

12/20/2024

How Social and Digital Media can be used to reach a wider customer base

MODULE NAME: DIGITAL SKILLS

MODULE CODE: LCLM 4002

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Introduction

Social and digital media channels have become indispensable tools for businesses to reach a wider customer base. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Snapchat and LinkedIn are the most powerful social and digital networking sites in expanding customer reach. From the early 2000s, Social and Digital Media emerged into our daily lives mostly across the globe and continue to increase in popularity mainly among the adolescents and young adults. According to Webster (2024) "social media is defined as forms of electronic communications such as, websites for social networking platform and microblogging"

What is digital media?

"Communications and interactive services based on digital content accessible through different technology platforms and devices including the Internet, web, mobile phones, computers, TV and digital signage". (Chaffey, 2020)

The history of the social media

The first true Social Media Platform appeared in 1997 after Six Degrees founder Andrew Weinreich, known as the father of the social networking, succeeded in connecting many people, rapidly it expired in 2001 ,Webster (2024) .Shortly after that, we witnessed the birth of diverse platforms having their own unique niches in the social media landscape such as, Facebook, launched in 2004 by Havard student, Mark Zuckerberg, which reached over 1.7 million users, including 69% of U.S adults .Twitter, found in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone, and others as a microblogging site, owned by Elon Musk who upgraded this platform with the version of everything in one app, and a new name as X since July 2023.Shortly after in 2010, a graduate student from Stanford, Kevin Systrom, launched another virtual interactive platform known as Instagram. This site is also widely used, reaching more than 1 billion users across the world, and was later purchased by Facebook in 2012. Another student made changes in the world of Social Networking Site, the trio students from Stanford, Evan Spiegel, Reggie Brown, and Bobby Murphy released Snapchat by introducing the concept of 'stories' or serialized short videos using new features such as filtering informative digital effects. Emerging from Asia, a Chinese Company, Byte Dance, created TikTok in 2016, which expanded later globally in 2017. It is known as the most popular and engaging social networking reaching about 1.04 billion. LinkedIn, another online social media hub, came into view in 2002 /2003 by Reid Hoffman and his co-founder, which is widely used for professional networking and job searching. Pew Search (2023)

The history of digital media

The term digital media is frequently used referring products and services that provide online information or entertainment via internet such as, online news source, video game, blogs and social media platform. Digital media is accessible with this range of devices like, cell phones, tablets, laptops, computers. The first digital media devices, such as the compact disc (CD) and the digital versatile disc (DVD), were introduced in the 1980s (Moncada, 2023). Tim Berners -Lee invented the World Wide Web in 1989 while working at CERN. The first digital media devices, such as the compact disc (CD) and the digital versatile disc (DVD), were introduced in the 1980s. The advent of social media in the early 2000s, such as Facebook and Twitter, marked a major turning point in the evolution of digital media. The rise of streaming services, such as Netflix and Spotify, also changed the way we consume media.

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The advantage of the social and digital media tools for businesses

The transformation of the social and digital media has revolutionized the way businesses connect with their audience across the world and from the different platforms used by billions of users. These channels offer unparalleled opportunities for businesses and organisation to expand their research and compelling with different customers' base. Unlike, traditional advertising, social media offer businesses with exceptional tools to interact in real _time faster and efficient. Let's observe TikTok for example, this platform is known the most Authentic form to interact, socialise and advertise it is faster than other social and digital platform. For businesses, consumers could feel related to several advertised products especially if their eye caught specified items from very famous influencer who has huge followers, surely this item will massively demand from customers. The visibility and the engagement are key to reach wider audience who themselves will create the buzz and brand recognition. It is no longer possible to consider marketing without considering digital as consumers are always connected to their desktops, laptops, tablets, or mobile devices this implies that, if your brand isn't part of the digital marketing your products will likely to be considered as other digital companies will enjoy growth at your expense. The success of several companies in the modern era is fundamentally relying on two pivotal factors, SEM and SEO.

Let's interduce these two vital search engines below -

SEM, is a search engine marketing, also known as PPC (pay-per-click) this is a form of online advertising in which advertiser accrue costs when users click their ads, SEM, is all about relevance for consumers when searching for specific products.

SEO stands for Search Engine Optimization and helps search engines understand your website's content and connect it with users by delivering relevant, valuable results based on their search queries. The goal of SEO is to rank on the first page of search engine results pages (SERPs) for the most relevant and valuable keywords to your target demographic, driving qualified traffic to your site. SEO is considered a digital marketing practice and can be applied to any website. It helps improve a site's visibility on search engines like Google and Microsoft Bing. Whether your site promotes products, offers services, or shares expert knowledge on a specific topic, SEO can help drive traffic and increase online visibility (Search Engine Land, 2024)

The disadvantage of social and digital media for businesses

Social and digital media are extremely powerful for businesses indeed however, they carry a great risk in Parallel for example , the lack of an effective listening strategy for your business will affect you badly ,in order to be able to explore the wider world of content marketing you need to make sure to have excellent online service so you can nip any grievances in the bud faster and efficiently before the problem escalates .Let's observe more precise explanation through these examples, Unhappy customers will review and share their experience by vocalising their feelings and irritations for the world to see from the platform they use.

Another risk threatened your business. Trademark infringement, we have seen this dramatically increasing recently, when someone uses similar symbol or trademark to register trademark owned by other party this can sadly confuse consumers about the origine, quality, or authenticity of goods or services (Hayes,2023)

Conclusion

In summary , social and digital media provide unique opportunities for businesses to expand their customers base through targeted outreach, improved engagement ,and cost-effective scalability .However, these platforms also pose challenges , such as managing data privacy , navigating platform ,combating misinformation and maintaining consistent , authentic engagement .if thus can be addressed carefully , businesses can unlock the full potential of social and digital media and will gain sustainable growth .

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