

## **An Empirical Study to Enquire the Effectiveness of Digital Marketing in the Challenging Age with Reference to Indian Economy**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Everyday marketers are facing challenges and getting many new opportunities within this digital age. Marketers are basically making use of electronic media to promote all the goods and services into the market. One of the major challenges the marketer has to deal with is to know how to persuade someone and how to come up with ways in order to attract and retain prospective customers. The issue could easily be solved by making or allowing customers to interact or talk about the brand through the use of digital media. Through this research the researcher would be focusing and talking about the importance of digital marketing for both customers and the marketers. This research is conducted to understand why digital marketing is more effective than traditional media and what are the major differences between digital and traditional media. The researcher made use of primary and secondary data, and a close ended questionnaires, where a sample of 105 respondents were selected. The data was collected through Google forms and analysed using the SPSS statistical tool to explore descriptive statistics like frequency, mean, standard deviation as well as cross-tabs and inferential statistics, comprising regression analysis and

ANOVA. Secondary resources were used to do review of literature through journals and articles. This research will also show the major factors that affect the effectiveness of digital marketing in the era of digitisation, where every marketer is opting for digital marketing to promote his brand(s).

*Keywords:* Customers, digital marketing, digitization, promotion, traditional marketing

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## INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing is one of the marketing strategies generally used to promote goods and services to customers by utilising different channels of distribution. Digital marketing reaches out beyond web promotion by including all the channels which do not require the need for the Internet. Through digital media, purchasers can obtain information whenever and wherever they need. With the presence of digital media, customers do not only depend on what the organisation says in regards to their brand or product, additionally, they can take after what the media, companions, affiliations, and peers are stating too. Digital marketing is a broad term where through the use of digital technologies, various techniques of promotion are being provided or deployed out to prospective customers. In today's technology driven world, social networking sites have become an avenue where retailers can extend their marketing campaigns to a wider range of consumers (Paquette, 2013).

Digital Marketing makes sure that the marketer approaches buyers in a relevant, sensible and cost-friendly manner. The digital marketing procedure is adequately utilised as part of the push and pull marketing strategies. Both push and pull marketing techniques are possible in digital marketing. Mark mindfulness has been demonstrated to work with more adequacy in nations that are high in vulnerability shirking, likewise for nations that have instability evasion, online networking advertising

works adequately. However, marketers need to be mindful so as not to be intemperate on the utilisation of this sort of showcasing, and also exclusively depending on it as it might have suggestions that could contrarily outfit their picture. Brands that speak for themselves in a humanising way will probably prevail in circumstances where a brand is promoted. Since online networking use can improve the information of the brand and consequently diminish the vulnerability, it is conceivable that individuals with high instability shirking, for example, the French, will especially value the high web-based social networking collaboration with a humanised mark. Moreover, computerised stage gives simplicity to the brand and its clients to cooperate specifically and trade their intentions for all intents and purposes.

Midde (2009) conducted a secondary research to compare the trust of consumers between traditional and digital marketing, the conclusion of which was that the major influence are family and relatives. Online advertising comes very late and digital marketing still has a long way to influence the buying decision of consumers (Clarke & Svanaes, 2012; Furrer & Sudharshan, 2001).

As markets are getting complex day by day, companies are trying to cope with such complexities. As rightly said by Fader and Winer (2012), e-commerce and social-commerce are the era of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. IBM Institute for Business Value (IIBV) has also highlighted the importance of digital marketing while having interviews with CEOs (IIBV, 2011).

While conducting primary research in one of the research papers on Indian consumer buying behavior through a survey on 250 respondents the author came to the conclusion that Indian buyers are high information seekers, that is, they research a lot before indulging into any buying. Indian market is a value-oriented market, that is, buyers would be ready to pay a certain price for product if they are getting value for their money. People have started bending towards online marketing to get information about the products. Word of mouth of friends, family and relative is given more preference than online reviews. The limitation of this research was that the research was conducted within the students of the college.

