

DIGITAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODS

Executive Summary

For businesses to grow today it is important to have good knowledge about digital skills and the research methods connected to it. The growth of a business today depends upon its digital reach and connection with the customers. Employees today need to understand how to use digital media and help in bringing profit to the business.

The following report explains the various forms of digital media, the role they play in each sector, the development of social media and its effect on the overall business management. It begins with simple introduction to digital skills and further explains in detail the various medium where it can be used for employee training and business growth purpose.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Literature Review.....	4
Knowledge and Understanding of Subject	5
Analysis.....	7
Practical Application and Deployment	8
Skills for Professional Practice	10
Conclusion	12
References.....	13

Introduction

The development of technology brought with it the spread of digitization as in digital work mode is being put to use on a large scale. People are yet to get adjusted with the concept of digitization for there is a story making the rounds that anything associated with the social media counts to be digitization. However, digitization is much more than just social media. According to Bondarouk and Olivas-Lujan (2013), recent business research has proved that people are using digital media so as to have better work accessibility with good scope of saving all the necessary documentation.

In addition to this, international educational institutions and noted universities around the world including online education providers are speaking in support on the induction of courses associated with digital marketing, digital media and other digital courses open to all. What was earlier controlled to just the information technology sector is seeing its web spreading wide across the globe (Holloman, 2013). While talking about digital skills and research methods one needs to sit and analyze the gradual rise of digital media over the years and its importance in day to day activities.

From corporate cabins to school classrooms, digital web has been making its presence feel. What was earlier just used as a basic medium of communication, has now taken another form of being the most influential tool of the working industry as well as business. Digital skills and research methods go hand in hand as the research results are massively used in the development of digital skills in different sectors. As per Bowen and Ozuem (2016), functioning that was earlier paper bounded has now taken a digital phase all thanks to consistent developments in digital skills. In addition to collecting information about the market, social media has helped organizations to develop a online presence, enhanced marketing and communication.

Literature Review

The simple definition of digital skills makes it difficult to understand and hence to explain in simple words is the use of information technology to search a concept, assessing the subject, placing it into practice, make appropriate implementation, share it on the web and create content on the internet. In other words, it also means that finding answers to queries associated with any subject is what digital skills is all about. Finding answers require research methodologies to be followed which help in finding the correct medium of research (Persuit, 2013). These research methods lay necessary rules so as to make the search target oriented and provides with proper information.

