Social Media Marketing Mix: Applicability Review for Marketing in Education

S.B.Thorat[1], S.B.Kishor[2] and Bharat Meghe[1+]

[1]S.S.B.E.S's I.T.M., VIP Road, Nanded-431602 (Maharashtra State) India

[2]Computer Science Department, Sardar Patel College, Chandrapur, (Maharashtra State) India

[3]Commerce, R.S.T.M. University, Nagpur (Kamala Nehru College, Nagpur), Zip -440009 (Maharashtra State) India

Abstract. This paper provides an overview of some of the recent research that has been conducted on how social media is being used in marketing & how the organizations that sell to the education market can use the social media for marketing. In this paper the social media is discussed in length to have the better insight of the social media & the authors attempted to judge this effective medium's suitability for the marketing of education with relative benefits. Worth to note that the way our organization uses social media will be directly influenced by how our customers and target audience are using social media. This paper further investigates the suitability of 8 P's framework of Marketing Mix to the social media to support the author's choice of using the social media for marketing in education. Marketing's conceptual framework is also discussed in this paper for the use of upcoming researchers in this sector.

Keywords: Facebook, Linked In, You Tube, Flickr, Twitter, Google, Digg, Delicious, Blogs, Podcasts, Wiki's.

1. Introduction

Social media is initiated on web sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, Google+, Delicious, Blogs, MySpace and relies on the premise that marketing message, shared is exceptionally good, outrageous & unique content, in the form of video, text, audio or widgets, can be virally distributed throughout the social web by inviting people to interact and share the content. Unlike Word of Mouth, where the primary goal is to target "influencers" to spread the message online and offline, social media marketing is a marketing strategy that is based on connecting directly with the target communities, engaging them and generating content or discussion online. The latter can range from submitting How-To article or Tip sheet to Digg or bookmarking it at Delicious, putting images up on Flickr, having conversations on Twitter, uploading videos on YouTube and establishing a Facebook Page with contest or just passing a web page on to a friend via email. [1, 2, 3, 7]

2. Social Media Web Sites

Social media web sites are increasingly complementing, and in some cases replacing; traditional search engines as a way for people to find content that is specific to what they are interested in and as major channels for web site traffic. But a social media marketing campaign will be more than a link building or a low cost viral marketing campaign when it is well planned with content that is prepared for a target audience, a message that engages them and is integrated with traditional online marketing to give it the strength and acceleration it needs.[3, 4, 9]

3. Social Media Marketing Benefits

Social media marketing campaigns provide businesses with new ways of online marketing that no longer relies primarily on traditional online advertising with large budgets, such as banner and campaigns and paid

Corresponding author. Tel.: + 91 2462 254850.

E-mail address: suryakant_thorat@yahoo.com.

search advertising, to build brand-awareness and drive web site traffic. The main benefits of a social media marketing campaign are:

3.1. Increased Brand Awareness

A social media marketing campaign creates brand visibility and builds brand-awareness from viral messages that travel throughout the social web. Whether from content that virally travels or from active participation in the target communities: establishing a brand power of authority and online reputation.

3.2. More Web Site Traffic and Links

Social media marketing campaigns generate links and web site traffic from profile pages at social media web sites, web widgets, social network applications and the contents that travel virally throughout social media news and bookmarking web sites. More links result in higher rankings of web pages in the organic search at Google, Yahoo, Bing and others. [11]

3.3. Improved Customer Relationships

Social media marketing, through social networking profiles, Blogs, podcasts, wiki's, forums and other social media tools can improve customer relationships and user engagement. They are accomplished by developing a deeper, two-way communications channel with the customer base, wherein the business can take part in the discussions, receive feedback and build trust. [4, 5, 6, 10]

4. Social Media Marketing in Education

Regardless of the clients' product or service, a social media campaign can and should be an integral part of the overall marketing strategy. It needs to be accelerating through traditional online marketing tactics such as search and online display of advertisements. As a part of full-service Internet marketing program, Advanced Media Productions will coordinate and integrate social media marketing campaigns with traditional online marketing. [1, 2]

