Marketing in particular is well suited to exploit student’s developmental challenges. On the web information is only a click away from any advertisement, making impulsive purchase easier than they have ever been. Digital marketing strategy works on collect data of users to match advertising through computer user’s histories and other personal information. This information’s are used to further explore highly targeted marketing strategies.

The older generation slowly getting connected with digital marketing but the younger generation has grown up by knowing only digital channels/marketing for getting information. In education sector primary advertising audience is youth and digital marketing continuously growing its importance
because of its success and increasing adoption in educational institutes. Reports shows that 93% of college students have access to internet and the average time they spend on internet is 3.4 to 4 hours including all devices. Students are accessing internet to find information about course and college. As the digital marketing impulsive is very high on students hence every education institute is forced to have their online presence in digital world.

Traditional marketing channels aren’t completely shut off but on the other hand digital marketing platform provide much easier access to youth. As the digital marketing is more important and relevant to education industry.

Digital marketing is the promotion of products and services through various digital channels to reach target audience. It is the key of effective way of brand promotion with cost effectiveness. It ensures the right message to right person at right time. And to exist the presence of business online presence is compulsory for the success path.

So the change of marketing strategy to educational institutes will help education sector to grow to next level as the increased usage of internet has great influence on education sector. This indicates that the educational institutes must mark their presence and use digital marketing as a compulsory marketing mix strategy in addition to traditional marketing strategies.

A study released by eMarketers indicates that education is a top industry in the world currently using social media marketing as a part of overall marketing strategy. Over 72% of respondents from higher education sector said that they are using social media as a marketing strategy and 17% are planning to implement social media in marketing strategy.

**PRACTICES OF DIGITAL MARKETING IN EDUCATION SECTOR**

For the application of digital marketing in any industry first it’s important to define target audience and their personal behaviour. Accordingly right channels for promotion can be used to reach the maximum target audience. Some of the best practices for digital marketing in education sector are used as.

**Create a Website:** Website is the primary online presence of business. Website is a source of information and knowledge of an educational institute it must convey important USP, special offerings and it should be attractive, motivational and trustworthy for students and parents. Most important is it should be solution for most possible queries of students and parents. The details of establishment, vision, campus environment, courses, faculty, experience, facilities, amenities, benefits, application or enquiry form and prompt feedback system. And it should be compatible to all devices.

**Search Engine Optimization:** Content optimization helps in search rankings of website and blogs and helps to reach more students. Appropriate keywords are the key to drive more traffic towards website. Preparing content by observing competitors websites and educational blogs and include keywords in heading subheading and anchor tag is recommended. Not only on page but off page SEO helps to attract new audience by linking with relevant educational forum discussion, blogs, and websites of educational institutes.

**Use of Social Media:** Social Media is the most popular and followed in youngsters. Promotion of institute through quality content and banners by targeted communities/pages of students, parents and faculty will be advantageous. It engages in two way communication. To reach more students and parents most use full channel are Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp etc. It helps to reduce marketing cost/acquisition cost, vast & fast reach to audience, visual presentation of institutes in friendly manner. It allows two way communication as well as personal conversation and conversion as well.

**Mobile Marketing:** Approximately 50% of internet web page views come from mobile devices and major share comes from students between the ages of 18-25. This is the reason educational institutes are targeting mobile audience for marketing campaign. To target this particular audience, educational
institutes are putting an effort to send crispy messages, videos and other promotional material on mobile.

**Writing Blog:** Blog is a source of knowledge and information to attract audience. Regular blogs on education and current affairs attract lot of students. Blog will promote institute and provide space for students, faculty and parents to read, write and share the information. It helps to improve ranking and high standards in education industry by attracting prospects and motivating students. Involvement of faculty and student in writing blog will be more advantageous. Blog writer must have an idea about popular blogs of educational institutes and sites, current trends which attract student audience. Educational blogs are mainly targeted for students and must be interesting.

**Paid Channels:** Search and display ads are the useful way to promote educational institutes. We can run ad campaign on Google AdWords by targeting audience with specific criteria and as per the specific requirement. Another way of creating more awareness and lead generation is Google display AdCampaign to drive more traffic to website. Most relevant keywords will help to increase number of impressions and visits to specified web page.

**Email Marketing:** Email marketing is the most cost effective way to reach directly to prospective students. First of all to create an effective and precise content with catchy headline and separate email list for each category of target customer i.e. students, parents and as per the courses and programs.

**Re-Targeting:** There is a lot of scope for lead generation through various digital marketing channels. To convert these prospects in to customer we must re-target them till conversion. We can send follow-up emails, can show display ads to interested students through targeting options available. We can make separate target audience for re-targeting.

**Lead generation and CRM:** We can generate more lead through ad campaigns. Apart from this buying leads from third party i.e. educational portals (For example shiksha.com, rediff.com) is the best option. A good Customer Relationship manager (CRM) will maintain long term and healthy relationships with audience. By auto-importing the leads, queries, follow up and website visitors will be result in to better conversion rate.

**Online Reputation Management:** Online reputation matters best reach and alert action on positive and negative messages matters a lot. By implementing digital marketing in education institutes online reputation can be increased. Online reputation can be maintained by creating best blogs, campus videos, alumni feedback, faculty and inspirational personality interviews, testimonials, research work, achievements and campus news will help to attract and maintain attention of audience.