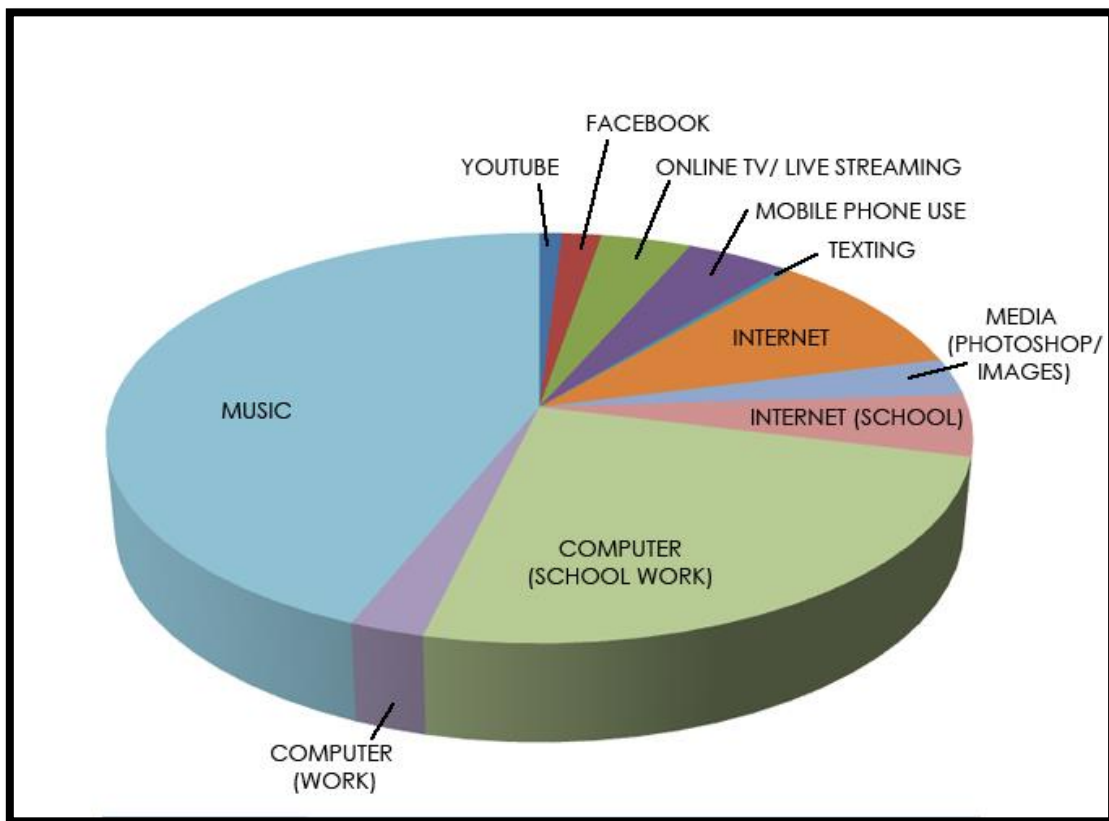


Figure: Social Media Platforms in Business

(Source: Qualman, 2013)

According to Plowman and Winchel (2016), digital skills are not developed in a day for they need access to varied web pages and other information mediums so as to develop a complete approach towards a concept. To add to it, an individual's presence on social media platforms namely Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Quora and so on also plays a crucial role in developing digital skills. With online education on the rise, the concept of digital media and learning skills associated with it are on the rise.

In addition to understanding digital skills, students are also involved in the making of projects which offer insights on the latest developments in the digital world and its effect on the world. The need for self analysis is important when it comes to choosing a section of digital skills (Khanlari, 2015). The varied concepts of digital skills are interlinked and hence a part of each has to be learnt and understood for entering the bigger business picture.

In the words of Shelton (2013), coming a step down from the global platform, businesses today are using all means of digital mediums to provide the best quality service to its clients. Whether that is digital meetings or other projects, all of these are now being accomplished digitally thereby decreasing excessive work pressure. The introduction of digital labs in every nook and corner of the world has helped people seek global information with the mere click of a button.

Knowledge and Understanding of Subject

A little rewind into time and conducting business a few years ago was quite difficult due to lack of instant connectivity as well as knowledge about using digital mediums. However, things have changed today and now business too has gone digital. As per Acar (2014), corporate businesses today are trying their level best to offer the best possible services to their clientele with the help of digital medium. From approaching a company to building a project everything is designed through digital media.

While once there was need for personal meets to discuss a concept has now taken a different shape. Mediums like Skype, Facetime, Video calls and other sources of video communications are developing on a daily basis and are being put into practice in the corporate world. From managing a customer, to making a deal, product marketing and sales, product management to marketing and customer service is all planned online. As stated by Rajagopal (2013), going digital also helps in segregated documentation thereby avoiding cluttering.

The latest developments in research methods associated with digital skills calls for more skilled minds to help take this forward. Each section in a company or business today is in need of employees who posses digital skills. Companies today are changing their means of hiring people, for digital knowledge is of primary importance (Gruenbaum, 2015). The digital experience of a employee is put to test and promotions are accordingly decided. This has eased the hiring process as well as has cleared way for different positions associated with digital functioning.

