



Social Media Marketing: A Harnessing tool to Increase the Marketing Capabilities and Skills of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in this Digitalized Era

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ABSTRACT

Marketing is a process of converting societal needs into marketable opportunities. Marketers use various tactics to attract and retain the customers, this activity has become more rigorous and even challenging because of constant changes in the needs and wants of the customers and drastic change in internal and external business environment. Advancement in Information Technological tools such as artificial intelligence, augmented and virtual reality, advances in usage Internet (IoT), cloud computing and automation has created a revolution in every field and every activity associated with the business. Every business today is focusing on the different ways and means of simplifying and optimizing, and of course technology is becoming an enabler and catalyst for change. The current research provides an insight into various modern marketing tools in digital era which help them to market well and have a visibility in the market space not only at national level but also at international level. This paper highlights on various social media marketing tools which will help the MSME to educate themselves about various social marketing tools, this awareness will help them to have a global exposure to various best practices followed across the globe, and will fulfill the goals of business such as to sensitizing the behavior of customer, effective networking, providing exporting opportunity and even in business expansion. The present research paper is prepared by considering the secondary data available from internet sources apart from the general articles in the news papers, magazines, text books and research papers, the research paper will give an insight into various social marketing tools at one place, which undoubtedly will be helpful for the micro, small, and medium enterprises.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing Tools, MSME, Digitalized era, Artificial Intelligence

Introduction

A great and unique idea, team and funding alone are not enough to grow a business and generate consistent revenue. To increase the same, It is needed to acquire more customers, sales and profits. Social marketing is an entirely different science. It is needed to choose and

combine the right marketing channels to create an unbeatable strategy. The same old, traditional marketing strategies don't always work. Now is the age of internet and smart phones. According to the latest report, India has more than 374 million smart phone users and over 270 million people use the internet in India. The face of

marketing is also changing with the times. Many companies are focusing on digital marketing to expand their business and customer base. There are many digital marketing channels available. But not all digital marketing strategies are created equal and yield the same benefits. Some digital marketing strategies yield amazing results, and where as others don't. This is why you need to choose the right digital marketing strategy for the business to get maximum results. Which strategy works well for the company depends on niche, target group, and many other factors.

Social media marketing is one of the best ways to get your business' attention and customers. This is one of the best and cheapest marketing techniques to use in business. Social media marketing has the power to turn business into a profitable brand, but it's important to know how to use it. Modern technologies are revolutionizing today's digital world. These technologies, along with digital marketing strategies, are used by organizations of all sizes to stay ahead of the market. The ultimate goal of companies in all industries is to maximize revenue and return on investment (ROI) while minimizing the amount spent on cost per acquisition (CPA). Although there are multiple digital marketing strategies companies can implement to achieve their goals, there is a widespread myth in the market that the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) cannot benefit from these strategies. But this is not the case. Businesses large and small can and should use these strategies to grow and succeed in the market.

Social media marketing is recognized as a powerful tool for businesses of all sizes, including micro, small, and medium businesses to reach prospects and customers. Today, customers generally discover, learn, follow and buy from brands on social media. So, it is needless to say that, the companies that aren't on platforms like LinkedIn, Whatsup, Facebook, and Instagram, etc may be missing out on a lot of opportunities. Good social media marketing can bring a remarkable success to any business by not only creating a passionate brand advocate, but also by continuously increasing leads and sales. Social media marketing is a kind of digital marketing tool that usually harnesses the power of the most admired social media networks which will help to achieve not only marketing goals but also branding goals. One thing we have to accept is that creating a

business account and posting some messages is not the only thing needed.

In general, social media marketing requires an evolving strategy with specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and achievable goals, including:

- Maintaining and optimizing the business profile.
- Posting images, videos, and stories that represents the brand and engage relevant audiences.
- Responding to the comments, likes, shares and monitoring reputation constantly.
- Tracking and engaging followers, customers and influencers to build communities around the brand.
- Social media marketing also includes paid social media advertising, as it allows the companies to pay to have the business appear in front of a large, highly targeted audience in right time.

Many the MSMEs are looking to implement different online marketing strategies such as blogs, emails, social media, etc. depending on their needs and capabilities. In the world of digital marketing, no one knows which combination of strategies will work, so continuous innovation and consistency are required. It is known fact that none can promise the victory with a single strategy, so it is compulsory that MSMEs must constantly try diverse approaches for special opportunities.