Digital Marketing is a powerful tool in education institutes to implement marketing strategies. But the same time educational institutes have to build offline reputation, brand and good word of mouth publicity so that it will help to encash on online platform. Monitoring of whole process is very necessary either institutes have to recruit professional team or outsource work to digital marketing agency.

**ADVANTAGES OF DIGITAL MARKETING IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES**

**Cost effective:** Online marketing platforms are affordable as compared to traditional marketing practices. Digital marketing practices like social media, SEO, google Ads, email and mobile marketing requires less involvement and large audience target.

**Instant Feedback:** Digital marketing platforms provide two ways communication and instance feedback can be received. Digital marketing is an easy way of interaction and messages are sent and received within short time.

**Measurable:** There are various tools to measure digital marketing effectiveness. This marketing is highly targeted and in most of the cases its permissions based marketing and it’s easy for educational institutes to measure and track the effectiveness of marketing campaign.
Easy Accessible Tools: Digital marketing platforms are easily accessible and better result producing tools and guarantee a large focused audience.

High Conversion ratio: SMS, email, website visitors, google ad and mobile marketing these are the best digital marketing forms that receive high response ratio because they are personal and targeted in right manner.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

This study has been conducted to analyse and collect information about innovation in technology supported Marketing strategy. Study also focuses on the impact of digital marketing on education sector. This paper also discusses online marketing solutions and challenges faced by education institutes in Global education scenario. This study will add more ingredients and crisp to take decision while adopting as well as running digital marketing channels in education institutes. The study will be helpful to analyse trends in education industry and it could be easy for organisation to identify and adopt new trends.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data is more important in any research work. For this paper researcher collected secondary data. The present paper is purely based on secondary data source. The secondary data for the paper was collected from different online research papers, reference books and journals.

ANALYSIS AND MAIN FINDINGS

The older generation slowly getting aware to the idea of digital marketing and younger generation grown up knowing only of digital channels as an information source. In education sector primary advertising audience is youth and because of that digital marketing is getting importance in education institutes and institutes are adopting digital marketing as an important strategy. While traditional marketing channels aren’t completely shut off from young audience. But on the other hand digital marketing platform provides much easier access to the youth that doesn’t online but practically lives online, making them more important and relevant to education industry. Attention span and tolerance of youth is very short, so they need information relevant and engaging content that gives them a basis for fast decision making. According to findings 4 out of 5 Indian students consider internet as a main source to find their college or course related information while 3 out of 4 students feel that internet is a complete source of information for their searches regarding college. Using digital marketing platform marketers ensures the right kind of information provided to right candidate in right periodicity to help them making right choice. Those who clicked on website link or enquired were became leads and can be easily reached out and who dropped out can be re-targeted. These campaigns not only deliver right message and engage audience, it gives educational institute’s larger funnel and huge enrolment than traditional marketing strategies.

The amount of planning and logistics to start traditional marketing campaign are far greater than to make digital campaign viral. Compared to the price of print campaign entails an e-mail campaign or series of post on social media or video clip on YouTube or Facebook barely cost a fraction. And making comparison of video advertisement on YouTube and television is simply incomparable.

The challenge of educational marketing strategy is to incorporate parents and children as separate target audiences and address them individually with different platforms, communication routes and brand experiences. Maximise conversions with sales performance and pipeline analysis, insight of consumer behaviour and post sales services.

Parents and students are finding names of institutions/universities in search engines, if it do not show up on top of the result then people could have impression that institution could not have reputation. As a consequence potential student prefer other institute which quickly found on internet. The presence in social media, search result, regular updates, online debates, competitions, audios, likes and loyal base
of followers indicates the professionalism and credibility of institute. Institutes not capable of reaching this balance are considered as old fashioned or boring.

Recent studies found a link in increased impulse buying and a mixture of techniques and post likes. The primary location of study was in a Facebook. The most fruitful responses came when there were features in the text of the post, close social relationships of the members of the group, and likes from better known members.

**SUGGESTIONS**

1. Using digital marketing platform marketers ensures the right kind of information provided to right candidate in right periodicity to help them making right choice but the same time negative feedback damage overall strategy.

2. In this case market is very sensitive and available on fingertips to move in a positive direction 24 hours monitoring is required.

3. CRM system of education system must be very strong and responsive to in-cash benefits of digital marketing in education institutes.

4. Once you adopt digital marketing platforms then consistency is must.

5. Only experts can make it more successful so that dependency on professional staff or professional agency is mandatory at least in present scenario.

**CONCLUSION**

The goal of any organisation is improving quality of communication and feedback system and education sector is not optional and digital marketing is a path for success.

Digital marketing assist transformation to fill the communication gap among students, teachers, parents and education institutes overall administration.

Research indicates that regular use digital marketing platform increases brand awareness, reputation, enquiries and easy connectivity with students and parents.

Discussing the challenges related to introducing digital marketing in developing country like India, and issues related to change management in the institutions.

The research also observes that effectiveness of digital marketing is better in case of higher education sector as compare to school education sector.

Digital platforms have changed the basic form of existence of education sector because of steep competition and forced to have digital presence is pre-requisite for education institutes.

For an educational institution to reach the goal of success, digital marketing is the path. We are not saying to completely avoid traditional marketing, because offline reputation is the foundation for any online actions, especially for an industry like education sector. But, digital marketing in the education sector has committed to giving something big that out-stand and engage the right audience.

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