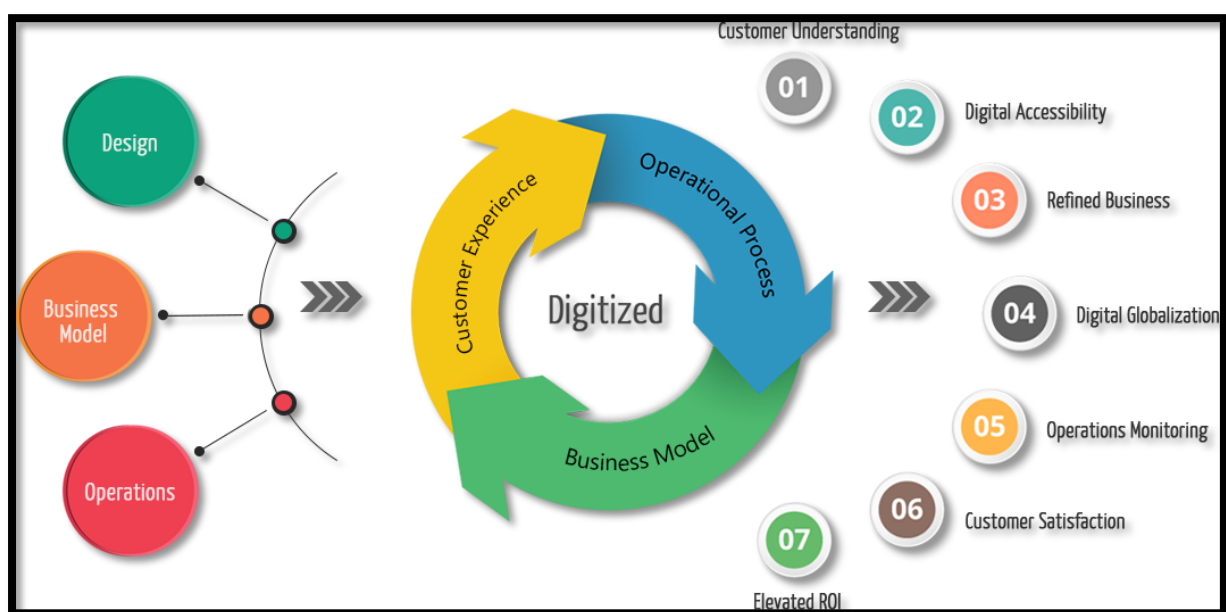


Figure: SMM Business Model

(Source: Ryan, 2015)

Analysis

The two primary concepts that work in coordination with each other are SEO as in search engine optimization and digital media. To explain in simpler terms with the help of SEO tool one can find or create information about a concept and share it with the world with the help of digital medium. The top most SEO medium today is Google, followed by Facebook, Quora and Pinterest. From a needle to a meteor, all the information is made available to people through these mediums (Piskorski, 2016).

As opined by Charlesworth (2016), if questioned as to why do a business employee needs to be active on social media is because the answer to any and every query is available right here. The concept of search engine optimization is not just controlled to social media but goes much beyond it. Here is a step by step introduction into how does SEO and digital media work

1. This begins with an individual searching for information on a SEO medium.
2. This medium connects the question to similar sites where this concept or question has been earlier placed
3. While the search is on, the SEO medium creates a link between the different website and the clients general information and social media link ups to help make the search better and clear
4. Each site which the client visits, digital details are registered on these respective sites.
5. The idea behind registering this information is to provide information notifications to the client.
6. The latest developments in digital media and SEO helps keep the information secured thereby maintaining the privacy of the client.