Pawar (2014), in his work, demonstrated the importance of integrated marketing communication and digital marketing in the changing scenario of the market. A survey on 250 respondents in the suburbs of Mumbai concluded that people do not think that digital marketing is the safest to use so they rely upon more than one medium to gather information about the product, thus one of the major reasons for this sudden importance of digital marketing is the increasing literacy rate.

Shammi (2015) also explored the importance of digital marketing in this competitive era and concluded that improved infrastructure and the presence of digital marketing are the key factors of success in digital marketing.

Banerjee (2012) concluded that the social media is majorly targeted on the

youths of the country. Social media is extremely effective due to its speed and the fact that it provides a platform for consumers to express their feelings, be it negative or positive.

Likewise, Pavlou (2003) examined the level of acceptance among customers towards e-commerce. From the survey, it was known that that customers are ready to accept e-commerce only if the companies are able to reduce or eliminate the perceived risk.

In the previous studies, e-marketing environment analysed the advantages and disadvantages of e-marketing, analysed the future of e-commerce and studied its growth. Research has shown that the future belongs to e-marketing but is not limited to it. Although e-commerce is advantageous in several ways, it also has some disadvantages which cannot be neglected at any cost.

Sait, Al-Tawil and Hussain (2004) sought to determine the factors that influence the adoption of e-commerce. The research showed that infrastructure, traditions, and cultural values play an important role in influencing the economy to adopt e-commerce.

Yasmin, Tasneem and Fatema (2015) also probed the various elements of digital marketing and understand the reasons why digital marketing is more effective than traditional marketing. They found that digital marketing would succeed only when it is a priority for the customer and that there can be many innovative ways in digital marketing like affiliate marketing, pay per click and text messaging.

Similarly, Merisavo (2006) studied digital marketing communication and how it helps in maintaining customer loyalty. It was found that digital marketing offers marketers cost-friendly options to maintain and improve customer loyalty.

Khan and Siddiqui (2013) surveyed the perception of Pakistani professionals towards digital marketing and how much it affects the customer's decision as a consumer. They found the respondents to be aware about the concept, but the concept is still in its beginning stage in Pakistan.

Finally, Stephen (2016) determined the extent the online word of mouth affect the perception of consumers. He found that consumers tend to seek enough information from various media about the product to come to a particular decision. The research showed that there is high degree of awareness about the concept in the targeted group and that digital media can play a vital role if the students take the word of mouth seriously. Consumers that engage with their favorite brands using social media have stronger relationships with those brands compared with consumers who do not interact with their favorite brands using social media (Hudson, Roth, & Madden, 2012).

According to Madni (2004), it is clear that nowadays, popular platforms of social media like Facebook and Twitter have attention on consumer markets.

Osewe (2013) stresses the positive relationship between Internet advertising and consumer purchase decisions, and further recommends that companies should

conduct market research on the different markets in various countries to ensure that the Internet advertising initiatives being implemented suit the targeted markets to improve product purchases.

### **SWOT Analysis: Digital Marketing**

- Strengths:
  1. Simple to target and tap the market at a cost-friendly manner.
  2. Campaigns can be effectively recreated and be made more focused according to the marketer's objectives and requirements.
  3. It helps the marketer to reach more and more people globally.
  4. It is cost effective.
  5. Small business promotion can be easily done.
- Weaknesses
  1. You need to keep up with the change in technology.
  2. You need to have a deep understanding of human nature, behaviour, taste and preferences.
  3. It becomes difficult to tap the market which does not use the Net.
  4. It can be almost impossible for damage control due to negative online review; its biggest strength becomes the problem.
  5. The more number of digital marketing options are available, the more confusion occurs to promote the brand.