Here's a list of a few proven strategies that are helping businesses across the world

- Regular advertising on Facebook
- Build an email marketing funnel
- Sponsoring and hosting events and webinars is encouraged
- Provide free consultations when possible
- PR works wonders, placing ads in highly rated print media
- Write one column/article in a row
- Make your presence felt by joining local business groups
- Use SMART goals to proactively focus on business-critical goals.
- Convey a clear and compelling message.
- Create content marketing strategy to generate leads.
- Distribute the created content.
- Use paid advertising to build community.
- Try social media to connect with customers.
- Tell stories with user-generated content.
- Create SEO-optimized content to attract engaged visitors.

- Regularly publish useful content and engage audience with surveys, questions and answers, and more.
- Choose the right audience
- Provide free e-books, trials, reports, demos, etc. , start a blog
- Respond and reply to all messages and comments on time.

Let's take a look at some of the best marketing moves.

▲ **Available online 24/7:** To do this, it is mandatory to create a profile on all available social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Need to Keep the contact information up to date so as to help us to leave a message at any time. This will help to get leads all the time. Of course, these platforms should not be considered a substitute for offline marketing activities, including banners, billboards, print ads and sponsorships. Properly balancing the two strategies will drive an effective growth.

▲ **Review about product:** Write a small article explaining the offer and how it can help the customers. Change a different image and some content and publish story on social media. By doing this regularly, the company can demonstrate its expertise, build and develop brand, build reputation, and expand customer reach. This gives the visibility need to grow the business and improve the ranking on search engines. In addition to this, email to existing customers as well as your target users not only will help to promote the content, but it will also increase sales and nurture future leads.

▲ **Connect with influencers through word of mouth (WOM):** Businesses that provide a great customer experience not only enjoy good customer retention rates, but also word of mouth and customer testimonials on their websites and social media platforms. The more customers write positive things about your product or service on website, the more customer base grows. On top of that, company can get influencers (celebrities, famous bloggers, people that many people follow and trust) to endorse and talk about the service, product awareness will also increase dramatically.

▲ **Hybrid strategy:** There is no strategy that will help to achieve the desired growth in silos. All that is needed is to mix and match strategies and use them continuously. The key word here is continuous. The moment this stop working on your pieces, your strategy falls apart.

Objectives of the research:

- To understand social media marketing concepts and explore the benefits of social media marketing.
- To raise awareness of the best social media marketing platforms and how to use them
- To raise awareness of statistics on social media marketing usage.
- To offer recommendations for building a social media marketing strategy and execution of the plan.

The best social media marketing platform for MSME:

The best social media marketing platforms for MSME include Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and Snapchat. Different social media marketing platform may require different approaches altogether, Following are few tools which will give quick overview of key vibes, each of its user base, strengths, weaknesses, and also the type of content which can be used. There are many social media platforms out there, but MSME should choose the right platform for marketing.

• **Facebook:** Facebook is the most popular social media platform, the world's largest social media platform and one of the largest local business directories with over 2 billion users. Facebook can be used for almost any niche or to promote any kind of product. The cheapest social media platform to promote business. However, the actual cost will depend on several factors such as target country, niche and ad type. People of all different age groups utilize it to communicate with family members and friends, participate in forums and groups, explore to find and visit nearby businesses, and also to follow brands. Facebook is a great social media marketing platform not only for building relationships with existing customers, events and milestones, conducting discussions, live streams, but also as marketing tool to baby boomers. Facebook organic reach is limited. So if a company wants to generate leads or find new audiences, Facebook ads are best bet.

• **Youtube:** Companies today may have myth and may not think of YouTube as a social media marketing channel, but the reality is it fits the picture. Can post videos to your channel. We can share comment and like other videos or can follow other accounts you like. You'll also see a curated feed of recommended videos on the home page. The key to social media marketing on YouTube is adding great value. Best for, Tutorials, guides, for sharing instructional videos, Shop ability,

YouTube Live Streaming, and as Advertising, Search Engine Optimization.

- **Instagram:** Instagram is the platform of choice if MSME are interested in fashion, health, beauty, fitness, modeling and photography. It works for other niche businesses, but Instagram is perfect for those niche businesses. Years after LinkedIn and Twitter, Instagram quickly overtook those platforms, reaching 1 billion monthly active users. It's popular across a variety of content formats, including feed posts, stories, live, and reels. People use Instagram to follow brand and influencers they buy from that support their personal values. Create an Instagram profile and use the same for, Social shopping, Influencer marketing for user generated Content, to build and shape corporate culture. Advertising costs on Instagram are generally higher than on Facebook, but the good news is that the organic reach is also higher.

