University of Wales Trinity Saint David

BAMB L6 T2G2

Module: Dissertation Proposal

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Topic: Analysing the role of digital marketing in influencing the psychology of ASDA's customers living in London

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Content

Introduction……...…….……2

Problem statement…….……3

Aim and objectives…….…3

Research questions……..…….....4

Literature Review……..5

Race model……..……6

Methodology……..……..7

Research methodology……7

Research Onion……...7

Philosophies……..8

Strategies……..8

Approces……..8

Choices……..8

Time Horizons……..8

Techniques and procedures……9

Application of research methodology……9

Ethical considerations……..10

Timescale……..11

Conclusion……13

References……..14

Introduction

To accomplish the goals of higher education, research is considered one of the basic components. It helps to uncover the truth and reach a new meaning of the research issue. Thus research develops new knowledge and updates the existing knowledge of the learners. As a part of studying the marketing module, research will be proposed to investigate the strategy of digital marketing of ASDA, UK. This paper is the proposal for the research work to inform the scholars' aim and objectives, problems and significance of the research project. Upon the approval of the teachers and the selected retail organisation, the final research will be carried out.

Problem statement

Digital marketing is referred to as the approach of promoting brands of an organisation online by targeting and engaging with potential customers and utilizing the tools of digital communication (Kannan, 2017). In this era of information and technology, digital marketing has been very important for organisations to sustain properly. This can help to reach an unlimited number of target people with a few clicks. The integration of new technology has made business operations digital and it has enhanced the importance of digital marketing. The number of internet users is everyday increasing and this is affecting the interaction of business organisations with people over internet-based applications e.g., email, website, social media etc.

Problem: Impact of digital marketing on the perceptions of the customers of ASDA PLC

It is seen from the digital marketing approaches of different organisations in London that, the organisations which are more active on the internet are more successful in influencing the customers and increasing sales performance and competitiveness of the businesses (Charlesworth, 2014). Therefore research on the role of digital marketing in influencing customer psychology is necessary to identify the values of digital marketing for ASDA PLC.

Aim and objectives

The proposed research will aim to understand the role of digital marketing in influencing the psychology of ASDA customers living in London. The research will be conducted to achieve the objectives pointed out below.

- To understand what the term digital marketing means to ASDA.
- To explore how digital marketing research is impacting ASDA's London customers
- To investigate the positive and negative impacts of digital marketing strategies on customer values and perceptions
- To develop knowledge of how digital marketing is more successful than traditional marketing operations in influencing purchase decisions and customer behavior at ASDA PLC?
- To determine what are the potential challenges, barriers and opportunities of digital marketing for the overall growth, development and expansion of ASDA PLC in the London area?

Research questions

To meet the aim and objectives of the research, it is better to formulate research questions to find answers step by step and simplify the processes of the current research.

The main question of the research: What is the role of digital marketing in influencing the customers of ASDA psychologically in London?

Upon the principal research question, the research will try to find answers to the below questions.

- What is meant by the term digital marketing to ASDA?
- How does digital marketing influence the customers of ASDA in London?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of digital marketing strategies on the values and perceptions of the customers?
- How digital marketing is more successful than traditional marketing operations in influencing purchasing decisions and buying behaviour of the customers at ASDA PLC?
- What are the potential challenges, barriers and opportunities of digital marketing for the overall growth, development and expansion of ASDA PLC in the London area?

Literature Review

The concepts of marketing have been changed by the influences of digital technologies. Digital marketing is web-based marketing that considers online marketing operations (Piñeiro-Otero and Martínez-Rolán, 2016). Digital marketing is better than traditional marketing to target the audience specifically by following the segmentation and positioning strategies of an organisation. Besides the local people, digital marketing can target people from other regions and countries at lower costs. Digital marketing also helps business organisations to reach the target audience within minutes (Piñeiro-Otero and Martínez-Rolán, 2016). Moreover, the effectiveness of digital marketing programs is more visual than the outcomes of traditional marketing programs.

Digital marketing allows organisations to follow multiple strategies and design multiple contents to increase engagement of the organisation with the target audience. According to Google (2022), 94.8% of the population of the UK uses the internet. There remain more than 45 million active social media users in the country (Google, 2022). The number of internet visitors and social media users is increasing every day. It is seen that people on average spend at least 2 hours and 27 minutes on social media every day throughout the world (Miller, et al., 2016). Therefore, reaching the target audience online and impressing them becomes easier for organisations. The arrival of social media and the internet has replaced traditional media of entertainment e.g. TV, radio, FM, newspapers and magazines.

Therefore, modifying the buying behaviour of the customers is possible for organisations by marketing online. So it is necessary to focus on the creation of customer-friendly digital marketing strategies (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2012). Although digital marketing can produce fake reviews and negative feedback concerning the organisation publicly, improving the processes, products and services this challenge can be overcome by organisations.