- Opportunities
  1. It is helpful in making our government digitised.
  2. More employment opportunities for youths are created in this sector.
  3. The dream of “Digital India” can finally come true.
  4. Encourages growth of small business units.
  5. Government actions can be prompt, for example, people have complained through Twitter to Railway Ministry, and the government has responded and taken action to resolve their issues.
- Threats
  1. If the campaign doesn't work according to the plan, then it might adversely affect the brand name.
  2. Security of data is still a questionable issue.
  3. Once, something is put on the Web, it is impossible to take it off. For example, if a bad review or comment is posted on the Web against a brand, then it could adversely affect its future business.
  4. Investigating the information wrongly can cause harm, which is rampant in many organisations.

### **Traditional vs. Digital Marketing**

Traditional marketing is the most known and old way of promoting goods and services to

customers (Blythe, 2006). On the contrary, digital marketing is a form of promotion of the brand and the product through channels like phones, television and the Internet. This is the latest technique and has been recently taken by marketers as it's been showing them positive results.

**Size of competition.** In digital marketing, a marketer can compete with any other player in the market, irrespective of its size or the size of its operations. But in Traditional marketing if a small retailer would have to struggle to stand and compete against a market leader. But online, a simple and better service would do the trick.

**Cost reduction.** A marketer can build up its online promotion strategy with very little cost, which will easily replace the traditional channels like radio, printed ads, and newspaper ads.

**Ongoing outcomes.** You don't have to wait for weeks and months to see the boost in sales for your products; it can be seen by just one click and the number of items sold will appear on your screen.

Redefining the strategy. To refine your strategy in traditional marketing, it would require a lot of time and cost but not in digital marketing, as online marketing lets you refine your strategy at any point of time to get better results and see improvements.

**More exposure.** Your business can be seen any place on the planet from one campaign

only, the cost to do this through traditional marketing would be very high.

**More prominent engagement.** With computerised showcasing you can support your prospects, customers and followers to make a move, visit your site, read about your items and administration, rate them and give input which is obvious to your market. So, it doesn't take them years to create exposure for your brand.

**Difference in medium.** Traditional marketing includes print, broadcast, direct mail, and telephone while digital includes online advertising, email marketing, social media, text messaging, affiliate marketing, search engine optimisation, and pay per click.

**Factors affecting the effectiveness of digital marketing.** *Target market.* The most important factor is choosing the target market. It will involve a huge cost if you want to promote your product on every platform on the Internet and want to focus on millions of Internet users as your target market.

*Technology.* As we all know, technology is the backbone of digital marketing, so for a marketer it is very important to stay updated about technology. Your employees should know how to operate the technical equipment.

*Content.* This is the place where you'll be able to stand apart from other players in the

industry. Your site and messages must have language that is relatable and rational about your product. The content should be useful for the consumer, attractive and crisp at the same time.

*Budget.* Digital marketing is less expensive than traditional marketing, however it is certainly not free. Thus, there emerges a need to set up a very much characterised budget for it. An advertiser must choose suitable blend of natural and paid advancements.

*Social media.* How much the business is involved in social media matters a lot. Organisations today keep up dynamic and sound online networking records. The organisations also request that their workers do the same to connect with their clients. Many organisations do promotions through web-based social networking stages to draw in new clients and hold the current ones.

*Channels.* Based on the channel chosen, the business will be able to target its potential customers. The marketer has to analyse the various channels in terms of their cost effectiveness, speed, reach and other parameters.

*Infrastructure.* This is also important, as when you don't have the infrastructure to support your technology then no matter what, all your strategies, plans and techniques will be futile. Are your potential customers equipped enough? Is the bandwidth of the country in your support?

**Literacy.** In countries like India and Pakistan, literacy is one of the major factors as it determines how much the people are aware about the concept and whether they are educated enough to use the technology where you are present.

- To understand the various forms of digital marketing
- To understand why consumers prefer digital marketing
- To understand the SWOT analysis of digital marketing

### Various Elements of Digital Marketing

#### 1. Online advertising

It plays a crucial role for promoting digital marketing. It helps the marketers to place information online so that the customers can get complete information which saves a lot of time.

