CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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Communication played a crucial role in the journey of human survival & growth. Human beings are the only species capable of speaking and perfecting communication. Humans use communication to express, inform, interact, inspire and establish power & control.

The emergence of the internet has transformed the landscape of communication. A critical advantage of the internet is flexibility. The user can view and participate in the conversation without the boundaries of space and time. It makes computer-mediated communication one of the most accessible means of transmitting the information. People have raised their voices over the shift from physical communication to digital communication and its repercussions on society; however, online socialization has many advantages over traditional socialization.

A virtual group or community offers opportunities to bring people from various backgrounds and allows them to find common grounds for their beliefs and interests (Chen et al., 2013). In virtual platforms, the consumer has the flexibility to connect, receive content, inform and influence at a convenient time. It facilitates communication, sharing, and exchanging ideas without the constraint of the physical presence of place and time. On one side, the internet and social media explosion increased consumer engagement options; on the other side, it fragments consumer attention. Consumer attention and engagement are challenging for marketers in a high media exposure environment.

1.1 Social Media

The emergence and reach of the internet have pushed organizations to rethink their communication tactics. Internet marketing materialized with sub-branches of marketing. Social Media Marketing is a type of internet marketing that exploits social media platforms for marketing and deploys techniques to spread brand awareness to promote products or services (Sanne & Wiese, 2018).

Social media has changed the way people communicate with each other and respond to organizations. Social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, etc., have transformed the communication landscape for organizations, brands, and individuals (Sanne & Wiese, 2018). Social media also changes how people engage and interact with their social circles. The

dynamics of communication have shifted to new dimensions with the rise of Social Media. The concepts of traditional groups and communities have been challenged with the emergence of social media platforms. In today's time, communities exist in the physical and the virtual world that operates via the internet (Lee & Lee, 2010).

Social media empowers consumers to talk, converse, provide feedback, write reviews, and influence larger audiences by sharing positive or negative thoughts about the product or services. Marketers should realize that social media users can effortlessly inquire and test the quality or price claims, find substitutes, and most importantly, review products or services and share their own experiences with large circles (Constantinides, 2014).

Marketers have different objectives behind setting up and running social media. Marketers aim to recuperate certain degree of control over social media space to communicate, interact and engage customers/viewers. Social media platforms have changed the power structure in the business and marketplace; evidence indicates a significant power shift taking place and surfacing a new breed of sophisticated and powerful customers, hard to influence, convince and retain(Constantinides, 2014). Social media helps customers develop new tricks in searching, evaluating, choosing, and buying services and goods (Albors et al., 2008).

Compelling content has a longer shelf life on social media. The customer engaged and satisfied with the video becomes the medium for further reach. There has been a shift in emphasis from paid media to earned media, where the customers become the channel of delivery (Corcoran, 2009). The following sections mention seven types of social media channels for content delivery (Mayfield, 2008).

- Social media platforms permit viewers to connect with friends to express ideas and share content like Facebook and YouTube.
- Blogs: Portals run by individuals or corporations, with recent entries on top of the online journal.
- Wikis such as Wikipedia: Websites that permit viewers to view, add or edit information on the website.
- Podcasts: Audio and video files that are available through subscription.
- Discussion boards: Online platform for specific interests and topics discussed.

- Video streaming platforms: platforms where viewers consume video content and like, comment, and share with others.
- Microblogging sites such as Twitter: Platforms that limit the size of the content sharing with social circles.

1.1.1 Social Media and Web 2.0

The internet is divided into two versions based on development and application. Web 1.0 is a one-way communication medium that allows the organization to broadcast information, but it does not provide tools for stakeholders to reciprocate/engage with the firm. Web 1.0 has initiated the trend for organizations to use social media to inform external & internal stakeholders. The web is a two-way communication medium. Web 2.0 is the point where the concept of interaction and engagement took place. Web 2.0 offers new horizons for exchange and sharing systems, making it significantly easy to share texts, pictures, music, and other products in digital media (Belk, 2014).

An organization must anticipate and organize a consumer-friendly eco-system to communicate or advertise on social media. The company's Web 1.0 legacy should be in good shape for effective social media engagement so that the company website can serve as the corporate platform for online customer expectations (Constantinides, 2004; 2008; 2014). The majority of the social media marketing strategic objectives require a robust company website that is functional, efficient, trustworthy, organizationally integrated, and customer-oriented (Constantinides, 2014).