The rise of e-commerce in the UK is the most important event in the development of digital marketing. Orendorff (2019) researched that, e-commerce will be the medium of exchanging products and services with customers within the next few decades (Orendorff, 2019). So, every organisation should get prepared to grow and develop the organisation and expand the business to grab unlimited opportunities through digital marketing.

Race model

Race model according to (Chaffey, 2022) is a built framework that helps digital marketing activities or channel communication plans, by implementing strategic planning. The model has the idea of building loyalty in the relationship with the customer, which is a set of four different stages of the life cycle that the consumer goes through until he reaches the ultimate goal of his engagement in the online space regarding sales. The RACE model is structured like the classic marketing funnel shown in diagram 1.

Diagram 1: RACE marketing planning framework

Asda has implemented the Race model successfully by implementing good strategic decisions and building loyalty to its customers throughout their shopping life cycle. It offers accessible information on its site about its brand, history, goals, and vision for the future. The company reaches out to a target audience that provides value and satisfaction as they find relevant products easily, quickly and conveniently from the comfort of their homes. The next step for the customer is to place an order by adding the required products to the user's basket and the company will make a profit. The last stage is included when the customer comes back online and wants to make a purchase and the company, with this strategy, creates a loyal relationship.

Methodology

Research methodology

Research methodology is seen as the science of how scientific research is conducted by applying a systematic solution to the research problem. Methodology provides us with information about the sequential steps a researcher takes in studying their research problem and understanding their logic. The researcher should be able to know the research methods, techniques and methodology (Kothary, 2004).

Research Onion

Research philosophy can be considered in two types from an ontological or epistemological point of view. Ontology in the context of metaphysics is the study of what things are (Effingham, 2013). According to the author, ontology answers the "what" and "how" questions of what we already know, that is, what the true nature of reality is and what we can really know and understand.

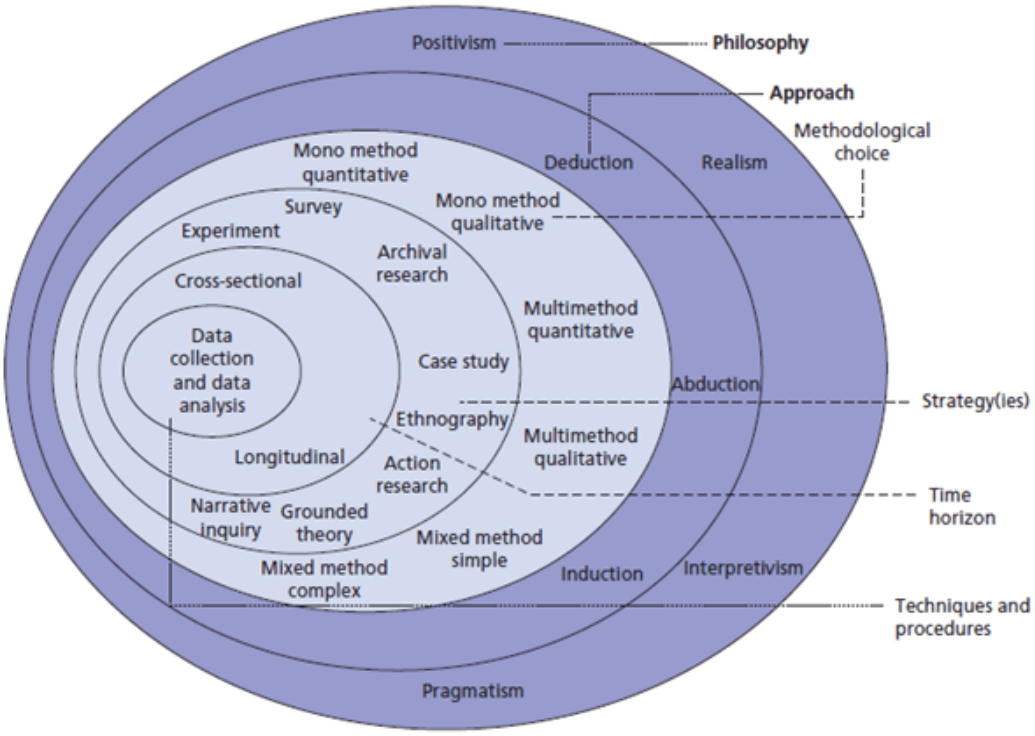

Diagram 2: Research philosophy in the ‘research onion

Philosophies

Research philosophy is considered extensively and extensively. Research philosophy is directly related to a specific way of developing and evolving knowledge, assumption and nature of research. Researchers may have different assumptions about the nature of truth and knowledge, and philosophy helps understand their assumptions.

Positivist research refers to when the view is taken that knowledge is outside of what is being studied, that is, what is being studied cannot include opinions or personal points of view, with the researcher only observing but not interpreting.

The research approach of positivism will contribute to the understanding of logical reasoning by applying the scientific evidence used. Therefore, a logical explanation can be given for this project using philosophical inquiry with the help of scientific evidence.