7. Use of keywords and phrases acts as a added benefit thereby making the search easy and to the point.

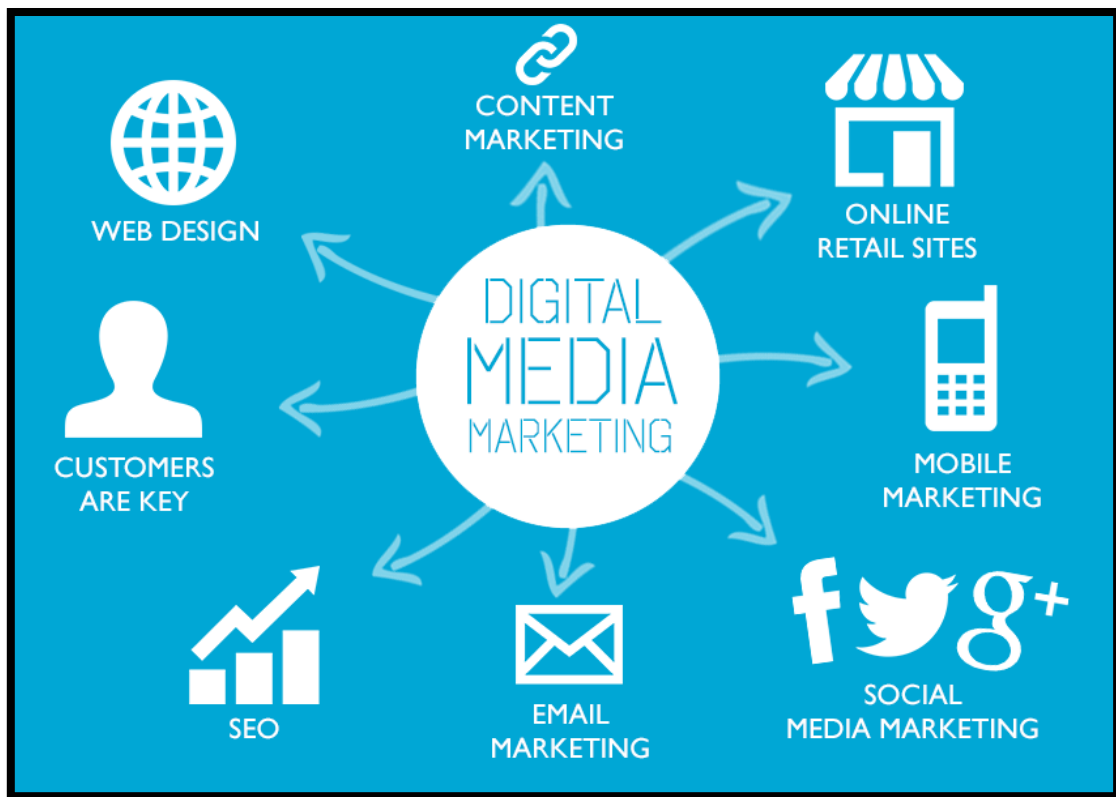


Figure: Digital Media Marketing

(Source: Weintraub and Litwinka, 2013)

Practical Application and Deployment

Corporate businesses are now using latest digital technologies to help develop their business. This also means that these businesses are registering themselves on social media platform. In addition to this, they are keeping a track of their progress and making necessary additions to help increase page views. As stated by Li (2013), there is a dedicated digital management section maintained in each corporate office which looks in to the digital development of the business. People who are quite good with handling social media platforms are being hired.

Keeping in regular touch with the clients and providing them with the best possible services is all done through the digital media platform.

Social media comprises of big names like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, wordpress and many more. For an employee new to the world of digital media these are just mediums of connecting from different companies and bringing them together under one roof. However, social media is much more than just fancy websites. Social media today is a growing platform of business and education. According to Bondarouk and Olivas-Lujan (2013), an in depth analysis of these and one would understand that all these are directly or indirectly linked with each other. The rise of SEO brought these mediums under one roof making information accessibility easy for an employee.

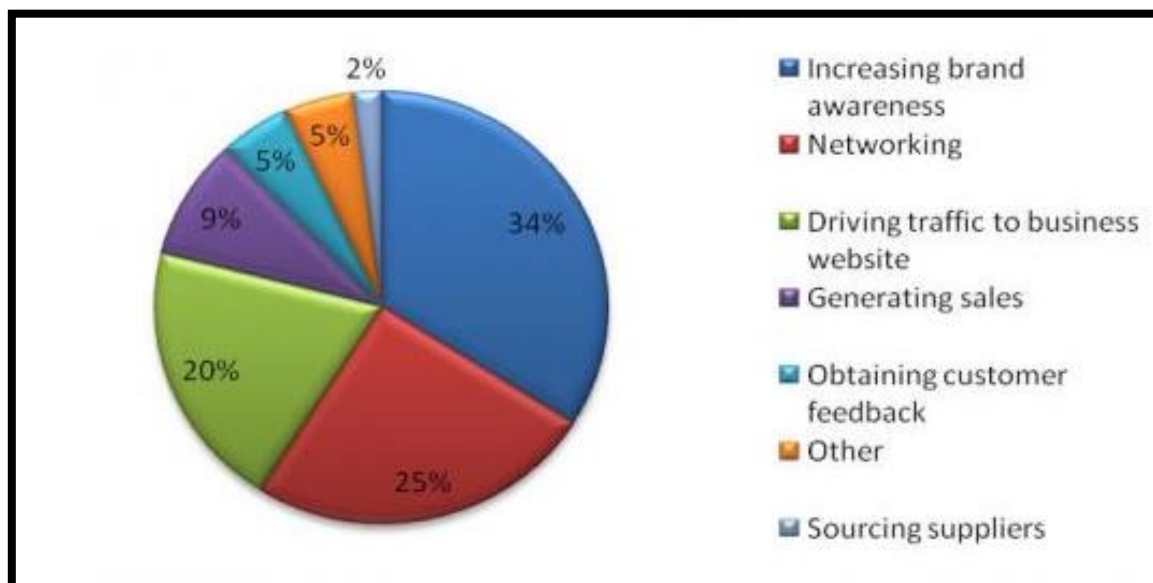


Figure: Social Media System in Business

(Source: Holloman, 2013)

Skills for Professional Practice

Big businesses are registered to different social media pages and try to access varied information. With digital media in full force an employee can now understand a concept in just one go and need not search a zillion websites. As stated by Bowen and Ozuem (2016), if asked about how this has helped in the bigger picture then the answer is that it has saved on immense time as well as efforts of the individual in search of information. The continuous accessibility to varied social media platform helps in connecting with people from different genres. This has enabled exchange of ideas at different levels thereby improving overall skills and knowledge.

