

# **DIGITAL MARKETING FOR COMMON MAN**

**An Overview By**

**Mr. S Md. Shakir Ali**

**BFC PUBLICATIONS**



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With his new endeavor, **Digitoze** has started rising to new heights and has started setting trend for other companies of the industry.

### **Awarded By:**

- National award for Eminent Educationist by Indo-American (Indus) Foundation for Digital Marketing
- Digital Marketing Man of the Year by AICC
- Best Digital Marketing Services provider in Andhra Pradesh by Brands Academy
- Best Upcoming Digital Marketing Academy in Andhra Pradesh by Brands Academy

He had been taking various educational management papers on Entrepreneurship, general management, Marketing, Information Systems, Brand Management, Digital marketing, e Commerce. Entrepreneurs" at MSME Hyderabad. I hope this effort to write the book would be of great help to the needy. For more details he can be reached at [info@ShakirAli.in](mailto:info@ShakirAli.in)

## ***Preface***

India is known for its enriched talent pool and is well appreciated across the world as a “Knowledge Center”. Diverse cultures, harmonious coexistence of religions, a pious approach to work, and a robust educational system can be stated as the pillars of success of India. With such a strong back drop, Indian industries have shined in every business vertical. Like any other nation, India is no different in facing the hurdles and challenges towards growing and competing in the global business.

Entrepreneurship in India is well encouraged, and despite the fact that many more reforms are needed to build effective entrepreneurial developments, this is an economy that has witnessed the introduction of rudimentary policies for organizational development.

It's been a decade and half of entrepreneurial journey in the digital media industry since the starting of the The eMerchant. When we started the eMerchant, digital media was only a segment of the IT business, and today as we look into it, DIGTIAL Media is a sector which has undergone numerous changes. And while currently engaged with DIGITOZE; Digital Marketing is the Key & Focus of Every Businesses in Local or International Market of each & every industry round the globe.

Challenges had always been there in my journey; initially it was about making a customer understand the significance of having a digital presence, whereas now it is about competing for market share, retaining the potential resources, training new resources, and addressing the demanding requirements of the customer base.

While helping & mentoring many startups from IT Services & Solutions, eCommerce, Logistics; Travel & Holidays, Export & other Digital Media companies in India & Abroad; Digital Media was focus of all Business plans and was the one of the key & important means which helped startups to reach to their milestones. In current scenario; it's **THE FOCUS of BUSINESS**.

One of the key factors attributed to the success of our company is constant touch with our client base and exploring new opportunities along with knowledge-sharing exercise which is part of our operational process.

This book is written to share my thoughts and learning, which is a valuable outcome of my two decades of journey in the digital marketing industry. This book is intended to those who would like to understand the insights of the Digital Media sector from common man perspective, and the potential scope for enabling an online presence to their businesses. The chapters discussed in this book depict the preliminary overview of the digital media thru SEO, SMO, and other optimization processes which work to create an impeccable presence in the online front.

With my sincere gratitude to Almighty for blessing me with this opportunity to share my thoughts, and also expressing my gratitude to my parents and well-wishers who supported me in every walk of life, I initiate this book to share a few thoughts on digital media.

## ***Dedication***

### **Mr. S. Md. Shakir Ali Dedicates**

This Book to My loving father, who though dwells in paradise, is always with me Late Mr. Md Ali Asghar. His strength and great dreams for me keep going in life. His blessings protect me.

Also, dedicated to my Mother, Teachers & Family Members. They understand me, and always held me by my hand and showed me the way whose compassion.

# ***Table of Contents***

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Chapter Name</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1.	Introduction	9
2.	Understanding of Digital Marketing from Common Man Perspective	11
3.	Google Minded	17
4.	SEO Politics	35
5.	Digitalizing The Thoughts	51
6.	Digital Media Tantrum	67
7.	Winning Edge	76
8.	The Social Media – Lifeline	82

Thanks to all the professionals and experts who kept writing so much on the future of digital media, and how computers can change the dynamics of communication. Every aspect or issue of debate relating to computers, communication etc., had been my choice of interest to gain insights into the future of digital medium. It all started during my part-time work in export–import houses of Delhi, where I learnt the significance and the gap of online communication.

Since then, numerous efforts to identify the scope and potential and the desire for an entrepreneurial career have been the curtain raisers for “The e-Merchant”. Typically the same start of “One Room Company” is how we initiated our journey, and with challenges all across we mobilized a few resources and started.

Elementary services like Website Designing, Hosting Websites, AMC of the websites, is how the journey started, and in some time, we could catch our main stream business of doing SEO (Search Engine Optimizing) to support our clients in getting their sites to the top in the search lists. Over a period of time, trendy developments which took place as Social Media Optimization, Lead Generation, and Online Reputation Management, all have been a part of the industry developments, and we constantly kept engaging ourselves in the research & development of processes and techniques which can support us in staying ahead of the competition.

Our vision to always ensure that we render the best possible services to ensure effective online presence to our customers has always

driven us to constant research. The intension of writing this book is also an outcome of business research carried out as a part of our market study.

When we were exploring market trends, we identified the fact that many of the industry experts are still pondering about ecommerce implementation, whereas there was hardly any considerable move witnessed. The Indian industrial sector is robust with small and medium-scale industry verticals blooming and when we explore the market, it is a fact that not many of them are aware of what Digital Media Presence is all about.

This book is primarily intended to know what an SEO and Social Networking Scenario are, and how effectively it can help them in their future action plans. I have intentionally tried to keep the concept briefing as simple as possible and in a narrative manner that would be easy to understand.

An attempt is made to make this book a simple guide to understand the Digital Media gamut and how it can be resourceful to address future challenges. With a hope to provide the readers with a value addition to their time spent on reading this book, we shall offer a sneak peek into “**Digital Marketing for Common Man**”.

## 2

## Understanding of Digital Marketing from Common Man Perspective

On a bright sunny day, with Monday blues, when getting ready for my hectic day for sales, I received a call from my friend. Surprised with a call so early in the morning, and in a hurry to get ready to office, I had to pay attention to what he called for. He was so curious to know, which travel agent he could rely upon to book his tickets. A familiar scenario to many of us. Culturally we have grown up signifying information, sharing knowledge of common origin in a locale and of each other's secrets, often going back to generations. Interdependence in rural life provides a sense of unity among residents of a village.

The solidarity of a community living is always driven by sharing happiness and sorrows, information about each other's families, business of each other, community-based information systems like sounding the neighborhood on our relatives' new business, etc. Living together and sharing a close relationship over generations, struggling to wrest a livelihood from the same limited area of land and resources, closely watching some grow rich and powerful while others remain poor and dependent, fellow Individuals are prone to disputes, strategic contests, and even violence.

Most of India includes what villagers call "big fish," prosperous, powerful people, fed and serviced through the labors of the struggling "small fish." Individuals commonly view gains as possible only at the expense of neighbors. Further, the increased involvement of villagers with the wider economic and political



People used to go to libraries and search through books. They used to discuss their topics of interest with friends and experts and slowly come to a conclusion. Till date books are still a great source of information even when Google makes things so easy.

In comparison to our older era, where few people in our circle belonged to the “Know-All” category, where any kind of information could be got, today we look forward for such virtual assistance in the world of the Internet.

And this virtual assistant who helps us solicit information is called a **SEARCH ENGINE**. Today we can treat this as our directory of information, irrespective of the category and classification of information.

## **Search Engine Modeling**

A technical sneak peek into the essence of how a search engine is modeled the entire gamut started with the prototyping of human networking model into the Internet information system. The chunk of information on how the information mapping system in the brain happens, how our brain connects information pertinent to various related activities and incidents and provides us the thought process, is typically how the search engine network today tags all the related information pertaining to a keyword and how the tags are related to the numerous sites and correlates information for our facilitation.



The first few hundred web sites began in 1993 and most of them were at colleges, but long before most of them existed came Archie, the first search engine created in 1990 by Alan Emtage, a student at McGill University in Montreal. The original intent of the name was "archives," but it was shortened to Archie.

Archie helped solve this data scatter problem by combining a script-based data gatherer with a regular expression matcher for retrieving file names matching a user query. Essentially Archie became a database of web filenames which it would match with the user's queries.

Computer robots are simple programs that automate repetitive tasks at speeds impossible for humans to reproduce. The term "bot" on the internet is usually used to describe anything that interfaces with the user or that collects data.

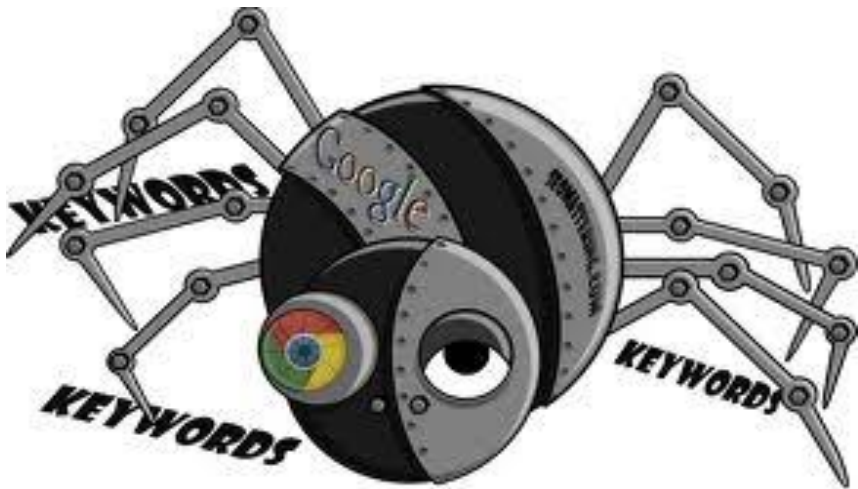
Search engines use "spiders" which search (or spider) the web for information. They are software programs which request pages much like regular browsers do. In addition to reading the contents of pages for indexing, spiders also record links.

- Link citations can be used as a proxy for editorial trust.
- Link anchor text may help describe what a page is about.
- Link co citation data may be used to help determine what topical communities a page or website exists in.
- Additionally, links are stored to help search engines discover new documents to later crawl.

Another "bot" example could be Chatter bots, which is resource-heavy on a specific topic. These bots attempt to act like a human and communicate with humans on a said topic.

## **BOT AS A MEDIUM OF A SEARCH ENGINE:**

Search engines consist of 3 main parts. Search engine spiders follow links on the web to request pages that are either not yet indexed or have been updated since they were last indexed. These pages are crawled and are added to the search engine index (also known as the catalog). When you search using a major search engine you are not actually searching the web, but are searching a slightly outdated index of content which roughly represents the content of the web. The third part of a search engine is the search interface and relevancy software.



For each search query search engines typically do most or all of the following

- Accept the user inputted query, checking to match any advanced syntax and checking to see if the query is misspelled to recommend more popular or correct spelling variations.
- Check to see if the query is relevant to other vertical search databases (such as news search or product search) and place

relevant links to a few items from that type of search query near the regular search results.

- Gather a list of relevant pages for the organic search results. These results are ranked based on page content, usage data, and link citation data.

Yesteryears were so comforting to the cultures in which we were brought up. All through the day, be it from parents or from the school, we learnt more about respecting people for wisdom. This has been the kind of learning curve that every one of us used to remember and also follow in our upbringing.

There used to be a great value for knowledge management, and if we had any scholars around us, we used to feel extremely privileged. Whenever I had any doubts whilst reading my subjects or when curious on any information, I used to rush to my neighborhood “Dadaji” asking them to clarify my doubts. More or less we used to get information about the routine matters from them; however the library has also been a temple of learning and exposure.

“Dadaji” of those days is what today Google stands is for. Because as individuals when we are keen to learn things, we are no more dependent on our elders or scholars, or any other humans Current Gen is not so keen on knowing it all from our elders. Today, “Google” has pervaded so much into the lives of individuals that you are completely clueless without a computer.

Moreover, for many new literates of Internet, SEARCH ENGINE is synonymous to GOOGLE. It is not as if Google is the only a search engine, but certainly GOOGLE has changed the era of SEARCH ENGINE.

Today when we look at a librarian taking time to search the book you have asked for, you shout at the librarian when she takes more than 0.1 seconds to find your book.

In a way, today we have become very independent of our surroundings for knowing about things and completely rely upon “GOOGLE” as a means for knowing things.



Today, no research is complete without usage of Google, or rather; we can say that people started believing that Google is way of learning. This is perhaps why optimistic researchers are said to be Google Minded.

It needs no big research to understand that many of us are carrying information systems with us most of the times. Kudos to the Smart phones' era, we have the Internet in our pocket.

GOOGLE is no more an organization which gives only a search engine solution, it has become a greater -than -life picture. Anything and everything right from knowing the price of a consumable to knowing “how it works” is completely relied upon GOOGLE.

After this search engine era took over, today we have started relying on the “keywords”. Earlier this used to be technical phenomena. When search engines were being used, Keywords used to be the basis on which it worked, whereas today we have addictively started using “keywords” in every aspect of our life.

Unlike yester times, where thoughts were given importance to, today the focus is on “keywords” of the meeting. Today we are so accustomed to this nature because key-words are the best way of optimizing your search and information solicitation.

When we use a search engine for seeking some information, the keywords what you enter into the search bar is the major factor which gives you the resulting outcome. If the keywords are appropriate the results are also appropriate.

Eventually, finding the appropriate keywords has a become a business dynamics. In the era of GPRS and search engines, for businesses to succeed, being on ecommerce front has become the gizmo. Repulsively, the identification of appropriate keywords for websites to promote their sites, and also for the users to use the proper keywords has become the trend.

This is what the SEO business, technically calls as “On-Page Optimization”. In doing this, the SEO companies try to ensure that the Keywords related to a business are appropriately used in the content of the site. By doing this the website gets into the notice of the search algorithm which most of the search engines adopt for identifying the keywords related to a site.

The relationship of any business with its customers is all about the credibility that the company builds with its customers and the business network. Similarly, every website needs its own level of

user-friendly and search-friendly factors, which is taken care as “On-Page Optimization” by the digital media companies.

When we are contemplating on building an effective On-Page optimization, what we speak in our site is the one which will form an impression about our business, organization and other factors. Similarly, an SEO is not an overnight development which will reflect your organization in top listings.

It needs vivid actions, like On-page Optimization, Off-page Optimization, and meta tagging which generate effective outcomes for the search engines to reach our website.

When we consider the act of SEO, the crux is about On-Page Optimization, Off-page Optimization, Tagging and other external conditions which influence the Search Engine Rankings. There are many who build expectations that the moment we initiate SEO to our site, we are assured of the top listings. In the present conditions of competitive businesses being competitive, if we factor SEO for so many sites, there should be logic which gives upper edge to few sites over the others.