- **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is regarded as both a professional network and an inspirational community that helps in learning core values. So, in addition to being able to network, finding leads, and for sharing industry insights continuously. It's also a great place to express company culture and building personal brand along with company's corporate page on LinkedIn. LinkedIn has a lot of features available. So be careful when creating pages. It is a great platform for, Attract top talent, Network with partners, colleagues and customers, Share company milestones and culture, Publish industry news and insights

- **Twitter:** Twitter is a beautiful web of quick thoughts, helpful information, and lively discussion. Any social media platform should be part of your daily life, but it's especially important here. People generally use Twitter to get news updates, helps to follow brands, and get effective customer service. It's a great platform for B2B companies, but it can also be used by B2C companies. However, it is more expensive than Facebook. However, we can display different types of advertisements for different purposes. To be effective on Twitter, MSME need to, follow influencers to stay up to date along with the latest news and trends, share stories through a string of tweets in threads, make customer service and make FAQs available.

- **Snapchat:** Snapchat is a great platform if MSME want to target young people or work in the fashion, beauty and health niches. It is known fact that today companies

can't build relationships on the platform for longtime with limited focus. MSME can use Snapchat for, location based marketing, app marketing they can build audience through short videos and fun photos.

- **TikTok:** TikTok is one of the fastest growing social media platform these days, taking less time to reach large numbers. While it's popularly known for dancing, apart from this, there are immeasurable trendy categories on the platform that persist to grow on continuous basis. Businesses are finding many ways to use it as a marketing channel/tool, but just remember the fact that, the primary reason people use TikTok is for entertainment primarily, so make sure your videos align with that. Use TikTok to, participate in trending challenges, to post funny and inspiring videos and to be relatable

Benefits of social media marketing: Considering the wide use and versatility, it is a known fact that social media is currently one of the most effective free channels for business marketing. Here are some of the tangible benefits of social media marketing list below:

- **Humanize your business:** Social media can transform the company into an active market participant. Profiles, posts, and user interactions create a persona that connects, engages, and is authentic and accessible to audience.

- **Increased traffic:** Between profile links, links to blog posts within posts, and advertising, social media is the top channel for driving traffic to websites where businesses can convert visitors into customers. Also, social signals are an indirect search engine optimization factors.

- **Generate leads and customers:** Businesses can also generate leads and conversions directly on these platforms through features such as Facebook shops, direct messages, Instagram, profile call-to-action buttons, and booking functionality.

- **Increased brand awareness:** The visual nature of social media platforms allows businesses to build visual identities for a wide audience and increase brand awareness, which finally leads to better results in all other campaigns.

- **Build strong relationships:** These platforms open up new avenues of direct and indirect communication with followers that allow companies to network, collect feedback, participate in discussions, and connect directly with individuals.

The larger your social media audience and engagement, the easier it is to reach your marketing goals.

Social media marketing tips/ guidelines for MSME:

Below are some social media marketing tips and guidelines for launching a social media campaign.

- **Diverse content creation:** As with any other area of online marketing, content is paramount in social media marketing. Post regularly and provide genuinely valuable information that your ideal customers will find useful and interesting. This includes how-to guides, quick tips, local and industry news, data and insights, polls, questions, contests, updates and announcements. It also means leveraging various social media formats such as images, videos, stories, live streams, and online stores.

- **Be consistent:** Using social media for marketing allows the company to project its brand image on various social media platforms. Each platform has its own environment and voice, but the company's core identity must remain consistent, friendly, fun, and trustworthy.

Please don't post just to participate: In other words, don't log in once a month to schedule every post. A social media channel is a community. Businesses need to recognize who has compelling content and respond to comments. For example, you may need to post, live stream, poll or post real-time questions to spark discussion, share or comment, such as reposting someone else's content.

- **Using content creation tools:** If your company wants to stand out in someone's feed, we recommend attaching a post with compelling visual photos, illustrations, and text as art. There are templates and features that let you quickly create visuals that look good, include your logo, and match your brand.

- **The 3 R's Strategy (Reuse, Repost, Recycle):** Social media is a crowded place. Therefore, if a business wants to gain a foothold with its audience, it must publish good content on a regular basis.

- **Reuse:** Create a Facebook post from a customer review, split a blog post into a series of tweets, and distill a case study into a customer spotlight on Instagram. Turn webinar deck into LinkedIn carousel post. The possibilities are endless.

- **Repost:** It has to be done in moderation, but it's a great way to fill in gaps in content calendar. Repost and Retweet user-generated and influencer content on Instagram. Can also curate content from trusted sources

and share those links in posts.

Recycle: Post TikTok videos and Instagram reels to YouTube. Re-share high-performing blog posts monthly to reach new followers. Add Facebook live recordings to your YouTube channel.