Web 2.0 is a collection of interactive, open-source, and user-controlled internet applications enhancing the users' experience, collaboration, knowledge, and market power as participants in business and social processes (Constantinides, 2014). There are multiple uses of web 2.0. It supports informal user networks that facilitate the flow of ideas, information, and innovation by allowing the efficient generation, dissemination, and sharing of content (Constantinides, 2014).

Web 2.0 has opened new channels for business & communication for organizations. An organization has a range of new social media platforms to interact, influence, and engage

consumers. With the rapid growth of e-commerce, organizations saw a unique opportunity to sell and alter consumer action towards products or services.

The transmission of marketing messages no longer routes in a linear route from the marketer to the consumer on social media. Instead, it is built on the consumer's decision and inclination to accept and pass on the content received from the marketer. Viewers have more control in choosing whether to accept the marketing messages. Marketers want to develop content consumers view and distribute, which constructs a brand's supremacy.

1.1.2 E-Marketing Strategy Model

Social media marketing is not just about allocating a budget and spending money on social media platforms. It operates on tactical and strategic levels and represents tough choices and challenges to marketers(Sharma & Sheth, 2004; Thomas, 2007; Winer, 2009). In other words, social media marketing has a more prominent role in the overall scheme of things. Social Media Marketing tool is not a process that can be performed in isolation; it is instead the final step of a consistent strategic attempt to improve the product/service, company, and website (Constantinides, 2014).
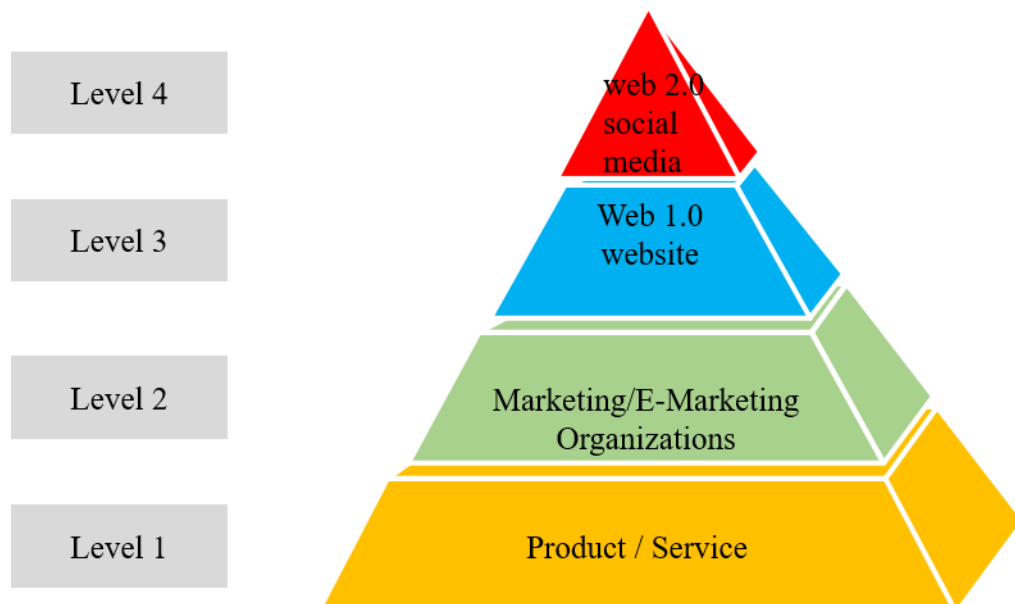
Source: (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008)

Figure 1.1 E-Marketing Pyramid model

The E-Marketing Pyramid model exhibits the relationship between Web 2.0 Marketing with the rest of the marketing program. In this model, web 2.0 - social media is at the top of the integrated marketing approach. Level 4 refers to social media as the two-way communication medium, whereas levels 1, 2, and 3 of the model deal with other marketing practices. The failure to address lower-level issues can generate discontent amongst customers at level 4.

Two basic approaches to engaging social media as part of marketing programs. The passive approach is listening to the customer on social media platforms (Anderson, 2007). It helps marketers list trends, market movements, and customer experience (Constantinides, 2014). It also helps receive consumer feedback to build a constructive strategy.