We could say that few of the following shall have a critical impact on the effectiveness of the rankings. Predominant among them are,

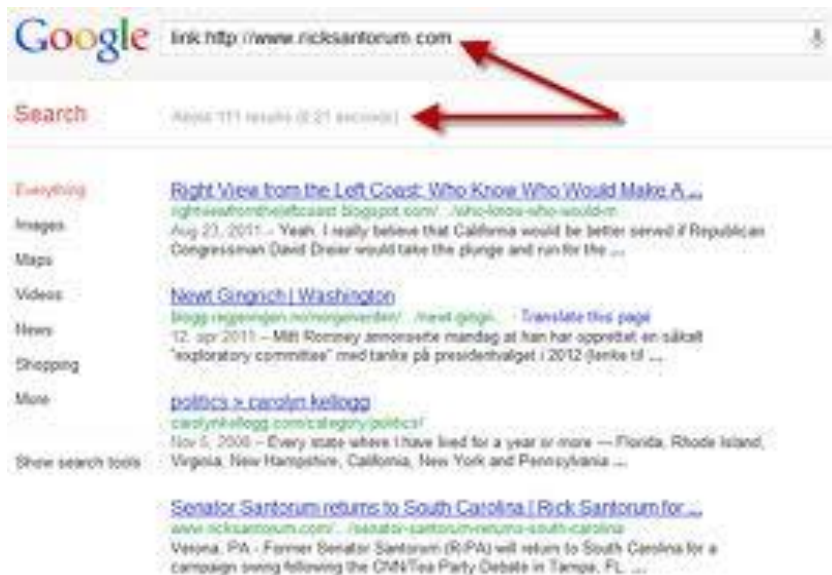
### **CONTENT OF PAGE:**

The content of a page is what significantly affects the position during search results. It is what the user will have as an outcome and is very important to get in to the top listings. As such, it is important to create good content to impress upon our work and the approach. But what could be treated as good content? From an SEO perspective, all good content should have two factors: good content must meet a demand and must be linkable.

## GOOD CONTENT SUPPLIES A DEMAND:

Just as in global commercial markets, information is also affected by supply and demand. The best content is that which works by effectively catering to the largest demand. The method of content or the approach is very significant to the development of the communication from the site to both search engines and also its end users. It can be a video, an image, a sound, or text, but it must meet a demand in order to be considered good content.

## Good Content is Linkable:



From an SEO perspective, there is no difference between the best and worst content on the Net if it is not linkable. If people can't link to it, search engines will be very unlikely to rank it, and as a result the content won't drive traffic to the given website. Unfortunately, this happens more often than one might think. Examples of this include, AJAX-powered image slide shows and content only accessible after logging in and content that can't be reproduced or shared. Bad content does not meet a demand and/or it is not

linkable. It is rampant all over the Internet and a waste of time and other precious resources.

It is as simple as when we read a book; if the content of the page is not well connected or sequential from one page or the other, the reader of the book will not be interested in reading further. In the same way, when the content doesn't have a proper linkage from one level to another, search engines fail to identify our site whilst doing search process according to appropriate keywords.

In the Indian television scenario, there will always be a program in news channels which will be debating or discussing or addressing a growing concern about some current issue. For good or bad reasons, the moment there is political, social or financial news it is addressed in the media, in an effective manner. Because unless the programs are linked to resourceful information, there would be no viewers for the programs aired by the television channel.

The title of this book itself is “**Digital Marketing for Common Man**” which is aimed at effectively briefing and discussing in simple terms the recent developments in digital media marketing. If this book is presented in a very technical manner, this book will not interest the common man., would it? By using simple incidents from our day-to-day life, when we are discussing the subject it makes our job of interpretation and understanding very simple and effective. Likewise in Digital Marketing especially in SEO, the relativity and linkage of content is very essential. One should use relative information linkage on the website which will improve the scope of rank building during the SEO process.

In a recent development of linking the conceptual aspects, In the recent IPL matches, if we have observed the post-match or pre-match presentations, host of the show is made to use the name of the

sponsors everywhere without any scope left out. Say for instance, host says, “X” company presents “Super Sixes” reviews. “Y” Company name and the super catches or wickets. The attempt here is to integrate the content in a respective manner to each of the activity carried out or presented in a show.

## **TITLE TAG**

Title tags are another very important factor for SEO (behind content). When we look into the derivatives which create that effect, URLs are very important.

## **URL**

This is one thing which basically all of us who are acquainted with the Internet, know about. It is very important to note that smart internal linking is very crucial for the search process and that companies should make sure that the classification of concepts is very much in place. To illustrate we can say that classifying our site pages as Careers, Services, etc. can create more effective action.

When the URL specifies the classification of the information on the page, it facilitates the search engines in correlating the information easily, as this information can be resourceful to determine the relevance of a given web page by the search engines.

Because of the hierarchy, the engines can deduce that the page doesn't pertain to history in general but rather to that of the other pages. This makes it an ideal candidate for search results that are related to the keyword of search. All of this information can be speculated on without even needing to process the content on the page.

## **AN IDEALLY OPTIMIZED WEB PAGE**

When we consider any good quality work from any professional, there are a lot of aspects which should synergized in the work. Unless every frame of work is set to the standard, it doesn't indicate a quality outcome, be it in any aspect of work. Typically, in the case of SEO, too, there are a lot of areas where there should be proper synergy.

When we create a website, with a purpose of making it to top with many search engines, there are few things which will provide such an effective outcome to the site. Some of the key aspects which we should focus for a better SEO site are:

- Be at an absolute specification to a particular topic
- Insertion of subject in the title tags
- Insertion of subject in the URLs
- Inclusion of subject in the image text
- Ensuring density of subject repetition through text content
- Link back to the classification page
- Link back to the sub-classification pages if any
- Connect appropriately to the home page

When the above-mentioned factors are properly addressed in the system, we have a better page optimization which will eventually turn the desired outcome of ensuring that the Search Engine gets the listing to our site in its results.

This web page optimization tool analyzes existing on-page SEO and will let you see your website's data as a spider sees it, thereby

allowing for better web page optimization. This on-page optimization tool is helpful for analyzing your internal links, your Meta information and your page content in order to develop better on-page SEO. The following chapters explain how to maximize the potential of this SEO tool to improve your website's on-page SEO.

## **ON-PAGE OPTIMIZATION**

The use of keywords and targeting the site are the key components of search engines. There are algorithms which track the ranking of sites depending on the varied metrics followed. Despite the fact there is the severity in the way the search engines change the algorithms, there remains the fundamental way of adopting the best practices that can leverage SEO.

The use of keywords remains the best tactic, and the following process could certainly help companies optimize their site on page.

The title tag should have the primary keyword at least once, and if it can be kept at the start of the tag, it leverages a better advantage. And also, we should ensure that the keyword is placed in a dominant manner at the top of the action page and, subsequently, maintain the same in the body content of the page depending on the density of the work.

There will be a substantial effect if the keyword can be used in the attribute, in the pages where an image is specified. The purpose behind this is to gauge the site not only on content-based search but also on image-based search, which, at times, can raise the traffic flow.

The usage of keywords in the URL tags and the Meta description tags are also important. Despite the fact that Meta description tags are not resourceful for engines to do rankings, it helps the

optimization process by drawing a number of clicks from the users from the resulting pages.

The interlink process where the anchor text on the page shall be coordinated to the other pages on the site or the different sites shall provide significant results.



Feeling lost in the technology; let's understand that these are the factors which we attribute in our everyday lives. Let's get back to the day-to-day scenario. When we write a business letter to any of our correspondents, there is a protocol which we generally follow, to mention "Reference" which reflects the information we are citing the letter for, and also we mention something called "SUB" as subject, giving a snippet of what we are intending. Here, too, we are doing the same stuff; we mark the tag in the title page to create a relevance to the topic.

We all know how postal letters are disbursed. When we review that scenario, they get thousands of letters from various places across the country. They follow a methodology to segregate the letters and covers. The pattern they adopt is the use of the "PIN CODE".

They classify the destination according to the PIN CODE and once the PIN CODE classification is realized, they re-group the area according to the next filter section. Once the common areas are re-grouped, the next classification is to categorize according to street levels, and array them according to their routes.

Such an approach that is followed traditionally by the postal and courier services can also be brought under the purview of the SEO algorithm. The above-mentioned keywords are like providing the proper address to the search engine to ensure that it is disbursed to all the right recipients.

Rather, this comparative classification only helped a lay man like me to understand the gamut of SEO. Now let's focus on other elementary factors which support SEO.

## **TITLE Tags**

This is something like whom we are addressing in a letter. This helps the receiver and the postal department in segmenting the content. When we take such in the SEO section, we adapt a certain framework which allows Search engines for better facilitation.

The title element of the page from the website should be accurate and has to precisely carry information pertinent to the content prevailing in that page of the site. This turns out to be a significant factor for both the search engines and the end user results.

Information management is crucial and effective, when it leads to application and development of systems and process which result in better outcome. The industry practices and research from experts signify that Title Tags are very crucial for a good SEO process, some of the mind full actions which can provide very good results are mentioned below.

## **Length is Vital**

Normally the algorithms of search engines display around 70 characters of the title tag in the results page. Rest of the content in the title page comes as ellipsis. As usual, this is the limit which even the social media sites adopt, when we stick to priority communication in the first 60 letters of the title tag that provide better outcome. However, when it is necessary to focus upon more keywords in a title tag, the content of the title tag should be phrased in such a way that it covers all the important keywords, even if it's a longer title tag.

## **Brand Optimization**

The effective way of signifying a site SEO is by mentioning the brand name as a part of the content phrase in the title tag. This may help the companies in creating the brand awareness and also might support in getting higher response rates as the brand visualization may help users with their preference.

As the page rankings are very dependent on the words at the beginning of the tag, while designing the title tag utmost care is required choosing the words to be used.

## **User Significance and Sensitive Touch**

Title tags should be reader friendly; it should be very receptive to the users. When such a kind of tag is put in place, it pulls more traffic in to the site and also creates an effective impact on the page stability in the ranking. When such factors are carefully worked upon, it implicitly creates an impression on the site to the search visitors.

## **Meta Tags**

For the purpose of providing a proxy for information pertinent in the website's content, we use Meta tags. There are many Meta tags which are used in the optimization process. Few such tags are discussed below:

### **Meta Robots**

The Meta Robots tag can be leveraged to work on the spider activities which are carried out by the majority of search engines, at the page levels. There are varied ways on how creeping from search engine to a page can be controlled.

When the method of Indexing is done in the site, it specifies whether the page can be crawled by the search engine. If the option of "No Index" is used, then the search engines will exclude that page from the search list, and by default search engines shall index all pages, and hence unless we are keen on excluding it from the search page, we needn't mention about the Indexing.

The other criteria of Meta tagging is about the "Follow" and "No Follow". When we choose the option of "No Follow" the engines will disregard the links on the respective page for the purpose of identifying the site page for search results and for ranking the page content. Usually, all the pages of the site are by default considered to have a "Follow" status.

When we use the other tag "No Archive" it restricts the search engines from having the cache of a page, unlike in normal conditions, where search engines will always maintain the visible copies of the pages indexed. This could be provided to the search users thru the "Cached" link in the outcome results of a search page.

The other Meta tag in the name of “No Snippet” can be used to restrict the search engines from displaying specific section of content and the URL in the results from the search.

## **Meta Description**

The Meta description tags can be described as a short snippet of the contents in a particular page. Search Engines will not consider the keywords or phrases in this tag for rankings; however, this Meta descriptions will be the primary source for the engine to display the content text beneath the listings in the search results page.

The Meta description presence in the site helps the search engines in identifying the appropriate content description and it bolds the keywords in the search engine outcome results pages, and by the presence of such description the visitors click rate can increase for a particular page.

Though there is no limitation on the length of Meta descriptions, the search engines will consider only up to 160 characters. When we have multiple keywords from a page as the target of a search engine, then the absence of Meta tags could be a wise decision.

## **.URL Structures**

At any given time, there are few names which we are quite acquainted with or have it in our long-term memory. This has certain attributes like, they are easy to remember, or they are unique.

The purpose of creating a URL, is to create an identity for the site and the online presence for an individual or a business. Hence care should be taken in selecting the URL if it needs to generate better results in the SEO.

The effective display of even the URL in the search results, will raise the click –thru and the visit to the sites.

When we adopt the policy of being a user or a visitor to our site and perceive the feel of it and prepare each and every aspect of our content in the site including the URL, it yields a very effective output. URL should be a conventional message carrier about the purpose of that site or the indication of the site content.

If you ensure a catchy URL with an effective content in the site, with proper navigation channels you can be assured that the site can go thru a proper SEO process and that we have a right medium to reach our customers.

From a common man’s angle unless all the requisites like details of the Sender (Owner of the Site) of the envelope (treat as Site), with a proper “To Address” (Postal Codes and the mandatory information like address – Keywords & Tags) and the Meta Tags (Confidential, Acknowledgement Required, or To be handed over to person etc such meta tags help a clear process for search engines) are present it cannot help the department (Search Engines) deliver the envelope to the right place.

When all the attributes which are predominant and primary requisites from our site is valued, SEO process management becomes smooth as a function. When the fundamentals are strong and in place, to ensure the day management of the actions, only then can it turn out to be a smooth function.

### **World of Keyword**

Identity is essential to living. One of the preliminary ways of knowing each other is by knowing Names and in business and social circle it is by our profession or activity. In our daily life, there would have been numerous instances where we said to each other as “Hey,

I'm speaking of Doctor Robert, Advocate Sandy etc". We remember about the individuals or the activities by certain tags. Even researches reveal that, when we get introduced to someone, the more often we repeat their names while conversing with them, the easier it is to remember their names. It doesn't slip from our mind so fast.

As discussed earlier, the process of SEO is also a kind of mapping as we do in our day-to-day life. This keyword is a kind of tag what we provide to a site with some relevance to their activity. The more number of times we repeat the process of reminding the name in the process for SEO, the more fruitful is the outcome of Search engine in reminding our name and picking up for search results.

Whenever there are any discussions on Keywords, the density part of keywords always becomes a question to ponder upon. The crawl from the bots of search engine will rely upon this keyword density on a particular page to index our website. To be precise, Keywords act as a symbolic representation to extract the content of the given search query.

In order to send proper signals to the search engines about the relevance of your website you have to ensure that there is a proper density of keywords. Overdoing this might only have a negative impact on the content in the page, from readers.

Research and expert opinions specify that the keyword density variation is from 1-3%. What is significant of these densities is how and where these keywords appear, how the Meta descriptions, the tags and positioning of keywords in the contents of page, are positioned. These will enhance the opportunity of bots picking the site for search results. The most important point for a site is the content written for our customers and readers to understand and not for search engines alone.

## Header Tags

It's always supportive to have some headings under which we remember the content. When we have a clear Header tags with appropriate HTML coding of tags, it turns out to be advantageous when the search engine crawls thru the site. It will be easier for the search engines to creep to the header tags, as these tags give more weight.

When we consider a blog post which has heavy content then we can consider a good number of header tags to be a part of the content structure.

The other important thing that should be remembered is the proximity of the keywords although there is no hard and fast rule that this is the limitation, adequate spacing between the repetitions of keywords should be followed. This shall help us impress the reader about the content.

In a nut shell when we look back in to the key aspects of SEO, we understand the importance of search engine, the conceptualization of search engines, and how the appropriateness of content works.

The elements of SEO process which we should remember is

- Design a proper site which has an apt process flow
- Ensure that Content written for the site, specifies the information in an effective manner
- Understand the importance of varied tags like Title Tags, Meta Tags and Header tags and utilize the impact of the same
- Usage of Appropriate Keywords ensures a good proximity and density of the keywords

- Create an appropriate link- building which shall improve the chances of proper search results.

It's been more than a decade since I dived into the wonder of Online Marketing. Since then numerous changes have taken place in the Online Medium of marketing. Anything and everything new which used to come up in online space was seen as having a scope for Online Marketing. In the Common Man's jargon in India, it used to be called "DOT COM" business. Anyone with more than little knowledge of Online Space would wish to start their "DOT.Com".

