

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TOWARDS AAYURVEDIC PRODUCTS: A LITERATURE STUDY

Dr. Nitesh Behare

Associate Professor, Balaji Institute of International Business (BIIB), Tathavde Pune

Prof. Shrikant Waghulkar

Assistant Professor, Balaji Institute of International Business (BIIB), Tathavde Pune

Prof. Anup Shivanechari

Assistant Professor, Balaji Institute of International Business (BIIB), Tathavde Pune

ABSTRACT

In last few decades, companies of Indian Aayurveda industries used various innovative techniques and marketing tools to create awareness amongst the consumer's mind and boost up their sales revenues. Social Media Marketing (SMM) emerged as a boon for all the companies where the marketing cost is very low as compared to other marketing tools. This paper instigates with elucidation of the terms that defines Social Media Marketing, followed by use of social media marketing for Aayurvedic marketing. This paper also gives an idea about scope of social media marketing for Aayurvedic industry.

Key words: Social Media Marketing, Aayurvedic Industry, Ayurveda, Marketing Strategies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's technological world, social media has turned up as a digital market place where retailers can showcase their marketing campaign like advertisements to reach out to the wider range of consumers. According to (Nations, 2017) Social media is an e-place that allow people to interact with each other by both sharing and consuming information, weather it may be Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, What's app etc...Technological transformation has changed the way of communication with their customers by means of Social Media; consequently businesses should be aware the forte of social media and must learn how to use social media in such a way which is consistent with their business plans. This is predominantly true for the

businesses which are struggling to gain a competitive advantage. This review critically studies current literature that emphasizes on involvement of social media marketing as an extension of their marketing strategy with respect to Aayurvedic Products. This phenomenon comes in the existence in last decade, thus social media marketing research mainly focused on

- Exploring the concept through elucidation of new concept and terminology that makeup its foundations; and
- To study the impact of Social Media Marketing on consumer behavior.

Social Media Marketing is well researched topic which has been studied through various research perspective. It has never been precisely described the impact of social media marketing towards Aayurvedic products. In studying enormous quantity of Multi-disciplinary Literature. It has clear that previous studies are focusing on explaining 'social media marketing is' and examining what are the various factors which affect consumer behavior relative to social media marketing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

(All Ayurveda, 2017) We all know that, Aayurveda is the oldest medical system in the world. The word Ayurved is derived from ancient Sanskrit roots which i.e Ayus means *LIFE* and Ved means *KNOWLEDGE*. It has been originated nearly 5000 years ago. The foundation of Vedic Civilization in India has been laid by spiritual rishis, who has expounded and practiced Aayurvedic Medicinal System by organizing the basics of life into appropriate system. The Aayurvedic Medicinal System had spread around in the 6th century BC to various parts of the globe like China, Tibet, Korea, Mongolia, Sri Lanka etc. by the Buddhist Monks, who travelled from ancient India to other parts of the world. Though much of its medicinal system has transformed from its original form but its effects can be seen in many new age concepts which have originated from there. Thus Aayurveda is not only a health care system but also a form Lifestyle adopted to maintain perfect balance and harmony in the human existence. According to (Banyan Botnicals, 2017), In Ayurveda, everything is medicine and everything is poison; whatever beneficial to you may be harmful to someone else, and vice a versa. It's all depends on the context of human health system. Ayurveda is basically opposite to one-size-fits-all remedies. Certainly there are some health care practices which are considered to be helpful for most everyone.

(Narayanaswamy, 1981) Even after the remarkable results accomplished by modern medicine science, particularly through advanced research in the area of physical, chemical and natural sciences, there are various areas of diseases which have evaded its therapeutic ambit and the study of a medicine system that has stood the test of time may have a fruitful contribution to make in the overall mitigation of human suffering.

According to (Dr. Subhuti Dharmananda, 2017), Many Indian companies are producing Aayurvedic Medicines, but most of them are small size industries, including many local pharmacies which compound various necessary raw material to make their own remedies. In India, the total value of the products from the entire Aayurvedic Production is estimated to be one billion dollars (U.S.). Less than a dozen major companies has dominated the industry for decades. But today there are 30 companies doing million dollar or more per year in business to cover up the growing demand of Aayurvedic Products. Most of the products from these industries fall under FMCG category which involves beverages, foods, toiletries, daily consumables etc. Most of the Aayurvedic medicine suppliers deals in supplying materials rather than internal medicine, especially in the areas of foods and toiletries (soap, toothpaste, shampoo, etc.), where there may be any overlap with Aayurveda, for example, traditional herbal ingredients in the composition of toiletries.

In view of (Ankur Gupta, 2017), it is expected that Government of India may increase its financial budget of AYUSH to Rs. 25.5 billion by FY'2021, which will boost up the industry size. To help various institutions of AYUSH throughout the country, Rs. 266 Cr has been given whereas Rs. 447 Cr is allotted for Research and development. The increasing investment of both Indian Government as well as Private Institutions for developing Aayurvedic medicines which is based on the Traditional Texts, would help in curing various life threatening diseases. In the coming future, because of unhealthy diets, stressful lifestyles, increased age of human being, it has been expected that 'Digestive Remedy Market will become more popular.

As per the reports of (FMI, 2017), in 2017, the world market for Aayurvedic Medicinal Products is anticipated to be valued more than \$130Bn with vigorous CAGR of 7.6% during the expected period. In 2018, this market is possibly to grow more than \$ 8800Mn and have opportunity to increase more than \$140Bn from 2017-2027. Aayurvedic Medicine Market may be the most profitable market among the segment of all the products of Aayurvedic Medicinal Product Market with attractive index of 2.3. In 2017, with more than 55% revenue share, the Aayurvedic medicine segment is expected to be valued more than \$75Bn which is growing at Compounding Annual Rate of 6.6%.