Consumer-to-consumer interaction and influence take place at level 4.0. The individuals on the internet are eager to interact with peers, share information, post reviews about products or services, exchange expressions, and make recommendations about services/products/brands (Constantinides, 2014). These interactions may change consumer behavior towards particular services/products/brands. The expected result is a behavioral change towards the service/product/brand.

The pace of communication has accelerated in the last decade. The real-time information offers essential data without any delay in time. One of the crucial qualities of social media is real-time information at a low cost. Social media platforms emerged as a source of low-cost but high-quality real-time information providers (Constantinides, 2014). These qualities support social media platforms to reach various strata of society.

The below section elaborates on two broad functions of social media platforms. i.e., listening and acting

1.1.3 Listening through social media platforms: a passive approach

For a long time, companies have understood customers through focus groups, research & survey, and other traditional market research methods. These methods are time-consuming and cost a lot, and hence are not always compatible with the available budget and time. With web 2.0, marketers can listen to and interact with the consumer in real time. It requires reviewing,

observing, and locating what customers publish, discuss, and comment on social media platforms. Blogs or online forums were often the first to report product problems, malfunctions, and bad corporate practices (Gillin, 2007). Companies can save a lot of money and prevent reputation damage if they take action before such news goes to mainstream media and becomes unmanageable (Gillin, 2009). Quick actions on the reports of malfunction or product problems can reduce lousy word of mouth for a brand. Suppose a marketer is passive and prefers to take no action on negative publicity due to ignorance or avoidance. The situation may go out of control and cross over to traditional media from social media platforms.

1.1.4 Active approach

Social media also functions as a tool to communicate and engage with customers and other stakeholders. The spectrum of social media is wide enough to impact different modes of promotion, including public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, advertising, etc. As categorized by Kietzmann (Kietzmann et al., 2011), below are seven functional building blocks of Social media.

1. Sharing: Sharing is functionality that indicates how users receive, distribute and exchange content.
2. Presence: Social media platforms also function as a tool to assess how users know if other users are available.
3. Relationships: It is the extent to which the platform used to relate with each other.
4. Reputation: The extent to which users understand other users' content and social stand.
5. Groups: Groups are functionality that indicates how users form communities.
6. Conversations: The extent to which users converse with each other.
7. Identity: The degree to which users reveal themselves.

1.1.5 Social media platforms as public relations and direct marketing tools

The active approach utilizes social media as a vehicle for promotional initiatives like direct sales and various online advertising, which helps attract and retain consumers. Corporate blogs, website forums, and organization-sponsored communities are an alternative that permits corporate executives to create a dialog in their quarters, control comments and directly respond to consumer queries and concerns (T. Singh et al., 2008).

Companies can also use low-cost platforms like sponsored video-sharing platforms like YouTube and Facebook for customer engagement initiatives. The growing popularity of these platforms makes them one of the essential ingredients for organizational communication. Companies use these platforms to promote corporate promotional material. Content uploaded on these websites has the potential to reach a substantial amount of viewers (Constantinides, 2014).

Advertisements, Links, or banners placed in blogs, pages, and forums are empowered to achieve a particular interest public (Constantinides, 2014). To keep the customer updated about the news and updates of the organization, RSS (Rich Site summary) can be utilized. The limitation with RSS is that only subscribers receive the updates. Another way to keep in touch with customers is to cater to online communities that offer the opportunity to share their interests with other like-minded users (Constantinides, 2014).

1.1.6 Engaging social media influencers and social media personalities as product/brand advocates

The use of celebrity or known face is effective in traditional and social media. Organizations prefer a celebrity or a known face as a brand ambassador to change consumer behavior towards the product. In the case of social media, both celebrities and influencers affect consumer behavior. Interacting and engaging with influencers, industry experts, and product advocates has always been part of traditional marketing, and the same is the case with social media (Constantinides, 2014).

Social media influences differently than traditional media. Marketers maintain relationships with blog owners or forums that consumers are willing to read, review, engage, comment on, and advocate a firm's product or services. There is a significant increase in marketers who discover that it is essential to engage opinion leaders and bloggers that offer extensive free word-of-mouth and publicity apart from traditional influencers (Constantinides, 2014).

