

Module name: Digital skills
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Assignment title: Write a report about how social and digital media can be used to reach a wider customer base.

Nowdays, social media is everywhere. It has so many different uses such as communicating with friends/family, but it can also be a powerful tool for businesses to research and grow by reaching new customers. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok allow companies to connect with people from all over the world. Whether it is a large international corporation or a small local business, social media gives them a way to promote their product, engage with customers, and grow their audience. In this report I will look at what social media is and how it has changed marketing, as well as how businesses can use social media to reach a wider customer base and the positive effects it has on them.

Social media has completely changed the way businesses market themselves. In the past, companies mostly relied on TV, radio, and printed out ads to reach people. These methods were expensive, and it was hard to know if they were reaching the right customers. Now, business can use social media to target specific groups of people based on factors like age, interest, location, and online behavior using most apps algorithm. This makes it easier and considerably more cost effective for businesses to connect with potential customers. (Arnell, 2023)

One key advantage of social media marketing is the ability to track the success of campaigns through data. Businesses can use tools like Facebook insight or Instagram analytics to measure engagement and see the works. This helps businesses focus on the strategies that get the best results and improve overtime. (Arnell, 2023)

A big benefit of social media is its ability to reach a global audience. Traditional advertising that used to consist of posters would be limited to that specific area whereas social media breaks those boundaries and can reach people all over the world. This global reach is especially important for small businesses, as its much more cost effective by stopping them from having to print out posters, helping them save on printing them out, and it also helps them be able to grow as it helps them reach their target audience. For small businesses, social media is an affordable and effective way to grow. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok let businesses share and promote their products through content like photos and videos which are shared widely. This can lead to any of their advertisements blowing up and becoming viral and that could help them hopefully become super successful by bringing in new customers and their

business getting more attention.

Social media also adds the ability to interact with the advertisement as it allows customers to comment, ask questions and even share their own experiences with the product or the service. This helps the business create a sense of community and loyalty among their followers leading to longer-term success as they can promote it to family and friends and grow faster. Social media platforms also offer features that make it easier for businesses to increase their visibility. Hashtags, location tags, and product tagging are tools that help users discover updated content. For example, businesses can use popular hashtags to reach people interested in specific topics and overall use algorithms to get to their target audience.

Marketing through social media platforms also opens the possibility of influencer partnerships, which can benefit both the business and the promoter. Influencers are people who have a large following on social media and can promote products or services to their audience usually on some sort of contract where they can get a percentage of the sales their viewers/followers buy in using their promotion code. Influencer marketing has become especially popular among younger audiences, who tend to trust influencers recommendations more than traditional ads, which is another way of growing and getting a whole new group of audience. Make sure to keep track of your progress using social media analytics. Most platforms offer a built-in tool that lets you see how well your content is performing. By looking at things like likes, comments and shares, you can figure out what works and what does not, allowing you to make smarter decisions moving forward. Building online social media presence takes time and effort, but it is all about creating content that connects with your audience, staying consistent, engaging with followers, and using the right tools to grow. Over time as your business grows and you continue to succeed, you will realize that it was all worth it.

Businesses also now have the chance to tell their brand story creatively because of social media. It allows them to craft narratives that resonate with the audiences on a deeper, more emotional level. Storytelling on social media is not just about promoting products or services; it is about connecting with customers, creating a memorable experience, and building lasting relationships. An advantage of this is that it humanizes the brand. Instead of just presenting products, businesses can share their journey, values and mission. For example, a small business might tell the story of how it was founded, the challenges it faced and how it overcame them. This personal touch makes the brand more relatable, helping to create an emotional connection with followers. People are more likely to support a brand they feel close to or can relate to it, especially if they believe the story. Storytelling on social media also allows businesses to show off their values and missions in ways that feel more genuine. For example, brands with a commitment to sustainability can share their eco-friendly causes. This creates a strong brand identity and appeals to customers who share those values.

Social media has transformed the way businesses can reach and engage with customers. By offering the ability to target specific audiences, interact with customers in real-time, and measure the success of campaigns, social media has become a necessary tool for businesses of all sizes. Whether it is through

influencers partnerships, or paid ads, social media helps businesses grow their customer base and build lasting relationships with their customers. Despite challenges, such as dealing with negative feedback, which might feel very overwhelming, the benefits of using social media to reach a wider customer base far outweigh the drawbacks. As social media continues to evolve, businesses will have even more opportunities to connect with customers and drive growth. With consistent use of social media any business can become successful in these times as most things are online and with the generations to come eventually, I believe everything will be done online so starting early is always best considering how easy it is to go viral and how effective it can be.

Arnell, J. (2023) *How has social media changed marketing?*, *Rebellion Marketing*. Available at: <https://rebellionmarketing.co.uk/how-has-social-media-changed-marketing/#:~:text=Social%20media%20provides%20businesses%20with,their%20audience%2C%20improving%20customer%20engagement>. (Accessed: 27 November 2024).