4.1. Campaign Monitoring, Measuring and Reporting

The organizations that learn how to harness this technology and integrate it into their marketing plans, marketing research, sales efforts, training programs, customer support, and product development will be the leaders of the future. Since every company has unique expertise and assets, the value provided is unique, and thus social media program will be unique. Educators are joining an expanding list of emerging communities, and it's important to tap into this growing movement of online professional learning communities. In fact, many of these communities provide an unprecedented opportunity for industry executives to participate as colleagues with educators in discussing key issues in education, creating a virtual 24/7 conference. Now a days teaching and learning are becoming more personalized and more technology-driven and the pace of information and innovation are accelerating. Creating and managing an effective strategy for building this community and engaging with customers may take some time and may require some research & planning but it is well worth. More and more, educators are going online to participate in communities that help them find information and resources, provide professional development, and give them a place to support each other in coping with the changes and challenges in education. [4, 6, 7, 8, 9]

5. Marketing's Conceptual Framework

Social marketing relies on commercial marketing's conceptual framework to guide program development and implementation. This framework places consumers at the center of an exchange process in which they act primarily out of self-interest attempting to maximize the ability to satisfy wants and needs and minimize the cost to do so. Social marketing identifies consumer wants and needs and then develops ways to satisfy them. Marketing's framework, or the marketing mix, includes eight components involved in the exchange process. 8P's Framework in social media marketing; with regards to Education social marketing was "born" as a discipline in the 1970s, with the increasing need to "sell" ideas, attitudes and behaviors, a paradigmatic shift from the need to market products only. Kotler and Anderson define social marketing as "differing from

other areas of marketing with respect to the objectives of the marketer and his or her organization. The focus is on creating and sustaining demand for the product and service by market modification or even creation.

The 8 P's of Marketing or better known as the Marketing Mix are as follows:

Fig.1 The 8 P's of Marketing

5.1. Product

The social marketing "product" is not necessarily a physical offering. The products can range from intangible to actual physical products, so educational services are the education being offered by the organization could be the marketing product. In Education sector Building, furniture, Laboratories & all the infrastructural facilities are physical assets & Lecture, imparting knowledge of high caliber, enhancing skills, counseling services are the intangible things used for attracting the aspiring students.

5.2. Price

"Price" refers to what the consumer must do or pay (in terms of financial, physical effort, time or any other resource) in order to obtain the social marketing product or service. This cost is financial; but worth to note that yet none of the social media is charging for marketing the education or anything, offered by your organization by hosting your profile on it. The fees charged to the students are just the 'Price' in this case. Just like product marketing, if the costs outweigh the benefits for an individual, the perceived value of the offering will be low and it will be unlikely to be adopted, but if the benefits are perceived as greater than their costs, chances of trial and adoption of the product is much greater. The students should get the returns in the form of essential facilities. Hence social media is the better choice for marketing in education. Entire universe has became a small global village due to the advents in Internet technologies & social media is the prime choice to let every one share the common platform irrespective of their geographical distances & other differences.

5.3. Place

"Place" describes the methodology of product or services how it reaches the target segment. Think about where and when the audience will perform the behavior or access the new or adapted product/services. How can we make it convenient and pleasant so as to increase chances of adoption? Also think about training the sales team – the people that will take the program to the audience. By training the team on the details of the activities and habits of the target segment, as well as their experience and dissatisfaction with the existing delivery system, better adoption may be achieved by using social media in marketing of education. This 'P' can be implemented in colleges by conducting several programs like off sight Counseling of students, Personality development sessions, seminars, guest lectures etc through virtual connectivity for smart class, smart training, smart interaction & smart counseling, all in all a use of a strong social media.

5.4. Promotion

For the established & highly reputed Institutes, they may say that there is no such promotion being required since their alumni's are the best promoter's. Still, we feel it is very much essential for all the Institutes as promotion allows us to present our self with every minor change that has been incorporated for quality improvement since there is always scope for the improvement. Promotion of the educational institutes is possible by determining the communication channels that will be best within the reach of audience for easy adoption of the services offered by the institutes. It becomes crucial to understand which advertising or public relations media would play a greater role (e.g., radio, newspaper, postcard racks etc.)

since that it varies depending on the product/service and also on the target segment. Social media holds the interest of all promoters as it has the better influence on targeted market as compared to the traditional marketing strategies due to overwhelming advantages like effectiveness in appealing the audience, retaining the audience by virtue of no physical presence of the promoters.

5.5. Public

Marketers would have different audiences for their program that has to address in order to accelerate adoption of the products and ideas. "Public" could be both the external and internal groups. External groups would include students, parents, people, while the internal groups would comprise of the Director/Principal, HOD, Teaching staff, non teaching staff & Management people. The authors endorse that social media marketing for education is highly suitable & adoptable to all kind of public elements as it has been found that it has a strong impact to appeal the public elements. Worth to note that Indians are using internet and most are using the social sites to a great extent as it is reported.