1.1.7 Using social media for personalized online experience / customized online product

Mass communication lacks in catering personalized experience to the consumer. By the very nature of conventional mass communication, there is very little room to design customized messages for consumers. Social media enables marketers to customize the message based on consumer preference, search history, and demographic profile. The personalization and customization address the customer need for individuals rather than mass products, and it can offer higher retention for customers and impactful branding (Constantinides, 2014). One of the most popular online shops, amazon.com, is a well-known leader in customer feedback, review, ratings, and recommendation in video/photo-based customer behavior targeting.

1.2 Social Media platforms and usage

This section aims to present social media users worldwide and provides information on leading social media platforms and their use.

1.2.1 The usage of the internet & social media platforms worldwide and in India

The internet is changing the very landscape of societal communication. The growth of the internet is changing the way we observe and react to the world around us.

According to the digital 2022 - global overview report (Hootsuite, 2022).

- 67.1% of the world population is unique mobile users.
- 62.5 of the world population are internet users
- 58.4 of the world population are active social media users surfing social media platforms at least twice a month.

According to the digital 2022 – India report (Hootsuite, 2022).

- 81.3% of India's population has mobile cellular connections.
- 47% of Indians are internet users.
- 33.4% of Indians are active social media users surfing social media platforms at least twice a month.
- Google.com is the most visited website with 21.4 billion total visits, followed by Facebook (875 million total visits) and YouTube (515 million total visits).

The popularity of Facebook draws attention from the business to exploit new platforms with various marketing initiatives (Chen et al., 2013). Marketers have multiple reasons for not ignoring Facebook and YouTube in their marketing plan. One of the biggest reasons is widespread popularity. Facebook has 2910 million active users worldwide, and YouTube has 2562 million active users worldwide (Statista, 2022b).

Facebook delivers access to a global audience spread across a vast demographic audience available for targeted advertising (Curran et al., 2011). Facebook is a sweet spot for large and small organizations. Small organizations review Facebook as an effortless way to develop marketing tools that help attract new customers and support them in interacting with existing customers (Chen et al., 2013).

1.2.2 Data consumption across the world and in India

An average Indian spends 7 hours and 20 minutes on the internet daily, which is higher than the worldwide average of 6 hours and 58 minutes (Hootsuite, 2022).

The surge of mobile has changed the way people consume the internet. Mobile is relatively a convenient and flexible medium compared to other internet sources like personal computers and laptops. The convenience of internet usage leads to a considerable increase in video streaming. As per the Nokia Mobile Broadband Index 2019 report, video streaming accounts for 70-80% of total mobile data traffic on mobile (Nokia, 2019).

According to Nokia MBiT 2022 report, in India:
● Average data per user per month grew three times in the last five years.
● 40 million 4G data users added/upgraded in 2021
● 4G data traffic increased by 6.5 times
● Total Per month 4G data traffic is 12,640 petabytes.
● 5G services revenue is expected to grow at a CAGR of 164% between 2022-2026 in India

The video streaming consumption exceeds the rest of the mobile traffic mediums like browsing and social media usage. A close look into video streaming may reveal the specific websites/apps that hold significant traffic for video streaming. YouTube has a traffic of 245 Million monthly active users in India, which is way ahead of premium video streaming services

like Hotstar (150 Million) and Jio TV (70 Million) combined (Nokia, 2019). According to TRAI, the total data usage of India was 80.000.00 Million GB in 2019 (TRAI, 2019).

1.3 User-generated content

The content generated and broadcasted by users is considered user-generated content. This content can be in photos, videos, memes, blogs, etc. Below are a few instances of how user-generated content impacts the brand image.

Instance 1

Michiko Ozawa documents instance 1 & 2 in his research (Izawa, 2010). A video titled united breaks guitars was posted by a musician singing about his bitter experience with united airlines in which an employee of united airlines damaged his guitar. The effect of the video was so immense that the brand apologized to the video creator and accepted the video as a unique learning opportunity to train customer service professionals. This incident demonstrates video pass-on by multiple users; it can be an influential instrument for people to ensure that their voice gets heard at a scale previously unattainable.