The Dot.Com fever got to such a level of penetration that, once (almost 7 or 8 years back) when I was travelling in the uptown locations of then Andhra Pradesh but now in Telangana, I met a village head, who had organized a meeting of the big wigs of the villages, to announce his entry in to his DOT.Com business ! Awestruck with the kind of boom, out of curiosity when I asked him as to how come he opted for that Industry, his reply was *"What's big deal in it, the way I use to have land in this village, now I'm having space in online. My Beta said that one day it's cost will also shoot up, and we can make good profits. I know one day we will not have lands here to buy, so we are stepping forward to buy it there."*

I was shell Shocked with the kind of online medium penetration into people's mind, but It only added to my confidence in my venture. After all, I should help these people in selling their space for a better price, right??

There is a belief that, this is how the boom of DOT COM began. It gave hopes for people to invest directly into this business. The social, economical and political scenario has changed so much that, the government has started wooing investors and the multinational companies with subsidies and infrastructure allotments, to ensure that they set up their business.

Indirectly this has led to the development of a plethora of other business too. Confident that Dot.Com boom is the next big thing to happen, Computer Science Engineering course was the craze of Parents and Children, which created the mushrooming of Engineering Colleges, (alas today they are doing Digital Marketing or SEO for their sites, for better occupancy).

Also, this boom has created a boom to the Real Estate, Hospitality and Restaurants business. Recently, When I was watching a TV show on the ambitions and desires of Individuals, a few common ambitions were to buy a piece of land in the Hitec City area of Hyderabad, OMR of Chennai.

The OMR of Chennai (Old Mahabalipuram Road), once the outskirts of Chennai, is now, the costliest place in Chennai. Need Less to say that we all know Bangalore as Silicon City of India. Hyderabad is termed by people as HUB of IT.

Hey, are we talking about SEO, yes look at it, the IT business had its physical SEO done for itself. Whenever people tried to understand what the best business is in the near future, IT has taken the place as the driver of all businesses.

From Dot.Com boom, IT has moved to the advertising quantum, where sizeable companies started its operations, Online, with dozens of sites, with information about specific sectors or entertainment

quotient. Their main source of revenue is the advertisement which is displayed in their site by various companies.

Clients decide on the kind of sites to promote their advertisement, which depends on the number of foot falls to the site. However this classification raised the scope for many scholars to do their Ph.D's too. All this gamut of competition piling up to understand the Dot.com's and their advertisement revenues, raised the scope for new business which can help these businesses promote their clients.

**SEO**..... Which was an internal aspect of Dot.com, has come up to the fore front, and fortunately today, it has become a vertical of IT services sector. Eventually this vertical extended its foray as Digital Media Marketing, ecommerce solutions, end-end online.

The seat of action in any country always is Politics. And today in most of the developed and the “developing” countries, Digital Marketing has become an integral part of their day-to-day affairs. Gone are the days when the news (read as anguish / complaints) about the counterparts or the oppositions was discussed only in public meetings. Today the moment politicians feel something is either good or bad, it has to be “Tweeted”.



Politics across is about portraying, be it the manifesto, persona, ambition to serve the country, whatever needs to be sounded. The way Social Networking Sites like Face Book and Twitter has changed the way people communicate their feelings, is amazing.

Thanks to the kind of technological advancements happening across all the sectors, and the kind of intensive competition, today the world has seen a plethora of changes. India is one among the largest mobile subscribers and is running out of the series for number allocation. This is socially and politically, a pragmatic scenario. During the elections, the SMS campaigns will rule the scene.

Every small or aspiring leader shall woo their vote base with so many SMS campaigns. Why will not the Digital Marketing Industry boom? All is well and healthy till the rise of one sector supports the raise of the other sector, but the game gets a little murkier when the SEO factor starts at the mushrooming of a number of companies into this business.

Everyone has their customer base, and every customer would wish to be on to top of the search list, and every digital marketing company has to ensure that their clientele is on top, if not they can't be anywhere.

Shortcuts, innovative methods, creative techniques, development and deployment of automated tools; everything has come in place for Digital Media companies to ensure that they serve their clients. This has created a strategic push to the Search Engine Companies.

In the earlier chapter, we discussed how the Search Engine Works, the way their algorithms can be designed and put to use for ensuring better search process. Alas today these companies have come to such a stage that every day, every hour they have to keep abreast to service the clients.

“GOOGLE” no doubt has changed the way internet penetration was among Indian users and globally too. When they saw the opportunity for establishing a vivid model for promotion, they introduced the “Pay per Click” model of advertising and welcomed the portals and blogs to have their advertisement space. For few days, this scenario gave optimized results in a proper orientation.

Soon the scenario changed to another format. Few Bloggers started a falsifying action of network clicks, and GOOGLE had to take stringent measures to restrict any such happenings. Today the Indian Digital Marketing is highly competitive and is politically correct. Every company like every other party is trying to show its dedicated efforts. All the clients assure that they shall be on Top, but as the votes of politics decide the winner, the algorithms of the search engines decide the fate of many assurances.

It is needless to debate as to whether this is a healthy scenario or not, but the dimension of thought is to understand how important the role of SEO, SMO and the Digital Media is. The cartoon below reflects the kind of global competition in the Digital Media Tantrum.



Now, in this kind of clustered competition and the current gen heading to a state where, they feel that the World is incomplete without Internet, , needless to say that the whole process of SEO is going to have a phenomenal impact.

Now let's get an insight as to how technically it's becoming politicized and the intensive competition.

On-Page SEO is the actual form of SEO process which is used to interpret the results based on the content on the web pages. This is how the indexing was taken up by the search engines. However, the emerging competition and also the kind of rigor between the search engines only raised the scope for more optimized tech from the Search Engines. Few years back, what mattered was the density of keywords in the content pages and the sites used to hit high ranks. Later it escalated to next level where Meta Tags used to take the wheel and now the kind of parameters these Search Engines use is phenomenal and the big challenge for SEO service companies is to constantly keep abreast of the changes and alternate their process accordingly.

All said and done, this has created ripples for SEO companies internally too. Few of the customers whose sites were ranking high in the search process on a specific process, witnessed a downfall in the rankings or the search toppings. Though this is technically due to the change in the algorithm process of the search engines, customers got the perception that, their service agent (Digital Media Company), was not taking proper care of their site.

This is similar to our political scenario, where if the weather conditions are bad and the drought prevails, the opposition takes these opportunities to conclude that the ruling party didn't do well. Similarly, when the ruling party takes a tough stand and raises the prices of fundamentals, it's seen as Inefficiency or irresponsible

behavior, whereas when the opposition did it during their regime, it's called "**REFORMS**"

In the early days of matrimonial sites, many of us were wondering as to how this idea can work and whether such an important process can be performed thru online support. On the contrary, down the line when matrimonial sites started yielding results, the numbers have outgrown matrimonial sites domain, and every site started competing with a little or major differentiation, like regional matrimony, community-based sites etc. Despite the fact that the fundamental process is the same for every site, the way companies approached its customers got classified in order to optimize the list. Similarly, the Search engines also attribute a better optimization process in order to have its pick of search lists optimized.

Do we call these changes Natural Calamities, or REFORMS or a Political Storm? Whatever you say, the common man's wish is to have his basics in place, and needless to say customers want their site rankings to be in place irrespective of the conditions.

The other major challenge of SEO companies is Searching and Resource Optimization. Of late this industry has become sizeable and is countering an effective outlook. The Industry bodies started having classification of this industry as a separate category for providing recognitions & rewards which is a welcome sign. But on the other hand - do we have enough talent pool optimized to handle the advancements and the growing business size?

Based on my decade of entrepreneurial journey as a head of Digital Marketing medium, I have my doubts. In today's environment, the key driver of any business vertical is cost factor. Resources are trained by the company and equipped by them to handle the changes corresponding in the industry and prepare them for the next level of challenges, and then the **GHOST** factor comes in place.

GHOST called the competitor. Poaching takes place. Beasts are always eying each other's resources and try to avoid cost by cutting on training their resources. Probably it's time for a kind of fencing of the vertical by the self-regulatory bodies... Otherwise, this vertical too has to face the journey of Poaching which the BPO sector in India had faced.



Sooner or later, this is going to be a place of murky politics which is going to hit the industry.

## **“DOPING” A DOOMING FACTOR OF SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION**

De-routes and Anti-right ways of doing business, had always been an evidential activity across every aspect. Whether it's been in sports or politics or business, at times the way of unethical approaches has always been a significant issue which had to be attended to. Every association body or the regulatory authorities had to undertake the task of curtailing the activity and carry the process in an appropriate manner.

There were so many instances where we see the sports man get caught in the act of doping where they have to face stringent actions, and the doping at a level has become the major factor of demoralizing the sports enthusiasm.

So, how does this doping of sports are in line to a Digital Marketing scenario, Well there are more similarities between professional sport and SEO can be clearly defined.

- Being the best in a sport is very much like getting to the top of Google's organic ranking, it's very hard and as time goes by it gets harder. Gone are the days when a sports person could compete at the highest level in football, cricket, rugby and athletics, as are the days when SEO doping would get you sitting top of the Google tree.
- Consistently competing at the highest level takes much time and investment.
- Being the best in the world rarely lasts forever, new techniques are used, the rules change, and younger, fresher competitors want to knock you down.

So, with this in mind, and whilst we're comparing the two, if websites are the athletes, Search Engines are the governing bodies and sports cheating (match fixing, blood doping, performance-enhancing drugs etc) is **Black Hat SEO** or **SEO doping**. Going further into the analogy, then the Google Spam team must be the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). So, when they have anything to say about changes to policy or the list of banned practices, you listen. For those who haven't been listening here are some of these.

## **5 SEO doping techniques that the testers are clamping down on:**

### **1. Blood Doping (Site-wide anchor text linking)**

Improving the flow of oxygen Page Rank through the body website to artificially improve the performance in competitions search engines.

Ok, anchor text links are good. We've all seen ranking improvements for external and internal links that have anchor text relevant to the term we're tracking. Since Penguin however, we've seen sites penalized for the over-use of unnatural anchor text links and one of the big culprits has been huge site-wide footers with unnatural, key-phrase specific anchor text links.

### **2. Steroids (Spun content & keyword stuffed content)**

Artificially promote growth of the body website through the excessive, unnatural use of naturally found substances content typically found in lower volumes.

Just don't over-do it. Content is great, as long as it's great content. Thousands-upon-thousands of pages with thin/duplicated/semi-duplicated/poor quality content may work for a brief period but is unlikely to be continually successful. Content should have worth, be relevant to your visitors and should above all be your own.

### **3. Growth Hormones (Excessive Low Quality Inbound links)**

Unnaturally building your body PageRank through the injection of excessive amounts of growth hormones inbounds links.

This is a relatively new addition to the list of banned practices. There has been a movement away from building as many anchor text links as possible, instead favoring a focus towards achieving a

more natural link-profile. There is still a lot of uncertainty around what is and isn't natural so err on the side of caution here.

#### **4. Masking Agents (Cloaking)**

Manipulative techniques employed to prevent detection of wrongdoing. Substances code taken into the body implemented on a website to hide the truth of an overuse of a banned substance lack of quality content.

If you're still doing this and it's working, I'm extremely surprised. Hiding keyword dense content from regular website users and showing them a "better", more natural page in order to rank for words contained in that hidden text, is only going to get you de-indexed. Stop it now!

#### **5. Match Fixing (Paid Links)**

Financial incentives paid to external bodies in order to artificially benefit in competitions search engine ranking.

Paid Links worked in the past and probably in some cases can work on a small scale however, like match fixing, the more you do it, the higher the risk of getting caught and if a site (or network of sites) makes it obvious that they're accepting these bribes then you'll soon be caught handing over those brown-paper envelopes.

With athletics and professional sport, there has been the argument for making all performance-enhancing substances available for participants to use or in the case of football, allow clubs to spend whatever they want and rack up millions in debts. The justification for this is that it will always be the competitors with the most financial backing that win the most trophies or gold medals as they can afford the best coaches, training equipment and methods or buy the best players.

This argument could also be applied to search optimization. The biggest, best run companies should employ the best people, build the best sites, put together the best content and rank higher than the rest or, on the other hand, the biggest, best run companies would buy the most links as well hire the best people to understand the key ranking factors and explore other spamming techniques.

The problem with this is concept is that it's not in the best interest of sport or search engines. Whilst the same athletes or websites may end up at the top, the experience for the spectators or website visitors could be considerably worse. So, GAST (Google Anti-Spam Team) are here to stay, fighting against the SEO dopers, and here are a couple of quick tips to make sure you don't test positive in the future.

## **BEAT THE TESTERS...TEST YOURSELF**

In order to ensure your site is as it should be you need to test yourself regularly. I may go into this in more detail in a future post but for now take the following pointers.

### **Know the List**

Google's tools guidelines document exactly what is considered a banned performance enhancing technique. Know this list inside-out.

### **Check Everything Onsite**

Anything onsite that could be seen as spammy or against Google's guidelines should be fixed right away. This shouldn't even be a question, get it fixed.

### **Check Your Offsite Activity**

How does your back-link profile look? Have you bought links in the past? Did you go through a period of spam linking every blog comments board you could find? Unsure? Analyse your back link

profile and find out. Find out if you have links that shouldn't be there or too many links with the same anchor text.

### **Check the Webmasters**

You should always watch webmaster tools to spot anomalies or issues early. If there is anything that looks odd in the webmaster tools, research it or ask an expert but above all act on it. Webmaster tools are the way forward!

So what's your opinion can you see the similarities between SEO & SERP to professional sport? And what do you think of search cheats? Let us know what you think.

### **Google Panda**

Almost a decade back in Feb 2011 Google Panda, this has become the buzz of digital marketing industry right from the time Google has taken the measures to keep working on putting up a ever changing algorithm in place. The intro of panda has ensured that there were many factors which were cut from the basics of the routine practices and the SEO companies had to ensure that they had rely on changing trends and had to always get to adapt to the new practices where they had to keep working the page rankings and website gamut. Following are the few major factors which the Google Panda has impacted.

### **Content is on Priority**

Content is King In a world of billions of web pages, search engines need to be able to efficiently crawl, index, and catalog, then algorithmically ascertain the relevant keywords that each piece of content should be matched to based on user intent, context and the query itself.

Remember, "Content is king." The Panda filter seeks to reinforce that mantra through a better understanding of content value through an algorithm that considers both human and machine evaluations.

### **Dig Into the Data**

Panda Cake There's lots of news, views and how tos to distract from data, but the first thing you need to do is leverage the data you have to ascertain whether you're "Panda-worthy" or a likely candidate for a "Panda pounce".

### **Data Engagement**

Primary paths through site: Are these the paths you expect? And are they consistent? Panda looks at value through a user lens, and user behavior contributes to the mix. Search engines can 'see' engagement metrics through toolbars, logged in users, browser tracking etc., so demonstrating 'satisfaction of intent' through consistent engagement will help search engines understand what queries match what content better.

### **User Paths through Site**

Time on page / time on site: Both Google & Bing (one of my favorite SEO articles from Duane Forrester - my second favorite here) have indicated dwell times are one component of assessing the quality of content and the match of user search intent to site content. Thinking 'beyond the bounce' and more about onsite engagement signals can help webmasters flush out Panda unworthy content that doesn't seem to connect.

### **Catalog Your Content – Avoid Surprises**

Panda Surprise In reviewing literally thousands of corporate websites, the biggest surprise I've had is in how many site owners don't keep track of content development and evolution over time.

The discovery of an old blog, long deceased product pages, or an image gallery that deserves display in the Smithsonian often comes as somewhat of a surprise to tech, marketing, or C-level folks.