Strategies

A research strategy is a helpful approach for the researcher to collect data and carry out the analysis procedure (Walia, A., & Priya Chetty, P., 2020).

Approaches

The next layer is the research approach that will be applied. The chosen identifying research method and approach, whether inductive or deductive, will inform the decisions made about collecting and analyzing data in this study directly from users and staff.

Choices

The next layer of the research onion is simply called "choices". In this layer, it refers to choosing to make a decision through two types of data qualitative or quantitative that can be used in the research.

Time Horizons

A time horizon is a method of planning strategic goals into the future that sets a fixed point in time at which certain processes will be implemented.

Techniques and procedures

Some techniques can be found across methods, while others are method specific. The procedure can be described by a term such as "First you do this, then you do that". Its a lot smaller a method, but its a sequence of techniques.

Application of research methodology

The methodology is the most important part of any research that defines how research will be conducted and what steps will be taken to meet the stated aim and objectives of the research. Two types of research methodology are used by the researchers on the marketing research projects; qualitative research methodology and quantitative research methodology. The qualitative methodology of research describes the findings in non-numeric order (Arghode, 2012). The application of qualitative methodology can provide in death findings of a research, but this cannot specifically obtain or interpret the research data and information. So, the quantitative methodology will be applied to the current research. The quantity methodology is a kind of research methodology that focuses on the collection, analysis and interpretation of statistical data to specifically present the findings.

However, there are different methods of quantitative research e.g. descriptive research, correlational research, experimental research and quasi-experimental research. The descriptive method of research will be applied to the current research (Arghode, 2012). Quantifiable data will be collected from a selected population to analyse the findings and accurately define the results of the research.

For this research, the values and perceptions will be collected from both the customers and the employees of ASDA. The participants will be selected applying the simple random sampling approach. A total of 15 employees of ASDA and 10 customers of the organisation will be selected for the quantitative research. The collected data will be analysed with Microsoft Excel and presented in charts and graphs in the detailed research report.

The proposed research will consider primary data only, although two types of data can be used in research projects. Primary data is original data which requires more time and resources to obtain the values. But secondary data is not original and collected by other researchers. There are different

problems with the use of secondary data in the current research. There is no way to check the reliability and currency of the existing data (Lowry, 2015). So, quantitative primary data will be collected and analysed to meet the goals of the research. By arranging a questionnaire with the research questions and relevant options for answering those questions, the participants will be asked to submit their responses. Research data will be collected online and a Google form will be created and shared with the respondents.

Ethical considerations

The definition of ethics is a person's behavior that is determined and governed by his moral principles. Research ethics is synonymous with following what is moral, what is legal, what is right in research. By right is meant certain that distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior (Parveen. H., & Showkat, N., 2017).

Ethics is an important part of every research. It helps to maintain the values, accuracy, sufficiency, currency and reliability of the research. In the proposed research, the below ethical issues will be considered.

Beneficence: The research will be done to enhance benefits for the selected organisation and its customers.

Non-maleficence: The purpose of the proposed research is not to harm anyone, who will be part of this research (Connelly, 2014).

Informed consent: The people who will be the participants of the research will be informed earlier to get their consent and inform them of the purpose and deliverables of the research (Connelly, 2014). None will be forced to take part in the research.

Anonymity and confidentiality: No personal and sensitive data of the respondents e.g. name, age, gender, religion, phone number and telephone number will be disclosed. This is also instructed in the Data Protection Act (2018).

Justice: Fair and transparent justification of the data collected from the respondents will be made (Connelly, 2014). The research will not promote any kind of partiality or discrimination over the comments of any respondent.

Respect of persons: The opinions of the respondents may have differences, but the research will respect the opinions of all the people who will participate in the research. None will be criticized or influenced to generate partial findings.

Timescale

The proposed research contains different stages and successful completion of each of the stages is important. The below drawn Gantt chart shows the timescale and approximate time required to complete the research project.

Research Project

Topic: Strategy of digital marketing

Problem: Impact of digital marketing on the perceptions of the customers of ASDA PLC

Required time (Proposed): 10 weeks

Task	*Time in (weeks)*									
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
1. Introduction (background, rationale of the study, aim, research objectives, research questions)										
2. Literature review										
3. Research methodology										
4. Creating the questionnaire/interview questions										
5. Collection of data										
6. Analysis of data										
7.Discussion / Interpretation of data										
8. Conclusion and recommendations										

Diagrama 3: Gannt Chart – source by Reneta Ivabova, 2022

Conclusion

Digital marketing is becoming increasingly important for businesses. From the recent covid-19 crisis, the significance of digital marketing to attract people and enhance the sales performance of organisations has been understood along with the increasing importance of digital tools and equipment for business. So, if the proposed research can be carried out, it may give specific directions for ASDA and similar retailer organisations operating in the UK to be more friendly with the consumers and improve the competitiveness and potentiality of the businesses through excellent marketing strategies, and operations and management.

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