#### 2. Email Marketing

When the marketers send complete information through mail, a lot of time is saved.

#### 3. Text Messaging

Through SMS and MMS companies can create and disseminate information. They can also make use of questionnaires and get them filled through text messaging.

#### 4. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

SEO may target different kinds of search including image search, local search, video search, academic search, news search and industry-specific vertical search engines.

### Research Objectives:

- To understand the effectiveness of digital marketing
- To understand the difference between digital and traditional marketing

### Research Hypothesis:

#### *Hypothesis 1:*

H0: There is no significant relation between technology and digital marketing.

H1: There is significant relation between technology and digital marketing.

#### *Hypothesis 2:*

H0: There is no significant relation between social factors and digital marketing.

H1: There is significant relation between social factors and digital marketing.

### METHODOLOGY

The researcher made use of primary and secondary data where 105 samples were used. In this paper the researcher considered the perceptions of different age groups, genders, marital status, income and educational groups. Obtaining most or all of the perceptions will lead to saturation. Saturation occurs when adding more participants to the study does not result in additional perspective or information. Hence in the researcher's opinion the sample was sufficient to address all perspectives, whereby an increase in the sample size

would not give any major difference in the results.

Patton (1990) said that qualitative sample size may best be determined by the time allotted, resources available and study objectives. In this regard, the data was collected through Google forms. The researcher used convenience random sampling to carry out the study. The researcher used descriptive research design and a self administered close ended questionnaire which used Likert’s scale, ranging from 1-5 where 1 stands for strongly agree and 5 stands for strongly disagree. Questions related to age, gender, marital status, educational qualification were asked and respondents were also requested to answer why they prefer digital marketing over the traditional mode and whether it is effective or not.

The data was processed through SPSS software and reliability test was measured by Cronbach’s coefficient alpha model. The data analysis was done through SPSS statistical tool where the researcher used descriptive statistics like frequency, mean, standard deviation as well as cross-tabs and inferential statistics comprising regression analysis and ANOVA. Secondary resources were used to collect review of literature through journals and articles.

The research was conducted to find out the reasons why digital marketing is so effective. The questionnaire was distributed through family, relatives, friends and colleagues. The limitation of the survey was that the sampling was non-random

sampling. The questionnaire was sent across through several social media platforms like Gmail, WhatsApp and Facebook. The respondents were of Delhi NCR.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1  
*Checking the response rate*

Total Questionnaires	Number of Respondents
No. of questionnaire filled correctly	105
No of questionnaire unreturned	15
No. of questionnaires filled incompletely	10
Total no. of questionnaire sent	130

Table 1 shows that the total number of questionnaires sent out were 130, out of which only 105 were filled by the respondents, while 25 respondents did not fill in the questionnaires.

**Reliability Test**

**Cronbach’s alpha reliability analysis test.** Cronbach’s alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, to know how far a set of items are closely related as a group. It is considered to be a measure of scale reliability.

Table 2  
*Reliability statistics*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.795	21



Table 2 shows that all the scales were reliable, having an alpha above the prescribed threshold of 0.6. The reliability is 0.795, that is, the data is reliable and the hypothesis can be tested on data. The total number of variables is 21.

**Descriptive Findings**

This study analysed respondents’ demographic profiles and various objectives of the study using various descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation and central tendencies measurement such as mean and median at length.

Table 3  
*Demographic aspects of the data collected*

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Male	50	47.6
Female	55	52.4
Age: 0-15	3	2.9
Age: 15-30	62	59.0
Age: 30-45	19	18.1
Age: 45-60	17	16.2
Age: 60 and above	4	3.8
Single	69	65.7
Married	36	34.3
Education: Certificate	8	7.6
Education: Diploma	1	1.0
Education: Graduate	43	41.0
Education: Post graduate	23	21.9
Education: Undergraduate	30	28.6

Table 3 shows the frequencies of the demographic aspects of the data collected. The total number of respondents is 105. The demographic categories include gender, age, education, and marital status. The frequency shown in the table is through number and percentage. The majority of the respondents lie within the age group of 15-30 and are single. 90% of the sample has tertiary (graduate) level education. The gender ratio of the sample is almost equal.