Click through the data you just collected, catalog the overlap, content themes, and prepare for a review of each and every page identified.

### **Digging for Dupes**

**Panda Duplicate Content** Duplicate content definition: search engines are looking at duplicate content across sites and within each sites itself. With Panda focusing on the value of content, having multiple pages with similar or the same content is asking for the Panda pounce.

Look for duplicate title tags to start, duplicate meta descriptions second, and then start digging into the content itself.

### **The Devil Made You do it**

**Panda Devil** We've all heard about SEO 'experts' who weren't always operating above board, who prefer to implement gray or black hat techniques to game the Google system. And let's not forget our cousin's son who did some SEO for us by stuffing keywords in our title tags, paying for links, hiding text on white background, over optimizing on-page content, and employing other spam techniques.

There are many factors which influence the way the digital marketing has been taken up and why the digital marketing companies has to always be on toes with the way the work on the optimization of a website.

The other set of factors which the industry encounters is the M&A phase which is taking place. There are always talks doing the rounds in the industry about Mergers or Acquisitions from the other IT companies - the Whale desirous of eating the Fish attitude. With these kind of advent changes which the SEO companies have very little time to cope-up. This directly impacts the customer base and customers are lost as fast as they are acquired. Beauty of a thought is the correlation; the kind of poaching which is happening in the political front is what we are envisaging in the Industry. Betting is always heavy on the winning horse, and with little effective resources if a company is rather slow , the horse is ready for betting. Wooing the other party cadets (Franchisees, Channel Partners, Allied parties) with perks has become the trend of SEO business.

BIG Fish in a small pond or Small Fish in a Big POND is always a debatable topic.. Even in the Case of Digital Media, it's getting to be the fact. Now with the kind of changes taking place with the global digital media, PERFORM or PERISH seems to be the algorithm for Digital Media companies.

The Politics of business is always abuzz and endless. It is better if the Industry has some REFORMS at the earlier stage to avoid natural calamities and drought of resources.

Let's not optimize this ...



# 5

## Digitalizing the Thoughts

“Digital” this word has become the syndrome of living. Today most of us are connected to our daily routines, in one way or the other through Digital Medium. I came across a recent study which points out that, Internet is one among the fundamental needs for living other than Air, Water and Food. Today the penetration of Internet and Digital Media has become so inherited in to our life styles.

The traditional customs, rituals and practices of our Indian culture has slowly given way to a trendy digitalized mode of living. In a culturally rich country like INDIA, Marriage is a bond between two families, and a process for families to get together. Families used to rely upon known families and friends (Pro type Search Engines) and intermediaries to introduce families to each other to choose the prospective bride and groom. However, today the elderly are seeking the help of numerous Matrimonial sites. In other words, they are seeking the help of the Digital Media.

When the very first matrimonial site was launched in India, its effectiveness was questioned by the users and business sector. But today the numerous sites which are in operation, stands testimony to its success.

In India, Public transport is its Life Line and a vital value chain, and categorically the “INDIAN Railways” is the nerve of logistics .It is one of the public sector entities which has adopted the Digital Media Change. A decade ago, if the common man wanted to reserve a ticket it meant a hectic task of standing in front of reservation

counters for tickets, whereas today the way IRCTC is facilitating the reservation system has changed the dynamics of travelling.

In the recent past, the Indian Railways took a step further when they announced that passengers can carry “Confirmation SMS” of tickets rather than physical formats. This is a representative of how effective digital mode of living has crept into the lives of a common man.

Gone are the days, where the public used to walk to bank branches to handle their transactions. Today there is a phenomenal change. Unless there is a need for any personal visit to the bank as a mandate, every other process is handled thru online banking and Mobile banking apps.

And when we take a look in to the role of digital media in the life of Gen X the social networking sites have become a rage of the times. Social Networking sites like Face Book, Twitter, and many others have become integral part in the life of today’s youth.

Researches reveal that it has become a syndrome for people to keep checking for updates in social networking sites, and for any kind of miniature information needed, to get on to GOOGLE (for many of the internet users, this is the preferred search engine, which is followed by many others too).

In this kind of techno advent era, the mode of promotions and the manner of performing of business has to adapt to the changing environment, failing which the business may cease to exist.

Before we talk about DIGITAL Media based marketing, let’s take a sneak peak in to the varied stages of promotions.

Earlier, organizations used to rely on print media for promoting their products and services, and bank on the circulations of the national or

regional news papers, to ensure they create awareness in the public about their products and services. Over a period of time, when Television viewing caught up, business organizations started relying on television channels to promote their advertisements, to ensure the reach to the customers. It also found that the impact of visuals was far more effective than the print impact..

Over a period of time, the kind of growth in the number of television channels, and the print media competing with for its pie of cake, has intensified the business of advertising. Every organization planning promotional activities today uses a combination of promotional activities like the Print, TV, and Internet media. Advertising houses and promotions management companies have seized the opportunity and this has led to the competitive and innovative trends of developing business.

Gradual developments of Hoardings and promotional events have taken to go along with print and television, and radio advertisements have also started. But the deciding factor in all these events is the kind of cost involved in promotional activities.

And for all such woes of high costs, Internet has become an alternative. When compared to the other means of promotional channels, if appropriately planned and deployed, online marketing is an effective solution. In the following sections we shall review few of the effective tools which can create an impact and how effectively it can be used.

Internet marketing started penetrating since a decade and slowly crawled in to all the verticals of businesses. Today from the time a company starts its product development, it starts relying on Online space, to carry promotions. Any product, or a company today has to be present in online medium – it has become a way of life.

The Network relationship between the customers, and the way the customer's personal interests are tagged is a very significant issue that needs to be discussed. Once registered as a networking site, a couple of sessions of access to the site is more than enough for the site to ensure hits to the site.

If we are a registered user of FACE BOOK and use it regularly for a few days, but withdraw from visiting the site for few days, we keep getting mobile alerts and email alerts, which persuade us to access the site again ( The nature of alerts is “ you have some notifications pending”). The intent of the site is to ensure that traffic to the site is intact and the number of people spending their time, at any given period should always remain high. Only then these networking sites can survive the costs and make profits.

Let's look into the aspects of DIGTIAL Marketing tools and techniques. Every aspect of Internet can be seen as promotional medium; however usage of certain activities can increase the rate of digital marketing .Few of them which we can look into is

- Email campaigns
- Effective use of social networking sites
- Significant use of websites
- Getting to the TOP of search lists
- Enabling online communication system with customers
- Creating eNews letters which can keep you stay connect ed with your customers

### **EMAIL AS AN EFFECTIVE TOOL**

Dynamics of Communication has seen the emergence of some latest trends. “Email” is one such revolution in Communications which has changed the way communication used to happen. After the

emergence of email system of communication, there is a rapid progress in the way the business transactions are taking place. It's not business alone, even personal inputs has changed dramatically.

The emotional touch carried by letters in earlier days was significant. Postal letters used to be categorized into Normal Post, Speed Post, Courier service, TELEGRAM etc. Today, they are hardly used.

In earlier days, when people got to know each other through network or business, collecting their residential or office address for postal communication was an important exercise.. But in today's personal and professional interactions emails are exchanged.

There is sea change with emails itself. Prior to introducing GMAIL by Google, the mail servers used to offer a limited space, but with GMAIL launching the integrated chatting system, the extensive storage capacities has created a ripple effect.

Research reports and statistics have revealed that checking emails has become a priority in any given day in the life of a businessman, student and professional. Prior to launch of smart phones like Black Berry, and other Smart phones, people used to depend on their desktops and notebooks to access their emails, whereas today the scenario is different. The moment an email pops up people have the tendency to look at it.

The curious part of emailing system is the "SPAM Folder". Many of us intentionally subscribe to emails when we visit some sites or share our email ids with a few sites and their network affiliates, which can send us the emails.

As quoted, information is wealth; today the data bank of email-id's corresponding to each segment of individuals is certainly a wealthy proposition.

When we start doing the campaign over email few of the aspects which we should remember are

### **Content**

- The content of the email body should be very precise and specific, it should neither be too elaborate or vague.
- The content should generate interest in the reader and in turn promote your product or services in an appropriate manner.
- Caution should be exercised when framing the Subject of the email because mail servers have been programmed to identify unsolicited emails and filter them automatically as SPAM. Hence subject line should have an interesting tag, and should never sound like a promotional caption.

### **Addressing the email**

- Mass emailing is an easy task, but the resulting outcome is very meager. Rather a personally addressed email has a much better read through rate, and also raises the chances for responses from the prospective clients.

### **Follow Through**

- Today once an email account is activated, hundreds of emails keep flocking in to the Inbox, and many of us don't even look in to few promotional emails. Hence proper follow up emails are necessary to keep customers connected with us and provide them the latest news about promotional offerings, products and services.

However, if we can get the database of email ids i pertaining to our prospective customers, it's an effective route to send a customized email rather than the group emails. It can create a better and desired outcome.

### **Social Networking**

Social Networking is a link between today's professional and personal life. Online or Offline, the combination of social life and networking essential for better living. Staying connected to old pals, ex-colleagues, neighborhood, and community has always played a significant role in an individual's role.

In the earlier days, office desks, pantry areas, Café Centers and functions use to be the networking platforms, where as in today's digital world, we rely on social media websites like Facebook and Hi5 for sharing our network.

Thanks to social sites, I have been fortunate to get in touch with hundreds of my friends and relatives whom, I had never been in contact for years.

Social Network has become an addiction and research states that, people get restless, if they don't spend some time on these social networking sites.

Networking sites have become a medium for communicating and sharing information both in professional and personal space of individuals, that Digital Marketing has become the very integral part of social media.

As a user when we login into our account / profile page in any of the networking site, the content might vary, but not the concept... yes. The fantastic concept of selling and promotions. Every day hundred thousand people keep hanging in on these sites, it's where we have

the scope for promoting our products/services in a very economical manner in comparison to print and electronic media.

Today, the gamut of selling or promoting online has become the criteria. Most of the products/events/services from companies are visible on the landing page in the profiles of the company's page in social networking sites and they encourage their customers to keep visiting that page for knowing the latest information, to share their experiences with the product/services etc.

It has become a necessity for companies to maintain their social networking; all is well when we use the platform to an optimum extent rather than simply creating a presence.

Few of the important factors which we should use to optimize our social media promotions are:

- Always try to engage your customers with new brochures/visuals/videos/images etc on the landing pages of this social site.
- Ensure that there is a proper SEO mechanism which is adapted to keep the traffic to this networking site pages of the company.
- Utilize the specialized tools and offers which the Sites email to you for promoting your pages on searches.
- Ensure that the content on this page are very effectively written or portrayed, to create a visual appeal
- Encourage your customers to share their experiences and follow your company profile on social network.
- Don't keep your profile pages static (in the sense, creating it once and not making any changes like posting new information etc).

- Clustering the profile with too much of information might only result in creating confusion in the customers, rather opt for a well-organized profile, with more number of link pages and provide RSS feeds.

Ensuring that we have a presence is important, but consistently utilizing that platform to provide us optimum result is a tactful job, which is to be properly addressed. Taking the professional support of digital media companies is not a bad idea, in the case of companies, where the yield ratio out of the social media platforms could be high.

## **Optimized Website**

Fundamentals always play a predominant role in of the activities we carry or initiate. There are few elementary aspects which are very important to be successful. For any company, whatever be the budget allocation on Digital Medium, the importance of a good website cannot be ruled out.

Every step of an online medium of marketing starts from here. The URL of a website is equivalent to the address of our office, and the name of the brand which creates an Identity. Unless it is good, it cannot assure effectiveness.

I still remember visiting a few sites, to gather some information about the companies, and was so impressed by the websites of some of them, that even today I remember the companies so much for lasting impressions.

Yes...what you have read is right! When we initiate the design of sites, having a proper theme for the site is very essential. It is the crucial step to project the company positively,

For instance if you have to create a website for a travel company, should you have the back drop of a beautiful landscape or visuals of happy customers etc.

Depending on the theme, the design of the site has to be chosen. The kind of importance we give to the business model we develop, budget allocation we do CAPEX and OPEX, similar level of significance is to be provided to the site design and site map too. Because this website is accessible to customers worldwide, and the visitors for your site are from diverse cultural backgrounds. Hence there is always a need for ensuring that the site design, approach and the content of the site is aptly integrated and is put to shape.

When we purview, few of the technicalities which are very important to have a proper website are:

- The domain name should be catchy or easy to remember
- Ensure that the content for the site is clear
- Navigation between pages of the site should be cluster free
- All the technical functionalities like TAG's and Key words should be adequate
- The content of the site is to be regularly updated and has to be properly guarded from hacking
- Search Engines always have certain standards, upon which they rank or index the sites, and when a website is getting developed these factors should be taken in to consideration.

A very common mistake which curtails the purpose of having a website is, the renewal of domain names, and hosts the sites in an improper server. When a site is hosted in a server which doesn't have proper fire walls, it can be prone to hacking.

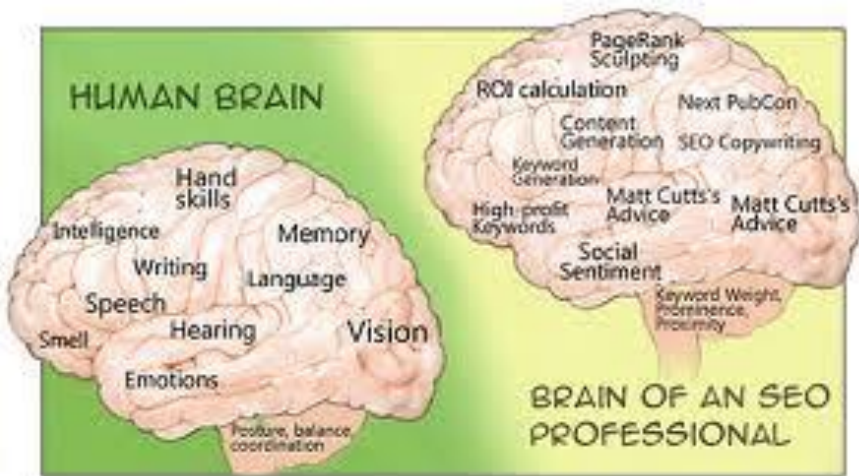
There are so many servers which frequently goes down, and when customers try to access the site, it leaves only a negative impression upon the company.

## **GETTING ON TOP AT SEARCH LISTS**

When eMerchant Digital Solutions (formerly known as The eMerchant), a digital media company was started, our clients remembered us as **SEO wale**. A decade back, the online mode of marketing and activities were yet unknown, and we had the task of explaining to our clients, the need for an SEO, but today the scene has changed.

For businesses to be effective SEOs are important and companies are keen on implementing SEO services for their websites, both to increase their e-business proposition and also for developing reputation. When we initiated the services to the companies, we had a tough time identifying trained resources, and even if there are few, the kind of small-scale operations we had, we couldn't afford such talent. We had to choose curious internet surfing resources and train them according to the requirements of the company.

Today, the scenario is different; there are numerous companies who provide Digital Media services, and SEO services. The kind of webinar programs, and Institutional sessions which are being conducted has only raised the talent pool. Few of our clients, have also requested to provide an in-house resource and get the SEO, SMO and other activities done for their business sites.



One major challenge which we handled effectively at eMerchant, was to keep abreast with the changing trends of techniques and systems. Despite the fact that there are numerous SEO tools which does the SEO process in an automatic mode, we relied upon the manual process of optimization and had achieved significant results for our clients.