- **Curate your own feed:** We're always looking for ways to show up in other people's feeds, but forget about the value you get from own feed. Follow and monitor the competitors to get ideas for adapting the own strategy and identify gaps to fill. Follow influencers, keep up with trends, and educate yourself. Follow brands that share your values or have a great content strategy for inspiration and unconventional ideas.

- **Measuring success with analytics:** Businesses cannot determine the success of their social media marketing strategies without tracking data. Google Analytics can be a great social media marketing tool to help measure most successful social media marketing tactics and decide which strategies should abandon. Add tracking tags to company's social media marketing campaigns so they can be properly monitored. And with analytics for each social platform, can gain even more insight into which social content resonates most with audience.

- **Try Paid Social Networks:** One of the many reasons to advertise on social media is that it's a very cheap way to expand reach. Playing cards right can get content and offers in front of a large audience at a very low cost. Most social media platforms offer highly granular targeting capabilities, allowing to focus your budget on the exact types of people most likely to care about business.

Facts about Social media marketing statistics: Some of the real facts observed among the society prove the power of social media marketing:

- The average adult today spends around more than three hours on social media each day.

- Customers having a positive experience with the company, product and services on social media would certainly recommend the company in their network.

- A Facebook user clicks an Facebook ads out of curiosity while browsing.

- Significant number of people uses Instagram to research products and services.

- It common among Twitter users feeling more positive about a company when they receive replies to their tweets.

- Four out of five on LinkedIn make business decisions.

- Half of the TikTok users use the app without other distractions.

Prerequisites for a successful social media marketing strategy:

A successful social media marketing strategy may look different for each business, but they all have one thing in common: Audience knowledge: What platforms they use, when and why, what content they like and who else they follow.

- **Brand identity:** What is the message the company want to convey to their audience? How do they want them to feel when they see the content?

- **Content strategy:** Social media has a certain amount of spontaneity, but having a consistent voice and producing quality content on a regular basis requires a structured content strategy.

Analysis: Quantifiable insights like whether we are reaching the targeted, the right content to share, and the best time to post are few essentials

- **Standard activity:** Social media is considered as a real-time platform and a tool to grow business successfully, for which it calls for the companies to post regularly, stay up to date with how the business is interacting, sharing, keeping up with trends, and maintain an accurate profile.

- **Inbound approach:** Do not use social media to promote business. Focus on adding value and building community through useful and interesting content. This promotes your business organically, and others promote it for you.

Action plan for creating social media marketing plan:

Now that we had awareness about the basics of your social media marketing strategy, it's time to put them into action. A social media marketing plan is a roadmap for executing the business strategy. It brings not only the structure to the efforts by measuring the success but also helps in making sure about the usage of resources wisely. The different phases involved in creating a social media marketing plan include the following steps:

- **Choose your platform:** Choose the platform keeping the targeted group in mind. Consider choosing a popular platform and the bandwidth for the industry. Compete only on as many platforms as the business can actively compete with. Companies can always start with one and slowly add more as they get used to it.
- **Set goals and objectives:** These should be simple and task-like at first. For example, post once a day for a

month, set up the company profile, conduct competitive analysis, and more. Once the company finds the rhythm and collects insights, can set more specific, strategic goals every month.

- **Regular reporting and adjustments:** We can use analytics for each platform to determine which posts are getting the most engagement, gaining more followers, and look at audience demographics. What works and what doesn't scale using stuff.

Start prioritizing your social media marketing strategy:

Using social media for marketing is more than just improving website traffic and expanding your reach. It helps MSME in transforming business into a distinct personality with which audience can easily and effectively communicate and can connect on a deeper level. No matter which platform you use or how you use it, the most important thing to remember is that social media is business. It is not a platform for introducing a community where you can express your personality, show your values, share useful information, and create an environment. People will naturally follow you and promote your content, so no pitch is required. With this approach, MSME can not only achieve business goals, but also all other intangibles that lead to happiness and prosperity.

Conclusion: Every company is unique and different, even if they make the same product. Therefore, there is no guarantee that they will have the same success on social media channels as others. There are many strategies and channels the companies use to promote the business. However, it needs to understand the audience, their behavior, and the nature of business. Marketing is not impossible, but with limited resources, each step must be ensured. To succeed in business, its mandate to change the mindset and be creative. Not all of the above strategies will work for every business, but at least some certainly do and will create wonders and laurels. It is recommended trying a combination of strategies before deciding which one works best for micro Small and medium-sized enterprises.

Conflict of interest statement

Authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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