Apart from general company websites, dedicated company pages on social media have helped in the spreading of a business as well as have helped in taking the business on a global page. This has also developed the concept of rational thinking thereby opening doors to new concepts. According to Pursuit (2013), people are now able to conduct a full fledged business on social media as well. The growth of a business depends upon the number of people following your page, crisp content, overall page layout, SEO notifications and so on.

According to Qualman (2013), keeping all the varied processes and systems in place has made social media a crucial tool of digitization. However, one has to be aware about the information being shared on the web as it might work as a double edged sword. Connectivity leads to communication and this is where one has to play his cards right. Choosing the right platform and connecting with the apt medium is of pivotal importance.

This also raises the issue of internet morality as in the authenticity of connecting with an informative platform. It is important to avoid falling prey to false claims and keep in check the legitimacy of a page or site (Khanlari, 2015). Digital developers today however, are

developing more secured channels so as to make internet accessibility safer. With the advent of web lock systems, perilous websites are coming under the scanner and facing the hammer.

Conclusion

It is important to have good knowledge as to how does the digital world functions. With each passing day there are new developments taking place in the digital world which are directly or indirectly affecting our lives. Digital skills have now become a necessity taking into consideration its growing web. Keeping off the digital phase might greatly affect day today functioning thereby affecting overall lifestyle. Whether that be business growth or educational development or mere connectivity, have digital skills is necessary. Rising mediums of organizations coming up with offering digital knowledge and functioning has helped in many individuals across the world. One needs to be a master of not just understanding the web but also play an important role in building a secured digital environment. Digital skills and research methodologies are the order of the day and have come to stay. The early we accept its presence in life the better we can operate with ease.

This will also help build strong professional ties on different digital platforms thereby helping the business reach out to maximum individuals. From reaching out to people, to just maintaining connectivity to offering the best quality services digital media has undoubtedly come a long way. It has now become one of the finest and most trustworthy tool so as to take the world into another century. The latest models of varied gadgets have also helped in carrying digital media in our pockets. It is important to embrace novel changes and business challenges so as to build a better future for the coming generations. All this and a lot more will only be possible the day people understand and utilize the power of digital skills and research methods.

References

- Acar, A. (2014). *Culture and Social Media: An Elementary Textbook*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, p. 56.
- Bondarouk, T., and Olivas-Lujan, M. R. (2013). *Social media in human resources management*. Bingley, U.K: Emerald, p. 90.
- Bowen, G., and Ozuem, W. (2016). *Competitive social media marketing strategies*. Hershey, PA: Business Science Reference. Hershey, PA : Business Science Reference, p. 56.
- Charlesworth, A. (2016). *An introduction to social media marketing*. New York : Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, p. 55.
- Gruenbaum, R. (2015). *Making Social Technologies Work: Leveraging the Power and Managing Perils of Social Technologies in Business*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 98.
- Holloman, C. (2013). *The social media MBA in practice: An essential collection of inspirational case studies to influence your social media strategy*. Chichester, West Sussex, UK : Wiley, p. 112.
- Khanlari, A. (2015). *Strategic customer relationship management in the age of social media*. Hershey, Pa: Business Science Reference, p. 90.
- Li, E. Y. (2013). *Organizations and social networking: Utilizing social media to engage consumers*. Hershey, PA : Business Science Reference, p. 56.
- Persuit, J. M. (2013). *Social media and integrated marketing communication: A rhetorical approach*. Lanham: Lexington Books, pp. 312-333.

Piskorski, M. J. (2016). *A social strategy: How we profit from social media*. Princeton, New Jersey : Princeton University Press, p. 788.

Plowman, K. D., and Winchel, B. (2016). *The social media communication matrix: A new direction in public relations*. New York, New York: Business Expert Press, p. 343.

Qualman, E. (2013). *Socialnomics: How social media transforms the way we live and do business*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, p. 290.

Rajagopal, . (2013). *Managing social media and consumerism: The grapevine effect in competitive markets*. New York: Palgrave, p. 21.

Ryan, D. (2015). *Understanding social media: How to create a plan for your business that works*. London: Kogan Page, p. 34.

Shelton, T. (2013). *Business models for the social mobile cloud: Transform your business using social media, mobile Internet, and cloud computing*. Hoboken, N.J: John Wiley and Sons, p. 333.

Weintraub, M., and Litwinka, L. (2013). *The complete social media community manager's guide: Essential tools and tactics for business success*. Indianapolis (Indiana): Wiley, p. 671.