## **COMMUNICATIONS AT LARGE**

For any business, communication plays a key role. Unless we facilitate a proper communication channel, having a proper communication is a hectic task. One of the common mistakes which we encounter with the websites are, the “Contact us” page, where the details for contact purposes filled up by visitors to the site, goes unnoticed.

As many of the companies, don't follow a proper review channel to follow-up with the visitors to the site, a lot of prospective business is missed out. If these sites utilize the scope to understand the visitors profile and their requirements, business prospects goes up.

The other key factor is to ensure that whenever there are email requests from customers, they should be replied to immediately. Mobile app applications could be very resourceful here to facilitate pre-sale and post-sale service follow-ups.

When there is a proper connect with a client it supports customer relationship management.

### **NEWSLETTERS ONLINE**

One of the most effective tools in the Digital Media is the Online News Letters. This tool is effective in addressing the challenges of the industry, and promptly sending newsletters to customers reflects our commitment to the business. The customer also gets to know the latest trends in industry and varied promotional offers what are being offered in the season.

However, there are certain key factors which are to be carefully addressed.

Whenever the newsletter is sent to companies, we should ensure that we provide them with inputs which are very relevant and appropriate to their needs.

And the other key factor is we should ensure that subject title is very carefully chosen as there is possibility for SPAM move.

### **ONLINE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT**

This is one of the buzzing activities in the arena of Digital Media. Today social networking has become a common phenomenon of professional and personal life.

It is an inherent desire for many individuals to have their profile well known across social circles. PR jobs are used to facilitate the

entire process of creating brand awareness for the companies, and Individuals. Earlier this phenomenon of Reputation Building was associated with celebrities, Industrialists and others who had several activities to be managed Over a period of time, the socializing activities, and club culture has become intensive, and the Page 3 fever started catching up.

But today, the innovative approach of utilizing the digital medium for working on reputation management is very economical and very effective. There is a lot of development which is happening across the digital media, towards reputation management. There are many blogs which promote the individuals and also the link building approach which creates a linkage to the site of the business or Individuals.

**Tweeting**, which is intended to express individual's opinions has become a very effective platform to create reputation. Despite the fact that professional support is available to ensure your reputation online; individuals at their level can do many synergized activities which can create a better reputation online.

Twitter, Social Networking sites are effective medium to build reputation online, and this certainly helps the companies and Individuals in building their social circle across.

Unlike the conventional methods where the reputation building is limited to geographical levels, in the digital medium, one action influences the whole network and such optimized approach can only help us build an effective medium of digital presence.

In keeping up with the nature of business competition, the impact of online presence is also equally getting streamed and there is a need

for utilizing digital tools towards effective deployment and getting the business prospects in an appropriate manner.

Along with all its positives the digital medium has its share of negatives too. There are hundreds of incidents which are reported across the globe, everyday pertaining to online fraudulence.

Some of the negative shades of online medium are hacking - where few companies and individuals hack the personal information from some important data servers. Hacking of passwords, phishing of vital information, unsecured online payments has become a very factor across the online network.

Though, there are stringent rules and regulations put in place periodically, there is still a huge gap which is to be addressed. Categorically, when we speak about the use of digitalization tools, there is lot of fraudulence reported across. One such is the email campaign saying you have won the online lottery, etc thus trapping many innocent users across the Internet world.

There are also many cases of profiles being hacked and undue activities carried out. In few cases the scope of such an effective medium is intentionally utilized for improper activities.

There is good and bad in every walk of life, and the kind of digital presence what we have today if utilized properly can reap tremendous benefits for optimized living online.

On a lighter note, Telecom companies have started advertising and giving importance to the social quotient of an individual and the need to have online presence regularly, by using their data network. Today companies are taking a keen interest in promoting their product or service online than on the product itself.

Online Reputation management has become a “push” strategy than a “pull” strategy in the market. If you have to be identified in the market, online medium has become the face of such identification for companies and personal network.

As a follower of Digital Media with a passion for social media activities, I often keep hearing to discussions pertaining to the upsurge in the Digital Medium presence in a much-hyped manner. There are numerous discussions which revolve around, how the effective digital media might make the traditional media disciplines a redundant exercise but despite all this we can't rule out the fact that the other alternative channels along with Digital Media, have their impact on the way businesses are performed.

Everyday there are thousands of profiles joining social media sites like FACEBOOK, and at the same time the same site is also witnessing profiles being deactivated. Over a period of time excitement gives way to monotony. Protection of privacy is another issue to be dealt with.

Some research reports also quoted the scenario as **“Consumer Fatigue with Social Media.”**

Despite these challenges social networks and blogs are turning out to be main destination on internet land. Billions of minutes are spent on this social media sites by thousands of people, and we should capitalize on the same effectively.

The way social networking platforms are gaining importance not much will change. Thousands of profiles, who are keen on an online presence, can't be expected to go offline.

Then we have the world of Gadgets. It keeps pushing its innovative products in to the world at phenomenal speed. Earlier the Telephone companies used to generate income from the “call minutes “ from the customer base, today the focus is more on Data and content usage revenues. The addiction to smart phones and tablets has given a phenomenal trust to Digital Media presence.

Statistics and earlier researches have also proved that Internet access is here to stay. It can't be eliminated from a user's day to day activities. It has become an integral part of life today. The factors reveal that the users who have got habituated to mobile way of data network are surely not the ones who will be away from digital network.

ORKUT gave way to FACEBOOK although the flow got slowed down with the TWITTER revolution .It has to be either one or the other site to stay engaged socially online.

Despite the economic recession, the sale of gadgets hasn't seen any decline. On the other hand there is a demand for gadgets. There is a plethora of opportunities which the consumers and the product manufacturers are hunting to stay networked and connected.

The power of mobile devices is increasing, the prices are coming down and the range of apps and content for them is growing -- including videos, live TV and catch-up TV. As they become lighter and handier, and connectivity increases, growing numbers of consumers will have a mobile device within reach all the time and everywhere -- including while they're watching TV. They may be spending long periods on these screens, as they currently do with TV, computers and games consoles, or they may be dipping in and out.

Either way, mobile screens will grab an increasing share of their attention. Being on Twitter/Facebook will be some of the activities the viewers will engage in , So the choice for marketers is clear: Either disregard digital and work a lot harder and smarter for the shrinking non-digital portion of consumers' attention, or embrace digital and work a lot harder and smarter for the growing digital share.

Internet has had a significant impact on all of us for years. However, the way the consumers are gaining a grip on the information is an indicator of the growing presence of digital media, and how effectively it can help businesses create their connect with the customers.

The significant contribution to the digital media is from the telecom companies who are keen on data market and invest millions of rupees in providing streaming digital services to its consumers across the globe. For business, this represents a vivid opportunity to promote their products and services in a synergized manner and integrate their connect to stake holders.

Before the penetration of smart phones, the usage of internet was extremely limited and the kind of bandwidth for office spaces and household locations used to vary. However, with the penetration of business phones, and consecutive launch of smart phones has revolutionized the way internet is used. Earlier considerable time was spent by individuals on print and television media too, whereas now there is sea change in the proportions.

Fast forward to today. You pick up your smart phone or your tablet device while you're in a journey or sitting at home. You flip through the digital edition of a journal or a magazine Clicking on a photo in an article activates a video or audio segment discussing the subject matter. In that same article, there is a chart — one click and more

detailed information is displayed on the finding. The ad next to the article alerts you to a new psychological test, CE program, or billing software. One click and your request for additional information is sent to the advertiser. As you're reading you notice an interesting job in the classified section. Again, one click on the job and a new screen pops up with the employer's website, where you can apply. When you're done with your day's work maybe you want to listen to some music or watch a movie. In totality, we are adapting to the syndrome of Digital Medium and are engaging ourselves to the uninterrupted information available on the digital plateau.

Digital environment completely hooks the users for their living style and trends. Earlier the penetration of digital media into the complete activities of Individuals was limited due to the mobility factors of the devices, whereas with the advent of devices, it has become a simple task of effective role set and all types of media can be presented to them: text, audio, video, surveys, games, social networking, distance learning, and customized mobile applications (Apps) are all available. The lines between editorial, advertising, social interaction and entertainment blur into one compelling experience. It's up to us, the creators of the content, to make it interesting, compelling, and enjoyable for the user.

If you are selling websites designs or templates, you can show users sample sites and have a video on good design. If you have a test preparation business, feature testimonials from successful past customers. If you have a practice management software package, do a demonstration that runs on the device and show users how they can remotely run their business. Digital technology makes all this possible.

Digital marketing is a discipline in flux. We face an onslaught of shiny new technologies and platforms that promise to "change

everything.” Marketers are creating similarly breathless headlines, proclaiming the next revolutionary devices/apps/social networks.

Yet even trend setters can’t adjudge what changes the future will bring; but they do need to be aware that their industry is changing every day. For instance, to reach consumers marketers need to be increasingly mobile, engaging, relevant and aware of the contexts in which we currently operate.

We can’t be pre-judicial about future, but the way things are shaping up, it opens up phenomenal changes across the digital media platform, and the best part of it is the employment opportunities it is going to create on a direct front.

This is due to the fact, that down the line, many aspects of business and social living is going the digitalized way, and it needs a professional outlook to put action in place. Hence there is a surge in the career opportunities for enthusiasts who if trained properly and are creative in utilizing the medium, shall rise to all new scales.

The other key factors which we should try to understand and can’t ignore are the kind of services which will be present in the market.

### **CUSTOMIZE TO LOCAL TRENDS**

Cultural diversities are so high in today’s world that there is so much of cultural differences and policy regulations which are taking place across the globe.

What is considered as issue of privacy violation in one region is under the permissible limits of access in other countries. With such activities happening across the world there is a need for the digital media to analyze the requirements of the clients and start proposing to clients about the possible services which can be offered.

Consumers today expect a kind of customization which can provide them the conventional methods of providing services. The way ecommerce companies strive to bring varied developments are gaining advantages.

GOOGLE has become an integral part of this revolution, and they consistently keep supporting the digital media change. One of the important factors which we haven't discussed in current digital trends is GPS positioning and Google Maps. Google maps has aided many corporate houses in providing identity to their presence. Also, the kind of tracking which is done by email servers about the location of the user access, is supporting them in picking up the advertisements and promoting the products and services to the local customers.

Let's illustrate how the synergy works . If a user is searching for new property or his email inbox has correspondence containing content related to new property developments in his area, then the server pushes the advertisements relevant to such properties and displays to the customers in his email inbox.

Companies also take the IP address of the individuals and send them promotional emails or advertisements in the ad space, in line with the local advertisements.

In business perspective, this makes significant contribution to the companies in terms of advertising space utilization and the number of clicks which can turn into effective business.

## **DIFFERENT STREAMS OF ADVERTISING**

In the advent of ever-changing trends, social media no doubt is gaining a lot of attention. When the boom of digital media, email campaign has been a runaway hit, and over a period of time, this has slowly crept into advertising on blogs which result in a lot of traffic.

It has become so popular, that few authors have given their inputs in the form of books on “How to make money through blogs?”

This momentum has to be synchronized to the kind of developments happening in digital medium and addressed effectively. And the next concept to revolutionize the advertising spree is Social Media networks. ORKUT & MY SPACE (both lost their charm and gone with the wind), and FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM are known, and thousand other sites not in the lime light, also has the same opine that advertising revenues and social commerce is very high. Undoubtedly, the kind of leverage which social commerce has got is unbelievable, some statistics suggest that Subscriber base of FACEBOOK in terms of population can be equated to one among the world’s top five populated countries.

The other platform which has caught the attention of advertisements is Online Videos. This medium has also have gained attention across the counters, enabling companies to display their advertisements before streaming third party videos, also enable companies to devise their own promotional videos and push it to the viewers.

Another trend in Digital media advertising which has caught space is the MOBILE APPs space. Thousands of Mobile apps are around for free downloads, and companies are on the lookout for installation of these apps by users in their smart phones and other gadgets. Once they achieve a little traffic to the apps site for downloads, this apps become a golden goose of advertisement space.

As most of the apps are developed with specific usage in mind, whenever the app is put to use by the subscriber, there is possibility of advertising displays. This is a very creative approach, and such an attribute can change the digital media game plan, down the line.

The other upcoming digital medium which is has a low profile is the ad space in the document downloads. In the recent past few companies have exclusively worked on content sharing platforms, and whenever there is any document downloads in portable document formats or other imagery formats, a part of the document is encrypted with advertisements. However, this format of media, can serve the limited scope of advertising when compared to other digital media tools.

These models can help brands become relevant to consumers and provide the next great opportunities for marketers. Many companies have received accolades from consumers and marketers alike and have demonstrated the power that personal touch and relevance can have for customer engagement.

Everywhere there is an excitement around the mobile based digital media developments. Ensuring that this potential is leveraged to its the optimum advantage is what has to be looked into.

*It's time to get creative and imagine the new possibilities. Media industry guru **Ken Doctor** points to innovative advertisers who take advantage of the iPad's unique format. "What's better for an insurance company like Liberty Mutual than threatening you with disaster (tornado, earthquake, flood) and then, by simply tilting your iPad see the damage magically disappear," he poses.*

Being relevant to your customer in every context improves brand recall and enhances engagement. In this increasingly interconnected world, consumers are not necessarily thinking in terms of silos. Research shows that 72% of consumers want to be engaged with an integrated marketing approach, but only 39% are receiving that. Google found that consumers had 74% brand recall when the advertiser's integrated strategy carried across mobile, TV and online.

Today's profound advancement in tech and media is changing how we interact with and filter our world. Smart marketers can succeed by staying engaged with the trends that resonate most with the emerging consumer of today.

“Win”, the feeling of winning is always incredible, and the competition all around is about winning spree. Be it sports, business or personal life, essential factor is about winning. We come across many instances where people win in a comfortable way, whereas for others it’s the kind of last mile run which sets a winning node.

Every aspect of business has that something which when rightly handled provides that winning edge. It’s no different in Digital Media too. For ensuring consistency in success always, there is a need for companies to work on being different from their competitors, and for few it’s all about sticking to fundamental principles of their business and industry without much deviation from the basics. There are no hard and fast rules for that winning edge. This is not something relevant only to business, be it sports, or movies or any other walks, one approach may not always yield results.

As it happens with our Indian Cricket team, sometimes the risk of team combinations or the shuffling in the batting order pays off and at times it bounces badly. In every industry, there are many companies who have their USPs and vision in a different way. Every business wishes to achieve success in business - some companies achieve it by consistent upgrade of technology and service, while others by sticking to the elementary aspects of the core product.

In digital media Industry too, it’s the same scenario. Earlier decade didn’t have so many companies offering digital media services.

Whereas now, there are numerous companies which offer digital media services, and hundred thousand of customers are in need of digital media presence, and SEO, SMO and many others are the order of the day.

When both supply and demand are very high, naturally the competition to have a higher market share encourages undue practices and commitments to customers. Every customer expects his site to reach on top of search lists in the shortest possible span of time, and its humane to expects to. And the service providers in order to bag the order at times, with all good intentions and confidence, convince the customers that they will bring their customers' website on top, in a very short time.

When every Digital Marketing/ SEO company indulges in a process to optimize, and every Customer Site from the same industry vertical desires to achieve top in the search list, does it sound practical? It's not that negative perception is carried out about the efficiency of the service providers; it's about emphasizing what is creating that winning edge.

There are certain processes and certain methods which will optimize the scope of winning. In a way there are many things which we over- do in the process to ensure delivering of right results to our clients.