Table 4  
*Mean and standard deviation*

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
W1	105	2.33	.987
W2	105	2.71	1.026
W3	105	2.24	1.033
W4	105	2.69	1.138
W5	105	2.23	1.085
W6	105	2.55	1.135
W7	105	2.28	1.061
W8	105	3.44	1.134

Table 4 shows n, mean and std. deviation of the data collected. The data shows primarily, the respondents are towards agreement, which means the respondents are positive towards the use of digital marketing over traditional marketing. Although both are in parallel direction, the advancement in technology has made digital marketing ahead of traditional marketing.

**Hypothesis Testing**

H0: There is no significant relation between technology and digital marketing.

H1: There is significant relation between technology and digital marketing.

Criteria: Age of the respondents

Table 5  
ANOVA results for age of respondents

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Do you prefer digital marketing over traditional marketing?	Between Groups	5.631	4	1.408	9.757	.000
	Within Groups	14.427	100	.144		
	Total	20.057	104			
Do you feel digital marketing is more effective than traditional marketing?	Between Groups	28.107	4	7.027	9.596	.000
	Within Groups	73.226	100	.732		
	Total	101.333	104			
Do you think the present infrastructure in our country supports digital marketing?	Between Groups	28.447	4	7.112	6.698	.000
	Within Groups	106.182	100	1.062		
	Total	134.629	104			
Do you think the infrastructure should be improved so as to support digital marketing?	Between Groups	34.934	4	8.734	9.972	.000
	Within Groups	87.580	100	.876		
	Total	122.514	104			
Do you think improving the infrastructure is one of the major reasons why digital marketing is a success?	Between Groups	29.884	4	7.471	7.178	.000
	Within Groups	104.078	100	1.041		
	Total	133.962	104			

Based on Table 5, H0 is rejected as technology does affect digital marketing. as the level of significance is less than

0.05, which means that there is a relation between technology and digital marketing with reference to age groups.

Criteria: Marital status of the respondents

Table 6  
ANOVA results for marital status of respondents

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Do you prefer digital marketing over traditional marketing?	Between Groups	2.534	1	2.534	14.896	.000
	Within Groups	17.523	103	.170		
	Total	20.057	104			
Do you feel digital marketing is more effective than traditional marketing?	Between Groups	10.821	1	10.821	12.314	.001
	Within Groups	90.512	103	.879		
	Total	101.333	104			
Do you think the present infrastructure in our country supports digital marketing?	Between Groups	24.990	1	24.990	23.476	.000
	Within Groups	109.639	103	1.064		
	Total	134.629	104			
Do you think the infrastructure should be improved so as to support digital marketing?	Between Groups	9.223	1	9.223	8.385	.005
	Within Groups	113.291	103	1.100		
	Total	122.514	104			
Do you think improving the infrastructure is one of the major reasons why digital marketing is a success?	Between Groups	9.656	1	9.656	8.001	.006
	Within Groups	124.306	103	1.207		
	Total	133.962	104			

In Table 6, H0 is rejected. Technology does affect digital marketing, as the level of significance is less than 0.05 which means that there is relation between technology and digital marketing irrespective of their marital status.

**Using Cross Tabs to Support Hypothesis**

Gender of the respondents \*Do you prefer digital marketing over traditional marketing?

Table 7  
Cross tabulation count

	Do you prefer digital marketing over traditional marketing?			
	1	2	Total	
Gender of respondents	1	31	19	50
	2	47	8	55
Total	78	27	105	

Table 7 shows that both males and females prefer digital over traditional marketing. Out of 105 respondents, 78 people prefer digital marketing which is almost 75% of the sample.