Instance 2

One more instance of a video, 'jk wedding entrance dance' received 10 million views in a week on 19th July 2009. The video virality increased over time. By the end of the first year, it had received 33 million views. There were 99 million views on 19th May 2020. The video showcases a surprise wedding entrance, the couple, and the groomsmen and bridesmaids marching and dancing to a song by Chris Brown named 'Forever'. The song is a copyright of record company Sony Music Entertainment. Instead of raising the copyright issue, the brand supported the popularity of the video to convert it into a business opportunity. The Sony record company placed an advertisement for the song on YouTube linked to iTunes, Amazon, and iTunes. The imitative pushed the song on the charts a year after its release. This case demonstrates user-generated content, which at first has no commercial intention, to be converted as a revenue cause.

1.4 Facebook: leading social media platform

Facebook started as a dating website by Mark Zukerberg with the named Facemash. According to the Harvard crimson website, Facemash used photos compiled from the online Facebooks of nine Houses, placing two next to each other at a time and asking users to choose the *hotter* person (Kaplan, 2003). Facemash attracted 450 visitors and 22,000 photo-views online in its first four hours (McGirt, 2007).

Facebook started with a Facemash name. It was a 'hot or not' rating website. It evolved as a social media platform that allows people to interact, communicate, share, and enhance human connectivity and sociability with time (Nie, 2001). 2910 million Facebook active users worldwide(Statista, 2022b) and 329.65 Million Facebook users in India (Statista, 2022a).

1.5 YouTube: leading social media platform

YouTube is a video-sharing website. The service was created by three former PayPal employees, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim in February 2005. Google bought the site in November 2006 for US$1.65 billion; YouTube now operates as one of Google's subsidiaries.

YouTube provides a platform for users to watch, rate, review, comment, share, and upload videos. The service is well-known for offering a space for individuals to create and share content with the world. These videos include but are not limited to video shows, video clips, tv shows, music videos, news videos, educational videos, entertaining videos, movie trailers, live streams, and other content such as vlogging.YouTube ranked the 2nd most used social media platform globally, with 2562 million active users (Statista, 2022b).

YouTube is a social media platform for viewing, liking, commenting, and sharing video content. As per Alexa, YouTube ranked the second most visited platform globally and in India (Alexa, 2022). YouTube is the 2nd most visited app of 2022 (SimilarWeb, 2022). As per the report, 79% of Internet users said they have a YouTube account (Mohsin, 2021) either on a website or an app.

Marketers see YouTube as a social networking, information sharing, and video-sharing functionality, which creates an environment for potential videos to go viral. It is also accessible

to unregistered viewers (Petrescu & Korgaonkar, 2011). YouTube would score lower on groups and identity, relationships, presence, and interaction but higher on reputation and sharing (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

1.6 Other social media platforms

As per the Statista report, Facebook and YouTube are the leading social media platforms worldwide, followed by Whatsapp, Instagram, and WeChat. These platforms vary in popularity but function as mediums to engage consumers through information or engaging content like text, photos, videos, carousels, etc.

Companies craft content that drags the eyeballs and increases engagement. Video content is an effective medium to engage and influence the audience. Simply said, marketers want to produce videos that help them connect with their audience. A video with high sharability is named viral video advertising. Multiple factors impact video virality. This research aims to understand the creative determinants of viral video advertising. It examines the impact of 42 creative determinants for viral video advertising. The creative determinants are categorized into three clusters, i.e., message characteristics, emotional appeals, and treatment factors.

Advertising is critical for brands to differentiate their position in consumers' minds. Brands employ multiple strategies and mediums to engage viewers on social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, etc. Viral video advertising is one of the modern tools used by brands to optimize social media presence and increase engagement. Companies along with advertising agencies are inclined to create content that goes viral.

This research shifts above the personal level of emotional engagement and explores creative determinants that affect sharing of the video by the viewer in his social circles. With multiple theoretical insights from multidisciplinary research in digital marketing, advertising, marketing, social media, and viral video advertising, this research aims to assess the effect of creative determinants on viral content. Several research gaps are highlighted in the work of researchers like Tylor West (West, 2011) and Lance Porter & Guy Golan (Porter & Golan, 2006). The research evaluates the contribution of creative determinants from the expert professional's perspective. Here, experts refer to individuals who are involved in the process

of making an advertising video. It was accomplished by receiving expert opinions on the set creative parameters.