However, sometimes such attempts boomerang.. Let's understand the fact that it's not that service providers alone are not the ones who constantly revive their plans, it's also the biggies (read it as search engines). The way they keep vigil on the processes followed by companies, set an ever-changing scenario.

There are few actions which one should restrain in an Digital Marketing/ SEO process, to ensure that the site is not over optimized and fails in the search engine criteria.

The first factor what we should keep in mind, is not to over-do the pudding. As the old proverb goes, “the taste of pudding is in the eating “”. For instance, when we apply the key word density pattern for the content in the site, at times blindly the keywords are repeated and often the sentence of the title or rather the text doesn’t make sense. In other words, there is a clear disconnect.

Often Search Engines filter such tasks and eliminate those kinds of sites from the search process, realizing that this sentence is an automated tool rather than the outcome of a human mind. It’s always good to refrain from usage of any auto tools for content framing.

The other important factor that experts warn us is about creating a kind of internal links. When a site is structured and framed with content, more often we indulge in deploying links to the anchor with the key words being repeated on the structure of the site like footer, headers or side bars rather than of the linkage to the content segments.

However, experts believe that any such overdo can only cause harm to the site rather than build any kind of contemporary advantage. Rather the optimum factor could be about having a proper linkage to the anchor and the call for action links with set anchors, which can yield a better result.

When every attempt is being made to make a very appealing website, we need to be equally concerned about designing of footers. Footers with inappropriate linkage fails to generate curiosity in the customers.. There should not be too much of ridge in the way

the anchors are set up in the footers, rather experts are of the opinion that we should use proper tags in the site at the index bars or tabs.

The other mistake which one should refrain from is creating blocks of content to grab attention of the search engines. One should avoid such an attempt to ensure that there is a smooth flow of content, and let's remember that the very fundamental objective of holding the site is to convey our business to customers and facilitate them in reaching us for services we offer. Whereas, when we look at few sites, we realize the content presented in the site, is designed more for SEO purpose rather than for expressing their business services.

Our decade of web building experience has taught us a few lessons. In order to provide a dynamic impact in the long run, website content should be precise, well-structured with appropriate content for optimization. , We should also ensure an organic SEO process (timely phenomena).

If the Webmaster over does the handling of the back links it might mess up the site rankings and the places in search lists. Our concern is to evaluate the factors that might synchronize the back links, the pattern to be adapted in order to avoid any kind of automated software blasts or tools which might serve us with some unprecedented outcome in initial times, but in the long run will create hassles to the optimization process. Hence when we are opting for back links with other blogs or sites, we should refrain from mass linkage and do so based on relevance.

To reemphasize overdoing any part of SEO process can only hamper the process of the organic process however the basic purpose of conducting an SEO or SMO process is to create a dynamic output which keeps the site optimized. Shortsighted approach might only land us into a clustered scenario.

## **RETROSPECTIVE ACTION WITH ANALYTICS**

Retrospection is an essential integration for any development in the works we undertake. When we indulge in the optimization process of a website and digital media presence enhancement for a company, a highly effective tool which can create a presence is **ANALYTICS**.

The fundamental process of this Analytics is to evaluate the site performance and ensure possible details about the site traffic-visitor's data mining. People have weird conceptions of where their traffic comes from. Sure, they can extract the figures pertaining to top searches, tweets, keyword patterns, but rarely do they have a robust understanding of the geographical distribution of their audience and evaluate the options to utilize the scope to extract such details.

More or less, analytics to plays a major role in the entire site building process, and it reflects the market dynamics of the site. There are numerous sites which can provide an impacting analysis. Proper utilization of such analytic tools can certainly help the companies do big in their SEO process.

It's not that SEO is a process only for companies who are into Digital Media, even customers at their end too can work on the analytics of their site and evaluate their business strategies, any pertinent changes required and outcomes which can impact the technicalities of the site along with the business functions too.

Analytics plays a very predominant role for optimization of digital media.

There are many reports like Overview reports of sources, reports on the action in landing pages, In-page optimization reports, and the

reports of conversion funnels, which helps us in understanding the site dynamics in many ways and solicit information for us.

When optimization is done in an appropriate manner it provides us the great advantage of securing rankings, building a reputation, enabling a better social media presence in a secure and a organic manner.

When any work is done with the intention of yielding better outcomes, the futuristic world of digital media presence will only enhance the opportunities., However the issues of pros and cons exist in all happenings. Let's step into the digital world with all the technical advents and maneuver the digital way of life.

### **GOOGLE JACK POT**

Nothing called Jack pot in Google – It is continuous building and maintaining trends.....

**Story of Digital Media Marketing is incomplete rather inappropriate if we don't discuss about social media.**

As Communication is a very important part of life. Communication, in general, is the process of exchanging ideas and expressions with each other. As evolution is a natural phenomenon, the way we communicate has also changed with the technological advancements. Right from the non-verbal communication millions of years ago to birth of different languages to telecommunication, communication has taken many different forms and now that we are witnessing exponential growth in technology, we have an absolutely new age communication channel known as the 'Social Media'.

### **Types of Social Media**

When it comes to 'social media' we only think about the social networking sites, where we spend most of our time these days. Not as you may think, but there are many different types of social media platforms that have cropped up. Some of them are:

- 1. Social Networking:** The most popular and casual form, that everyone is aware of is the social networking. The purpose of social networking sites like Facebook, Myspace etc. is to connect with your friends from any corner of the world for fun while some sites like LinkedIn allow you to connect with people for some professional motive. However, Facebook is also great

for business promotion and marketing through company's business page.

2. **Micro Blogging:** A new concept called 'microblogging' is gaining up quick attention in recent years. Microblogging is a medium of exchanging small posts by means of short sentences (up to 160 characters), video links or individual images on some trending event. Twitter is one of the leading microblogging sites these days.
3. **Forums:** Forums are unique piece of a website that allows users to share opinions and advices from others on a particular subject. For example, if you join a forum of a video game website, then you can join the forum to discuss on the different topics but all that are related to video games.
4. **Bookmarking:** Since there is limitless info on web about a particular topic, it is really a daunting job to personally compile them at one place and that is the reason why sites like 'Digg' bloom. On Digg, the 'diggers' can provide links on any topic from news to an entertaining video and let the other 'diggers' read. This type of social media is one great of promoting business.
5. **Video Sites:** When you want to watch a video, be it a newly released song or an event that occurred a few seconds ago, what do you do? Off course, you use 'YouTube' – don't you? Such video sites are just another form of social media as they allow you to exchange views through comments and profile pages.

Though these are just a few types and there are many other types that exist. However, what is important to know is that the 'social media', as we know now, was not the same always. The expansion

of knowledge, availability of resources and more and more awareness led to the growth of prospect of social media. But it is quite interesting to know about the social media that was there at the time of our forefathers and how we reached to the point where social media has become an inextricable unit of our lives.

## **Evolution of Social Media – From the primitive days to the ‘Golden time’**

Social media today have become an inseparable part of daily life, but this did not just happen in one night, rather it was in use since the late 70s. By that time common man was not familiar with this concept as it first took the forms of newsgroups, chat rooms and listservs, however, since then it has come a long way to unite the world on an electronic social platform.

## **Early Days of Social Media**

Some of the ancient social media developed then included:

- **BULLETEIN BOARD SYSTEMS (BBSs):** One can call the BBSs as the forefathers of social media as they were first introduced online in the late 70s. Initially these were hosted on the PCs and the users, one person at a time, could dial in using the modem of the host computer. These were the earliest sites that allowed people to log in and communicate with each other, off course not as faster as we do today. However, most of them were involved in shady practices such as hosting virus code, adult content, instructions and information about hacking etc.
  
- **USENETS:** Next, came the Usenet Systems, jointly conceived by Jim Ellis and Tom Truscott in 1979, which let the users to post articles on to the newsgroups. Usenets were different from BBSs and forums in the way that they did not have any centralized server.

- **Six Degrees:** Launched in 1997, Six degrees was the pioneer social network, where people can create their profile and connect with their friends, just like the Facebook in the current time. The site attracted more than a million users in its time; however, it is no longer functional since 2001.

Other early social media included Migente, Blackplanet, Livejournal, AsianAvenue and many more. But the common man little knew about these and even in some countries the majority population did not even hear of these social media platforms. Blame the lesser awareness of internet!

## **SOCIAL MEDIA IN 2000 AND AFTER**

It sounds surprising that only a decade ago social media still was a little more than a budding concept. Of course there were websites like Orkut, MySpace and Friendster that had gained a decent level of familiarity, but population as a whole was not there yet.

- **Friendster:** Friendster was founded in 2002 by a Canadian computer programmer, Jonathan Abrams. Friendster was one of the first of social networking sites to attract over 1 million members in comparison with its predecessors such as SixDegrees.com in 1997 and Makeoutclub in 1999.

Initially, till the year 2011, Friendster was a platform for members to share online content and media with other members in their contact list. This site was also used for discovering new events, hobbies, bands and dating. Just like facebook, users could also share photos, videos, send messages and post comments. However, in June 2011 the site underwent complete transformation and came up as a social gaming site. After attracting a good number of new users, the reign of Friendster ended at the end of the year 2015.

- **MySpace:** On August 2003, a new social networking website called Myspace took birth. The site offered interactive services to the users wherein they could create their profile and connect with their friends, create groups, share photos, blogs, videos and music.

It was in late 2003, where Fin Leavell became the first Myspace musician by encoding his music into his Myspace profile. From here onwards, Myspace attracted a large pool of young talents from all over the world which paved a way for ‘MySpace Transmissions’, a series of real time studio recordings by renowned artists.

Myspace was in its golden time during 2005 to 2008 as it became the top rated social networking site in the world and even beat Google in terms of number of visits around the US. Myspace offered its users to use its services in different environments including the mobile phone. To promote its services, Helio, an American mobile phone provider, even launched a series of mobiles in 2006 that offered the customers to access Myspace on mobile. Further, Myspace and UIEvolution together developed a mobile version for a range of carriers like Vodafone, At&T and Rogers Wireless.

Myspace maintained its glory until Facebook overtook the ranking on April 19, 2008. By then Myspace was continuously losing its membership as its competitors Twitter and Facebook had gained users attention by their new-aged social networking experience, while Myspace stuck to create audience around music and entertainment only.

But sooner Myspace learnt from its mistake and revamped its website and mobile app. The re-structured app was launched in

June 2013 with some newer tools like Myspace radio channels, live stream concerts and facility to edit and posting the gif images.

Even though Myspace completely declined in the year 2015, it maintained a pool of approximately 1 billion registered users by then.

- **Orkut:** The craze for social media was at its peak after the launch of Orkut, a social networking website designed by Orkut Büyükkökten, a Turkish Google employee.

By this time a lot of awareness about social media had been already there. Most of the people were familiar with at least the name ‘orkut’, though elder people still thought that it was not their cup of tea, whereas the younger generation found a new platform to connect with their older and existing pals, electronically. By the year 2008, Orkut was the most sought after websites in Brazil and India and the total users were 27 million by 2009.

(<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Orkut-once-Indias-social-media-darling-is-back/articleshow/53702303.cms>)

Features of orkut such as choices of themes, interface, watching your fan following and evaluating your friendship on a scale of 1-3 (percentage based), ignore list, crush list and others, kept the interests of the users alive. Orkut also allowed its users to add videos to their profile from Google video or Youtube under restricted/unrestricted polls. One could also integrate G-Talk and carry on chatting and file sharing with friends.

However, after grabbing so much attention from the users, the journey of Orkut came to an end on 30th September 2014,

because, in the meantime, its competitors Facebook and Twitter sprang up in every nook and corner of the world. Orkut allowed the users to export all media and files from their respective accounts till September 2016.

As of now, the website is still there but only to show the letter from its creator stating how wonderful the journey of orkut was and now the next generation orkut – ‘Hello’ is back in the game.

- **Facebook:** While orkut was enjoying its ‘stardom’, had it known that its rival ‘Facebook’ had already taken birth, though was not in limelight yet. On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2004, Mark Zuckerberg and his friends launched the site for Harvard students only. Eventually, after opening it for higher education institutions & Universities, in 2006 Facebook was opened for anyone who claimed to be above 13 years of age.

By 2005, when Facebook was still in its early age, some people did create their account but could not find a point in using it until few years. But in late 2007, Facebook allowed companies to promote and attract customers through FB business pages and by the end of 2010 the company declared that it had successfully created 500million users out of which 150 million users accessed FB through mobile. Nielsen study revealed that Facebook was the second most accessed site in the U.S. after Google.

By this time, smartphones had already knocked the market and Facebook launched a revolutionary user interface layer called Facebook Home for Android users. A new concept (popular from the times of twitter though), clickable hashtags, was introduced in 2013 that helped the users to follow the discussion in trend.

2016 was the year for some of the great revolutions from Facebook, including Deep Text (natural language process using Artificial Intelligence) and fee- based tool for communication called 'Workplace'. Apart from being used just to connect with friends through timeline, messages and Video calling, Facebook is widely used for business promotion, branding, and sharing opinions on a trending topic.

Facebook is a very popular social networking site in current times that not only attracted the younger generation, but has gained a lot of attraction from the elderly people as well. In today's time, there is almost no one who does not know 'Facebook' and whosoever has access to internet must be using Facebook, except for the countries like Iran, China and South Korea, where Facebook is temporarily or permanently banned.

- **Twitter:** Twitter is another new age social networking platform that is quite different from all the other media discussed so far. What's happening in the world, twitter tells you first! It is one of the most used social media with more than 319 million active users in a month, as of 2016.

Twitter was launched in the July 2006, when people were already very fond of facebook. However, in January 2009, Twitter moved up to 3rd position from 22nd position in the terms of most used social networking sites. The posts on twitter are commonly called 'tweets' which are restricted to 140 characters. Users with accounts can post tweets, but unregistered ones can only read them.

Twitter's usage upsurges during prominent events such as sports tournament, political issues, celebrity news, etc.

The company rolled out a revamped version of twitter in November 2010, wherein users could watch videos and see pictures by staying on the twitter page, while ‘logout’ and ‘messages’ could be accessed through a black bar.

Twitter did a number of experiments to enhance user experience like allowing users to create and share 6-second video clips and offer online discount coupons for shopping from different outlets and so on.

Latest renovation done on June 2017 shows a renovated Twitter dashboard for a better user experience. Not just that, Twitter has launched mobile apps for a number of platform like ipad, android, iphone, Windows Phone, Nokia S40, Blackberry and Windows 10. It has also introduced a progressive web app ‘Twitter Lite’, to be used in the areas with slow and unreliable internet connection.

- **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn, launched on 5th May 2003, is mainly an employment-oriented social networking platform that is accessible through website as well as mobile applications. Initially, LinkedIn was more of a digital resume, but as it became more popular among users, they realized that it was one of the coolest places to make and maintain professional relationships in the real world.

As per Wikipedia, LinkedIn has recorded 500 million members from across 200 nations in April 2007, who are either the employers or job seekers. Using LinkedIn is quite easy as users have to create their profiles and start adding connections to their network by inviting anyone who may or may not be a member. Apart from the basic profile services, LinkedIn offers some

premium services and a member can upgrade his/her account to premium account by paying some subscription fee.