5.6. Partnership

Lifestyle and Social issues are often so ingrained into the consumer that change becomes a real challenge. Teaming up with organizations in the community helps to be effective. Organizations with similar goals to the campaign; not necessarily the same goals, need to be identified and collaborated with. Organizations need to collaborate with Companies for Campus Placements & can hire companies for conducting several training sessions for grooming the personality of not only the students but also for the staff. Careful & thoughtful selection is the key for success in this issue. The easy and most convenient access is the asset of social media and thus helps a lot in itself for building partnerships easily and conveniently. To sum up social media is connectivity with integrity.

5.7. Policy

Social marketing campaigns could do well in stimulating individual behavioral change; but for sustainability; environmental change is necessary. Thus policy set by the Educational institutes like maintaining discipline, compulsory college uniform, attendance, records etc. must be mandatory for the sustainability of the campaign. Being on social media a transparency can be maintained to appeal the target audience for maintaining the discipline and adopting the policies with great comfort zone to have the better impact as compared to other marketing strategies.

5.8. Productivity & Quality

Productivity is a rate at which goods are produced for educational institute productivity measured is in terms of number of students taking admission influenced by social media. This productivity increases with greater interactions of social networking sites with people & also depends upon impact of advertisement. Quality depends on the productivity & exists with productivity only. This adds another dimension to the strategic development and sustainability of students or Alumni's.

6. Conclusion

In a report, it is being stated that almost 39% youths are using social media & Indians spend more time on social media than on any other activity on the Internet. Hence authors believe that the social media surely will be the better for marketing of education. This paper has investigated the suitability of 8 P's framework of Marketing to the social media to support the author's choice of using the social media for marketing in education. Use of latest technologies in marketing is always desired, so does the social media as it gives the greater impact through the better visual effects with high degree of appealing & better effectiveness, low cost, high sustainability, and better influence on target market with ease and sophistication as compared to the traditional marketing strategies. Hence we conclude that social media has emerged as one of the best options for marketing in education proving more convincingly and will certainly grow further with age of time.

7. Acknowledgements

8. References

[1] Kaplan, Andreas M.; Michael Haenlein (2010). "Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media". Business Horizons 53 (1): 59–68. doi:10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003. ISSN 0007-6813.http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/B6W45-4XFF2S0-1/2/600db1bd6e0c9903c744aaf34b0b12e1. Retrieved 2010-09-15.

[2] Kietzmann, Jan H.; Kris Hermkens, Ian P. McCarthy, and Bruno S. Silvestre (2011). "Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media". Business Horizons 54 (3): 241–251.doi:10.1016/j.bushor.2011.01.005.ISSN 0007-6813. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0007681311000061. Retrieved 2011-08-23.

[3] USPTO search on published patent applications mentioning "social media".

[4] Inc. Technology Brent Leary Article.

[5] Edelman 2010 Trust Barometer Study.

[6] "Students Addicted to Social Media - New UM Study". http:// www. newsdesk. umd.edu/ sociss/ release. cfm? ArticleID=2144. Retrieved 23 May 2011.

[7] "FOMO: The Unintended Effects of Social Media Addiction". http://www.nbcnewyork.com/ news/ local/ Social-Media-Is-Causing-Anxiety-and-Depression-122260279.html. Retrieved 23 May 2011. 12. Harris, Kandace (2008). "Using Social Networking Sites as Student Engagement Tools". Diverse Issues in Higher Education 25 (18). 13. Gentle, Anne (2009). Conversation and Community: The Social Web for Documentation. Fort Collins, Colo: XML Press. ISBN 9780982219119. OCLC 464581118.

[8] Johnson, Steven Berlin (2005). Everything Bad Is Good for You. New York: Riverhead Books. ISBN 1573223077. OCLC 57514882.

[9] Li, Charlene; Bernoff, Josh (2008). Groundswell: Winning in a World Transformed by Social Technologies. Boston: Harvard Business Press. ISBN 9781422125007. OCLC 423555651.

[10] Surowiecki, James (2004). The Wisdom of Crowds. New York: Anchor Books. ISBN 0385721706. OCLC 156770258.

[11] Tapscott, Don; Williams, Anthony D. (2006). Wikinomics. New York: Portfolio. ISBN 1591841380. OCLC 318389282.