Hence, null hypothesis is rejected as it's been proven that there is a significant relationship between technology and digital marketing.

**Hypothesis 2:**

H0: There is no significant relation between social factors and digital marketing.

H1: There is significant relation between social factors and digital marketing.

Criteria: Age

**ANOVA**

Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and husbands easier?

Table 8  
*Relation of digital marketing with social factors*

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	46.188	4	11.547	16.309	.000
Within Groups	70.802	100	.708		
Total	116.990	104			

In Table 8, H0 is rejected as the significance level is less than 0.05. This proves that digital marketing is related to social factors like age of the prospective customers.

**ANOVA**

Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and husbands easier?

Criteria: Marital status

Table 9  
*ANOVA of digital marketing with social factors*

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.168	1	5.168	4.760	.031
Within Groups	111.822	103	1.086		
Total	116.990	104			

In Table 9, H0 is rejected as the significance level is less than 0.05, which proves that digital marketing is related to marital status of the prospective customers.

**Using Cross Tabs to Support Hypothesis**

Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and husbands easier?\*

Table 10  
*Gender of the respondents cross tabulation count*

	Gender of the respondents			Total
	1	2		
Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and house husbands easier?	1	8	13	21
	2	23	31	54
	3	12	5	17
	4	4	2	6
	5	3	4	7
Total	50	55		105

Table 10 shows that 31 out of 50 males think that digital marketing has been helpful to working women and house husbands in running their homes. Among females, 44 out of 55 feel positive about this.

the respondents agree to the statement that digital marketing has helped working women and house husbands.

Here, H0 is rejected through cross tabulation; male or female majority of

Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and house husbands easier?\*

Table 11  
*Age of respondents cross tabulation count*

	Age of respondents					Total	
	1	2	3	4	5		
Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and house husbands easier?	1	0	15	5	1	0	21
	2	1	37	11	5	0	54
	3	0	8	2	6	1	17
	4	0	2	1	3	0	6
	5	2	0	0	2	3	7
Total	3	62	19	17	4		105

Here too, H0 is rejected as cross tabulation shows that within the age group of 15-45, the majority agree with the statement that was asked in the question.

Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and house husbands easier?\*

Table 12  
Cross tabulation count of marital status of respondents

		Marital status of the respondent?		
		1	2	Total
Do you think digital marketing has made the life of working women and house husbands easier?	1	16	5	21
	2	38	16	54
	3	9	8	17
	4	3	3	6
	5	3	4	7
Total		69	36	105

Here in Table 12, H0 is rejected, as both married or single groups feel that digital marketing has helped house husbands and working women. Therefore, there is a relation between social factors and digital marketing.

Gender of the respondents \* Do you feel digital marketing is more effective than traditional marketing?

Table 13  
Cross tabulation count of effectiveness

		Do you feel digital marketing is more effective than traditional marketing?					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Gender of respondents	1	8	18	15	5	4	50
	2	11	30	11	3	0	55
Total		19	48	26	8	4	105

Here H0 is rejected as majority of the sample agrees with the statement.

rejected as there is a significant relation between social factors and digital marketing.

Hence, through Anova and cross tabulation analysis, the null hypothesis is

## CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the data collected, it is clear that there is a relation between technology and digital marketing and social factors and digital marketing. Majority of the respondents are aware about the concept of digital marketing, which has proven helpful during the demonetization phase. However, respondents are still a little apprehensive about digital marketing. They have accepted digital marketing because of its ease, mobility, variety of products available and competitive prices that it offers.

The majority of the respondents have their presence on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube, which are a useful consumer base. More than 50% of the sample spend more than two hours surfing the Internet. The sample mainly rely on online media to gather information about the products which they are interested in buying. The data shows that the respondents prefer both online and offline shopping, instead of just one. Respondents still give less preference to online reviews about products. The major factors that affect digital marketing are technology, target market, content, budget, and channels of medium.

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