According to the New York Times, US high school students are including their LinkedIn profiles along with their college applications. On the other hand, the head hunters, recruiters and HR personnel are frequently depending on LinkedIn to find the potential candidates. It is very convenient to do so through LinkedIn; with the help of advanced tools, recruiters can search for profiles that match their requirements. Additionally, recruiters and job seekers can join industry-based groups and make professional connections with people from same industry. LinkedIn also allows users to search for companies, non-profit organizations and governmental bodies they may be interested in working with. Users have to just type the name of the organization in the search bar which will return the data about that particular organization.

## **OTHER POPULAR SMARTPHONE BASED SOCIAL MEDIA**

Just like the social media was evolving, so was its platform. Over the recent years, mobiles have come up as a hyper-operative tool and have become the point of interest in IT business. Since technology is advancing with each passing day, people are more inclined towards mobile-based applications and so there are many wonderful mobile based social media applications that are out for providing faster and better user experiences.

- **Whatsapp:** Whatsapp is the one of the most widely used mobile based applications with billion users all over the world. It is a multilingual cross platform instant messaging app for smartphones. It is used to send text messages, images, videos, GIF, audio, documents, phone contacts and make video calls.

The app requires a decent internet connection to use the services and is absolutely free of charge. User can simply download the app on his smartphone and register on it with his contact number and can connect with other whatsapp user. One can chat privately or create group and can also send broadcast messages. The app asks for regular updates so that users can enjoy the latest features that are added time to time. Whatsapp is even accepted as an official platform for various business promotions as well as recruitment.

- **Hike Messenger:** Hike is another messenger for smartphones, just like Whatsapp. In addition to the text messages, users can send images, audio/video files, emoticons, graphical stickers and so on. A talking bot called ‘Natasha’ that uses Artificial Intelligence Markup Language to chat with users, is a unique feature that makes Hike different from other messengers.
- **Viber:** Viber is also a free messenger that offers similar services like other messengers except that there is no invitation or registration required to use Viber. Once downloaded, it instantly integrated with the user’s contact list and is ready to use. It gives high quality video calls when used on 3G or Wi-Fi networks.
- **Hello:** Hello, released in May 2016, is an absolute new-age social media though it is not very much in limelight as of now. It is founded by Orkut Buyukkokten (the Turkish programmer who developed Orkut), and a bunch of ex-Google engineers. Though Orkut was discontinued in the year 2014, Hello is seen to be advancement to Orkut which is developed with an aim to connect people with similar passions. Hello is currently available as mobile application for Android and iOS users.

## **A quick glance on total users using different social media as of April 2017.**

In just few years social media has become not just an inseparable part of a modern lifestyle but a must-have marketing media for all businesses, irrespective of their size. Talking about Facebook, LinkedIn, Whatsapp, Twitter and such innumerable social media, now they are officially a step ahead than just being used for entertainment. Based on scopes and purposes, here is a comprehensive list of number of users using different social media networks:

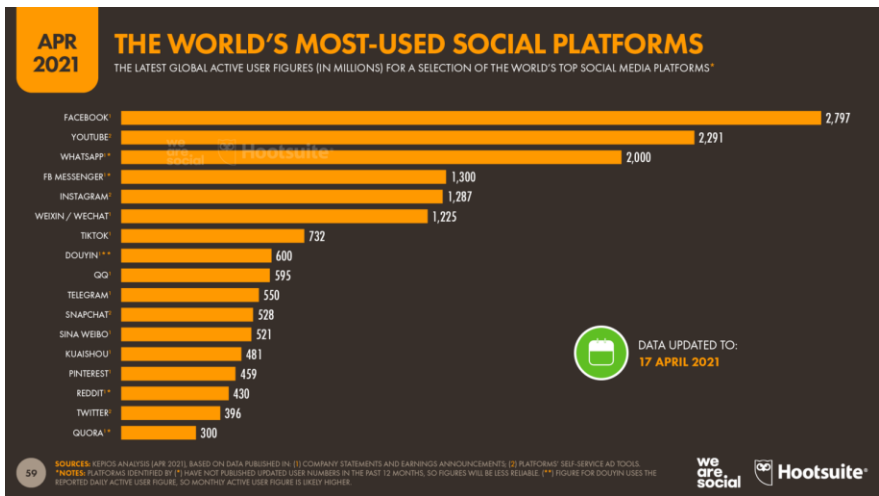
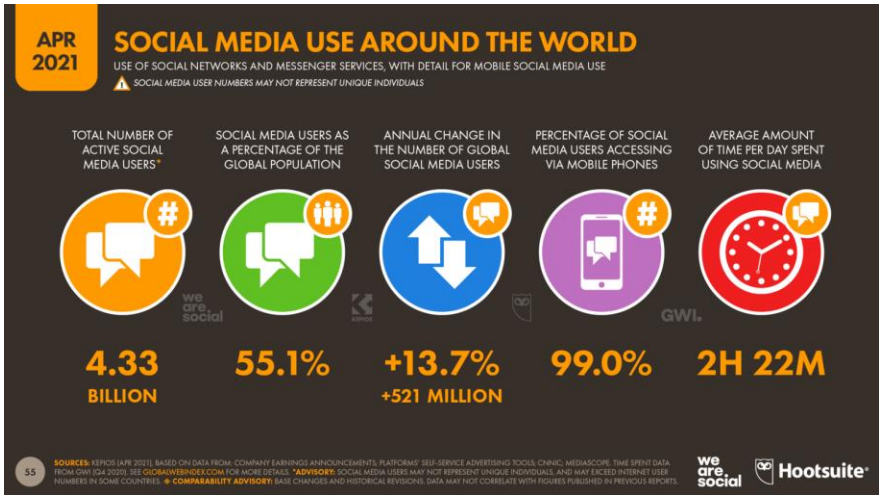
1.	<a href="#">Facebook</a>	: 1,968,000,000 users
2.	<a href="#">WhatsApp</a>	: 1,200,000,000 users
3.	<a href="#">YouTube</a>	: 1,000,000,000 users
4.	<a href="#">Facebook Messenger</a>	: 1,000,000,000 users
5.	<a href="#">WeChat</a>	: 889,000,000 users
6.	<a href="#">QQ</a>	: 868,000,000 users
7.	<a href="#">Instagram</a>	: 600,000,000 users
8.	<a href="#">QZone</a>	: 595,000,000 users
9.	<a href="#">Tumblr</a>	: 550,000,000 users
10.	<a href="#">Twitter</a>	: 319,000,000 users
11.	<a href="#">Sina Weibo</a>	: 313,000,000 users
12.	<a href="#">Baidu Tieba</a>	: 300,000,000 users
13.	<a href="#">Snapchat</a>	: 300,000,000 users
14.	<a href="#">Skype</a>	: 300,000,000 users
15.	<a href="#">Viber</a>	: 260,000,000 users
16.	<a href="#">Line</a>	: 220,000,000 users

## **LATER BY 2021: GLOBAL SOCIAL MEDIA STATS**

Based on publicly available data up to 17 April January 2021, at least 17 social media platforms have 300 million or more monthly active users\*:

1. Facebook has 2.797 billion monthly active users.
2. YouTube's potential advertising reach is 2.291 billion.(a)
3. WhatsApp has around 2 billion monthly active users.
4. Facebook Messenger has around 1.3 billion monthly active users.(b)
5. Instagram's potential advertising reach is 1.287 billion.(a)
6. WeChat (inc. Weixin 微信) has 1.225 billion monthly active users.
7. TikTok has 732 million monthly active users.
8. Douyin (抖音) has 600 million daily active users (note: monthly active users may be higher).
9. QQ (腾讯QQ) has 595 million monthly active users.
10. Telegram has 550 million monthly active users.
11. Snapchat's potential advertising reach is 528 million.(a)
12. Sina Weibo has 521 million monthly active users.
13. Kuaishou (快手) has 481 million monthly active users.
14. Pinterest has 459 million monthly active users.
15. Reddit has around 430 million monthly active users.(b)
16. Twitter's potential advertising reach is roughly 396 million.(b)
17. Quora has around 300 million monthly active users.(b)

# SOCIAL MEDIA USE AROUND THE WORLD (APRIL 2021)



Source : <https://datareportal.com/social-media-users>

## **IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN COMMON MAN'S LIFE**

Users of the present and upcoming generations cannot even conceive a thought of a world without social networking as the concept has literally implanted itself in our routine. In a statistical analysis it is estimated that the total number of social media users around the world in the year 2017 will be 2.46 billion which is expected to rise to 2.77 billion by the year 2019.

(<https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>)

However, just like every other thing, social media has both the positive and negative effects on the society. Let us learn how social media has impacted life of a common man:

- **Impact on Youth:** The youth of the world is the most prepared to adjust and to figure out how to utilize new innovations and they are absolutely spearheading the web-based social networking of different types. They have more technical know-how than the older generation. Online networking, in this way, is positively having a fairly huge effect on their day to day lives, both for good and bad.

However, youth, today, invests most of their time on social media, should understand that they must put these resources to good use. For guardians, even those of youngsters who are 16 and 17, it is essential to keep a watch to ensure that social media don't assume control over the lives of kids. At the point when utilized properly, it can be something to be thankful for.

**Impact on Politics:** Social media is not just bound to youth, but has an enormous role to play in the Indian politics too. Through various activities politicians in India have brought social media into the spotlight. Since it is said with social media, the power of media is in people's hand – it is very true in this scenario. Be it the upcoming elections or any political issue taking place in any

corner of the country, people have a better transparency than ever. Being a democracy, Indians have rights to discuss their views on a particular subject, within the moral boundaries. Now the tweets to the railway minister or foreign minister have provided people to have a greater reach to the authorities.

On the other hand, online networking is an advantage for political pioneers having a large number of fans on Twitter, Facebook and Google+. To frame an image in people's eye, some politicians have their own websites, for example – Mr. Narendra Modi, the honorable Prime Minister of India, have his own website and app, an official youtube channel, twitter account as well as Facebook page.

- **Impact on Entertainment Sector:** Entertainment is one of the inseparable aspects of common man's life and social media is a great way of entertainment. Watching videos, viewing pictures, reading stories and even playing games on desktops, tablets, smartphones, ipads had never been that entertaining. Now, not only playing is possible, you even engage your friends by sending challenges or your score over social media platforms that encourages others also to participate.

It is conceivable to find various distinctive web-based social networking media accessible today, and one can surely discover something that suits their requirements and way of life. From Twitter to Facebook and Google+, something is accessible for everybody who wants to socialize. Even the non-working population, the housewives, or aged find something entertaining for them over the social media.

Social media is additionally assuming a dynamic part in boosting zeal for various events such as Indian Premier League (IPL) by

giving progressive and live data on Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and Youtube. Teams are in steady touch with their fans through social networking and hence fans are updated minute by minute. These conversations are usually public and others also get engaged capturing the latest news, activities, and other things.

- **Impact on Business & Marketing:** Role of social media in business and marketing cannot be understated. It is shift in the customers' behavior that has changed the part of social media. For business purposes, Facebook is the most vital online networking stage, as there is clients' engagement, trailed by Twitter, YouTube and blogging. Social networking is utilized by brands to create communities for spreading news. Finding the right audience and social groups has become easier and reaching to targeted audience has been made possible.

These online networking destinations are ingenious platforms for marketing too, and in the course of recent years, clients have seen an uptick in the promotions over these sites. Many organizations are choosing to be a part of the website rather than just buying promotions. This takes into account a nearer association between the clients and the organizations, which could prompt better administration and better quality items.

- **Impact on Recruitment:** Gone are the days when recruiters and candidates used to depend on classified ads in the daily newspapers and the employment exchange. But in current times, social media has revolutionized the entire process of hiring. It has been really helpful in making the right talent meet the right job. Today the employers are considering Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other such platforms to post their requirements and in turn, allow the candidates to follow the companies of their own choice. Through this informal approach, people are getting

the jobs of their choice without paying anything to the consultants and are also sharing the jobs with their friends and relatives as well. This has significantly reduced the headache of HRs who are now contacting the candidates personally on social media.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AS A PUBLIC VOICE**

People are more aware and they have tapped the potential of social media very well. These platforms are used extensively to give voice to issues, thoughts, and choices of people which was earlier missing. Be it the dissatisfaction for a government policy, complaint against authority, bringing an issue in news, or publicizing a hidden talent, people are using social media to the best possible extent. Things which were earlier not possible to bring in light are showcased immediately these days with others sharing and popularizing them. We are no more dependent on the news channels and print media to get to know what is happening in the other part of the world with people actively publishing everything on social media. People even organize virtual events, campaigns, and webinars to discuss on a particular issue. Many people fight for justice on the Facebook and many others try to find their lost ones on social media pages.

This great innovation of the modern world has really added to the communicative abilities of people who are now more equipped and supported by these platforms to bring some sustainable changes.

## **BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

➤ **Instant access to Information from Anywhere:** Internet can answer just about anything. Whether it is a scandal or a political uprising, social media is the first place where you can find the story as soon as it is broken officially. The current ‘trending’ feature on sites like Facebook and twitter allows you to observe the entire situation event by event. While earlier, we use to

switch on the TV to get access to latest information, now-a-days, we get to know about the real picture from social media platforms. After any event or incidence, Twitter generates the trending hastags which follow and the news becomes popular instantly.

- **Abundance of Information:** Social media not just allows instant access to information, but the same information shared from a number of sources increases the reliability of the content. Then so much being written and blogged invites different viewpoints of the readers which helps in concluding what is actually happening around us. Information and further discussion on those pieces of information builds a new data of more tested and verified information.
- **Universal Connectivity:** Gone are the days when you had to catch up with people through letters or phones that did not have caller ID or answering machine. Call once missed forced you to find time and meet them in real time. Now, you can leave a text message or a voice message or even better a whatsapp message, drop a facebook message or tweet. You can even see what others are up to and share your activities with them without hurting anyone's privacy. The face-to-face connectivity through FB or WhatsApp video calls is further simplifying the communication process.
- **Creative Engagement:** People of all ages are busy in viewing or uploading their videos and in this process their either learn or make others learn. Even kids are uploading their experiences with toys, while the housewives are busy uploading the recipes. Every creative person is trying to let go his or her skill global on the internet. Social media has provided an open-end access to millions of people to do something new, view something

different, and learn whatever they want. The YouTube channels are providing new ways to bring the hidden talent in light and promote brands and businesses.

A whole new world of creativity is revolving round the social media. Pinterest is providing a platform to pin your areas of interest and showcase your message in just a few words with good creative images. Twitter is encouraging people to talk less and convey more. Facebook is allowing to post anything you wish through images, videos, or text messages. This virtual connectivity on the web is nurturing the creative skills of people and taking it forward.

- **Globalized Platform for Business:** In earlier times, mass media was the only way to expand your reach in the world and that too only large companies, who could afford millions, had wider reach. But now with the social media, even a start-up can launch itself globally within sometime if everything else falls in place. A number of ingenious social media marketing tools available are quite instrumental in increasing the visibility and promoting business.
- **Development of Real World Skills:** Ability to handle interaction effectively on the web through social media is very helpful in developing important skills for the workplace. People doing social media marketing are a new genre of resource who have developed the skills of effective connect with the audience. The effect of what works and what goes wrong on social media comes handy immediately and is visible to all. People learn how to act, react, and give response to a given audience reaction. Especially for the youth, adapting to technologies swiftly is regarded valuable skill by the recruiters and facilitates both informal and formal learning. Most of the services are text-based

and so it motivates literacy skills such as evaluation, interpretation and contextualization.

- **Opportunity to Learn:** Social media is a great platform to enhance learning. If one is interested in books, recipes, handicrafts, or any other subject, it is very likely that his/her interest will be met by the social media. If users are looking up to something more peculiar, then they can create their own community or group. Social networking sites are very helpful in connecting people with similar interests and hobbies. Such platforms also offer innumerable opportunities to explore how people think and live in other parts of the globe.

Social media has taken a life of its own and even though there are pros and cons of everything, if used efficiently and positively, it can be a powerful tool to give number of ways to live life more beautifully and successfully. Facebook, the most commonly used social media platform has exemplified how a virtual world is created which is so real and how impressively it can be integrated to our lives...the lives of common man.

## **THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA GIANT----THE MEGA FACEBOOK**

### **A Virtual Social Platform**

Though quite a few social media platforms had already been there by the time Facebook came in to light, but ever since it came into our lives, it has completely transformed the world of social media. It has connected the users from the physical world, in real time. Facebook apps for mobile devices have extended the usability of this social network as it can be accessed from anywhere and at any time. School and University unions are now somewhat obsolete as you already know which of your friends is doing what in the current time. Thanks to Facebook, which has kept you updated with all of

the events from others' lives, even if you didn't have a chance to meet them in the recent years and hence it is known as a 'virtual social platform'.

Some features of the Facebook that makes it a virtual social platform are:

- **Connecting with Friends:** It may not be possible for a person to make so many friends in real life or stay in touch with existing friends from your school or college days. But Facebook makes all of it possible! One can make at most 5000 connections from anywhere around the globe with just a single click, whether or not you know the person. In this way, you can socialize with anyone you want and expand your virtual social network. Facebook helps users to stay in touch with relatives, friends and other acquaintances irrespective of their location, as long as they can access the internet. It has even been instrumental in reuniting the lost friends and relatives. It helps the users to exchange their ideas, beliefs and interests via open or closed groups and pages.
- **Celebrating Occasions:** In today's bustling life it is next to impossible for us to be physically present with our dear ones at every occasion; but with Facebook, it actually is. It never lets you forget your friends' birthdays, memories from past years, 'Friendversaries' and other big events and makes you the part of the virtual celebration.
- **'Defriend-ing':** Unlike the real world, you don't have to be harsh when you want to end friendship because Facebook offers you a wonderful option to 'Un-friend' a friend in just a single click. Also you are not bound for any compromise; you can simply log out and walk away.

- **Keeping up with friends' daily activities:** So much so as the Facebook is used to share your every-minute activities, you can also know what your friends are doing, where they are going, what and where are they eating, what songs are they listening to and everything that they want to share with you.
- **Chatting and audio/video calling:** One of the very basic but important social activities is to communicate. Besides sharing images, events, videos and other updates is one part of the Facebook, you can communicate with your friends in real time through instant messaging and audio/video calling. You can check who is online at the moment and start the conversation.

## **WORLD OF VIRTUAL REALITY**

Time ago, social interactions of the people in the virtual world were mostly viewed in context of 3-dimensional games, blogs, forums, wikis, instant messaging, chat rooms and video conferencing. But virtual world is beyond all these as it is a digital online community environment created and shared by users to communicate within a customized and simulated world. The interaction in this simulated world is through text based, 2-D or 3-D graphical models known as 'Avatars'. Avatars are created using technologies such as 'Computer Graphics Imaging' abbreviated as CGI. Users can control their avatars with the help of input devices like mouse, keyboards and other simulation gadgets and commands. The main catch of the virtual world is the interactivity and persistence and so it enables users to enjoy the benefits of socialization.

## **FACEBOOK SPACES – A VIRTUAL REAL WORLD FOR EXPERIENCING SOCIALIZATION.**

Now, as the technology is growing with each passing day, Facebook has successfully stepped into the world of virtual reality or what we can call in short as the '*virtual world*'. Recently in April 2017, the

CEO of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg announced the early version Facebook Spaces at F8 conference held in California. With the launch of Spaces, scope of VR has been extended far beyond gaming.

Keeping the people at the center, Facebook Spaces has been developed as a simulated social platform which will allow the Oculus Rift headset users (as of now) to create an avatar for oneself and connect with the friends those who are and those who are not in VR, in 3-D and 2-D versions respectively. You can create your own avatar that you can customize to look like you and then you can invite your other friends to hangout on the Spaces. You can also call friends using Messenger and invite them on the VR chat.

Users can take selfies in VR, watch 360 videos, hold objects, draw, make calls through Messenger or communicate using voice chats in avatar body language and show different pictures in a VR slide show. Spaces for now is only available for users those who have Oculus Rift headsets and is not available for Samsung Gear and smartphones VR systems as yet.

Integration of VR in Facebook is another revolutionary event in the history of social media and has an obvious scope as it will be like hanging with friends in a virtual real world; yet another version that will be well appreciated by its users.

Facebook has entered the society and lives of common man so deeply that it's impeccable presence and effects can be felt very well. It had its own phase of birth, growth and successful survival still holding its place to the top of any such virtual platforms that ever came into existence.

## THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF FACEBOOK

At the point when Mark Zuckerberg started building up the primary Facebook model, he planned to launch it for only a few students of Harvard University. Merely 10 years after, this social media network has come a long way and has associated more than 2 billion active users from everywhere, throughout the world, rising above social, cultural, religious and geographical boundaries. Now Facebook has evolved as a revolutionary tool that has taken world by storm and has entirely changed the way people communicate and share thoughts, views and opinions. People use Facebook platform to propagate troubling issues which pose a cause of concern against security, especially when these interactions become somewhat less personal. Year by year the world is coming closer and is more connected, which is undoubtedly a positive trend, but the real question is that whether Facebook has brought all good to the society or there are some lacunas that have affected the socio-emotional state of the people in reverse course?

In the course of recent years Dr. Suzana E. Flores has studied in depth about the 'Facebook effect'. She interviewed users from over the globe on their experiences with social networking like how online social networking has influenced their feeling of self, privacy, social interactions, relationships and their emotional reactions. Dr. Flores came out with a book named 'Facehooked: How Facebook Affects Our Emotions, Relationships, and Lives' in July 2014 wherein she has beautifully compiled all her encounters about how Facebook has become a critical piece of people's lives.

Facebook has succeeded in bringing all of us closer and build a global community. It is a platform where people connect with new and existing friends, family members and strengthen their relationships online as well as in the real world. Facebook

communities, on the other hand, give a way to connect with random people sharing same interests or concerns. As an instance, a woman named Christina was diagnosed with a rare disease - ‘Epidermolysis Bullosa’. She is now a member of a group that connects around 2400 people from all over the world with the same disease. Though joining a community does not make her suffering any less, but surely, she is supported emotionally knowing that she does not have to suffer alone. Hence, Facebook communities and groups act as a social fabric for society as they support the emotional, personal and spiritual needs of users, especially in a world where physical social infrastructure is at a stake.

Facebook is a place where users remain informed about all that is happening in the society and in the world. Whether it is natural disasters, terrorism, disease, refugee crises or even the climate change, everything goes ‘viral’ in no time. This is particularly a positive impact as no nation can solve such problems alone and need coordination from worldwide. Moreover, a conflict in one nation can cause havoc across continents; for instance, a virus attack in one country can quickly spread across other countries; terrorist attack in one corner can help other areas to remain alert and so on. For such concerns, Facebook is quite a swift communication channel, because most of the users are logged in round the clock through their mobile devices. There are infrastructures like ‘safety check’ which allow users to let their friends know that they are safe and also keep a check on their dear ones who might be affected from these catastrophes. Since it’s built, Safety check has been activated more than 500 times in two years and has notified people greater than a billion times. Recently more tools like finding food and shelter during emergencies have been built and so much is still to be developed.

However, through Facebook and other online networking, we have exposed ourselves to the world of supporters and critics equally. Features of the Facebook like posting photographs, updates, checking in at areas and flaunting who we need to be seen as, makes it simple to get maneuvered into a cycle of self-altering and approval chasing. This may undermine our personality and make issues of self-esteem. What number of 'friends', "likes" and "followers" do you have? How impulsive is your 'check the newsfeed' behavior? Overuse of such an innovative platform has led to the birth of Facebook-addiction among the teens, youth as well as the matured generation.

Body language says a lot about a person. But in the case of Facebook, which is a virtual social platform and where there is absolutely no body language display, it makes some shy and socially awkward personalities to feel empowered when they are behind their profiles but they are not able to cope up with the interpersonal interactions in real.

Then comes the problem of 'over sharing' as users tend to share a lot of information about themselves and their lives without realizing that they are actually opening themselves to cybercrimes. Notorious brains can misuse the information causing social and emotional harassment of the user, which can sometimes lead to dreadful consequences.

Furthermore, the effect of the content and posts are different on different users. The emotional outcomes of reading the posts from variety of people including colleagues, acquaintances, best friends and family members can also depend on the relationship between the reader and the poster. Like, if any of your close friend posts something good or bad on Facebook, then you might have a

different reaction in comparison when reading the same news from any other acquaintance with whom you have not spoken in years.

Similarly, envy is yet another potential emotional consequence that Facebook users encounter when they come across news about good fortune of others and for some users this could be a reason of depression. There is a thin line between envy and jealousy which people often get confuse with but clear differences are there as envy is a feeling that arises when another person has something that one does not have while jealousy is when one has something but is scared of losing it. These momentary emotions after reading the posts are due to the relationship closeness and result in predicting the feelings of envy and happiness. However, it has been noticed that positive emotions are more dominant than the negative ones and it all depends on individual's consciousness of how he/she takes the things going around.

Facebook has turned out to be a field not only to think as a sociologist but also a reason to keep control on one's emotional well-being. The golden rule is to use the resource for keeping yourself connected and updated; reset your priorities in life to stay away from addiction and do not let negative emotions take a toll on you.

## **SOME REVOLUTIONARY INCIDENCES OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media has changed the way we communicate, understand and experience the things going around us. The popularity of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, etc. have, on one side, made them as a tool to bring revolution in the world while on the other side have encouraged the notorious brains to put these resources to bad use. Here are some revolutionary events, both positive and negative, from the history of social media:

**Narendra Modi's Win in India (<http://digiperform.com/social-media-played-imperative-role-narendra-modis-historic-political-win/>)**

Everyone across the world is aware that Narendra Modi is the Prime Minister of the India, but very few know that he is one among the most active tech geeks in India, who had foreseen the strength of digital media from the days when he was the chief Minister of Gujarat. He, very diligently, exploited the power of social media for good and clutched on the Seat of Honorable PM of India. Since then he is rigorously striving to make India digitally enabled with campaigns such as '*Digital India*'.

Narendra Modi and his team members were very active on various social media platforms since 2009. As to expand his outreach to potential voters, Mr. Modi utilized both the online as well as the offline channels plus connected with the farmers and people falling in the lower income group through live interaction sessions such as '*Chai Pe Charcha*'. To increase the voter base, websites like '*namonumber.com*' and '*India272.com*' were launched. Facebook, one of the most popular social media networks, was used to create a page named 'I support Narendra Modi' while Modi's speeches and rallies were spread through the whatsapp. Catchy slogans like '*Acche Din Ane wale hain*', '*Har Har Modi Ghar Ghar Modi*' and '*Janta Maaf Nahi Karege*' quickly went viral on social media platforms while '*Abki Baar Modi Sarkar*' became the tagline of BJP.

Social media also let people know about the development of Gujarat and the two way communication with public were appreciable as more and more people were able to connect with prospective PM directly.

The whole strategy for winning elections was framed keeping in mind the youth of the country and thus social media played a pivotal role in influencing the core of the country. In turn, youth was also looking forward to a leader who could connect and engage easily. Seeing the support and enthusiasm from public, the opponents got demoralized and as a result, all the planning and efforts brought the desired results and Modi was declared the 14<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of the country.

Modi not only used social media as a tool for his victory but wishes to bring the latest technology in the hands of every common man in India and in the wake of doing so, he has launched commendable campaigns like Digital India and revolution has already hit the country.

**Tunisian Revolution** (<http://mashable.com/2011/12/07/social-media-uprising-activism/#7NwpgVTUrEqT>)

Suicidal incidents like Tunisian vegetable vendor setting himself on fire because police stole his produce and suicide of Mohammad Bouazizi, a graduate who failed to find employment in his sphere of knowledge, that spread over the social media, triggered the Tunisian revolution. Youth of Tunisia protested against the 23-year regime of the oppressive President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on various social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook. The protest compelled Ben Ali to flee from the country along with his wife and children.

### **Chennai Flood**

Back in December 2015, record breaking rainfall paralyzed Chennai, the fourth largest metro city of India. It was the heaviest rainfall in hundreds of years that cut off millions of people from even the basic services during those days. However, social media took it differently and had a significant impact in clubbing users from all over the globe in offering help to the flood victims. Social networking sites

like Twitter, Facebook and Whatsapp were used in spreading the message about the conditions in flood ravaged city and fetched help through voluntary services. With social media, people managed to establish communication with their dear ones. While the hashtags like #ChennaiRescue, #ChennaiRainsHelp and #ChennaiMicro contributed in bringing the attraction of users towards the Chennai Floods, the safety status by Facebook provided users to mark their status as 'safe'. After Facebook and Google offered their help, Skype also came forward to join in the noble cause. Chennai flood victims started sharing their photos and updates and coordinated with the relief and rescue efforts. Google India's Crisis Response page that keeps all the emergency contact numbers and other crucial details was activated and a Google Spreadsheet containing the list of shelters and volunteer helping aids became very popular at that time.

### **Social Media during COVID-19 Pandemic:**

“Social Media turns up into Life Savior for various peer level unofficial support for humanity. Need not to write more as every digital citizen experienced it and know it better.”

### **Other face of the social media – The darker side**

Just as everything has its pros and cons, so is with social media too. There have been incidents reported where social media platforms have shown their ugly side.

### **Blue Whale Challenge**

A social media based online game Blue Whale Challenge has increased worries all over the world. The Blue Whale 'death groups' are assumed to have first originated on Facebook in Russia many years ago.

The players are given certain tasks for 50 days and the final task urges them to commit suicide. The players are also supposed to share the photos after completing every task.

In recent months, suicidal incidents as a result of playing game have been reported from a number of countries. The social media platforms are warned against sharing any kind of links and posts related to the game. Strict instructions have been given to all the social media platforms that they must remove any link related to this game with immediate effect.

### **Associated Press (AP) Incident**

In April 2013, hackers were successful in gaining unauthorized access of the Associated Press's Twitter account and falsely tweeted that there had been bomb explosions at the White House and that the president was hurt during the event. The tweet was up for only a few minutes and before the twitter could take the account offline, it was already re-tweeted for more than 3000 times. Though AP wasted no time in confirming that the news was incorrect; but may be they were not as swift as the tweet already quivered the stock market which dived down 143 points.

### **Victims of Cyberbullying**

In the year 2016, [Tovonna Holton](#), a 15-year-old girl from Florida, committed suicide after a video of her naked in the shower was shared on Snapchat. This was a conscious attempt to mortify Holton, and is an example of cyberbullying and the darker side of the social media websites like Facebook and Twitter. Tovonna is not the only person to end her life out of shame; the stories go on and on, with names like [Tyler Clementi](#) and Amanda Todd being better-known instances of bullying and ending their life just because of the power of social media taken for granted by some people with unsound minds.

These are only some incidents from social media which shows it has all the faces – the good, the bad and the ugly. Therefore, it entirely depends on an individual's inner conscience how he/she utilizes the available resources.

*“Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”*

**~ By Winston Churchill**

**The Digital Revolution has Just Begun....**

Picture abhi baki hai Dost.....