3. GLOBAL AAYURVEDIC MARKET SCENARIO

(Mehul, 2015) Demand and popularity of the Aayurvedic medicines are increasing day by day. Approximately 80% of the population from developing countries still depends on Traditional Medicine which is mostly based on the species of plants for their primary health care. In the ancient literature, about 500 plants with medicinal use are mentioned and in the indigenous system of medicine around 800 plants have been used. Due to toxicity and side effects of allopathic medicine the use of Aayurvedic medicine becoming popular day by day. Alone in India for curing various diseases, about 20,000 plant species has been recorded recently but 500 traditional communities use approximately 800 plant species. Plants are the main source of Aayurvedic Medicines and nearly 25% of the Pharmaceutical prescriptions of United States contain at least one plant derived medicinal ingredient. Aayurveda is the most ancient health care system of the world where as India enjoys legacy of Aayurvedic Health Care System for more than 1000years.

As per (Hexa Research, 2016), in 2016, market size of the Global Aayurvedic Medicine was estimated USD 71.19Bn and is expected to show lucrative growth over the projected period. The increase in the estimate is because of the increasing preference of consumers towards traditional healthcare system i.e. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Aayurveda, Unani, which do not have any or negligible side effects. In addition to this, increasing considerable funding and investments in research and development will support in the development of market.

4. MARKETING STRATEGIES: CONCEPT

"Marketing strategy is a process that can allow an organization to concentrate its limited resources on the greatest opportunities to increase sales and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage" (Bisht, 2017).

(Mullins, 2006) The primary focus of marketing strategy is to effectively allocate and coordinate marketing resources and activities to accomplish the firm's objective within a specific product market.

Referring both the definitions mentioned above marketing strategy involves analysis, strategical development and implementation of marketing activities in developing a vision about the markets of interest to the organization, choosing market targeting strategies, objective

setting, implementation of marketing program and positioning of the strategies designed to meet the required value of the customer in each targeted market.

The main focus of the Marketing Strategy is to improve organizational performance rather than a primary concern about increasing sales. The main emphasis of marketing strategy is to deliver superior customer value by combing customer influencing strategies of the business into coordinated set of market driven activities. Strategic marketing links the organization with the environment and views marketing as a responsibility of the entire business rather than a specialized function.

5. MARKETING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY AAYURVEDIC INDUSTRY

There are various marketing strategies used by the many Aayurvedic companies to influence customers buying behavior. Few of the following which are discussed below are continuously used by the companies.

1. Word-of-mouth-Marketing

Word-of-mouth Marketing is the passing of information from person to person by oral communication. Whenever consumers are highly satisfied with the products/ service's performance, they excitingly share their experience with other. Word-of-mouth Marketing has deep influential power to positioned the products/ service's performance in one's mind. Being a Brand Ambassador of Patanjali Ayurved Limited, Baba Ramdev has taken advantage of Word-of-mouth Marketing Strategy. He has promoted their products in the Yoga campus which was organized at various locations of the country. Now Patanjali Ayurved Limited is one of the leading FMCG companies in just a decade.

2. Viral Marketing

Cult Brand marketers are continuously crafting new business ideas that keep their products in the heart and minds of the global consumer. Every time a new product is created, customers have to be given a reason to dream about their future purchase. Sometimes marketers of Cult Brands hit on something so great that people can't help but share with others. Getting your customers talking about your products and services is very important to growing awareness for your business.

3. Diversity-Marketing

Develop a customized marketing plan by analyzing different customer segments based on cultural differences including tastes, expectations, beliefs, world views, and specific needs.

4. Mass Marketing

Big businesses spend big money in understanding big data. Major corporations need to drive large numbers of purchasing of their products in order to survive and grow. While mass marketing may seem like a shotgun approach to marketing this is far from the truth. This gives them an insight to where to place media for their potential national customers who buy their products and services.

5. Online Marketing

As commerce has propagated to the Internet, a new form of marketing has emerged. It is also called as online advertising or internet marketing or digital marketing. From online banners to those annoying pop ups, online marketers have attempted to get their customers attention any

way they can. Most online strategic marketing efforts today are a mix of growth hacking strategies and a variety of awareness tactics that drive attention.

6. Email Marketing

As soon as customers migrated into the online world, Internet marketers have attempted to collect and organize emails for potential prospects. Many business-to-business marketers depend on email marketing as a primary way to connect with customers. At industry tradeshows, IBM consultants can often be seen exchanging email information with their prospects.

7. Social Media Marketing

Cost of Traditional advertising is very high and no guarantee whether you generate a healthy return on investment or not. Social media, on the other hand, costs very less and offers additional benefits besides revenue. Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter offer a unique opportunity for savvy businesses willing to invest in customer engagement. Social media marketing is still in its infancy but is growing up rather quickly. The companies like Himalaya Drug Company, are one of the earliest companies that marked its presence on the internet. The Himalaya men face wash teaser was viewed by over a million viewers on YouTube on the first day of the launch. After taking on the technological advances in marketing and supply chain technology, the company is now enjoying the results in terms of brand acceptance and revenue generation.

8. Event Marketing

For driving sales various public events are targeted to achieve sale targets. Most of the companies give various offers on Republic Day and Independence Day to encash the opportunity. Customers often need a reason to shop and events can often offer the perfect reason.

There are various other marketing strategies which are used by leading companies.

6. ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING FOR AAYURVEDIC INDUSTRY

(Agarwal, 2017) The mobile internet users in India are expected to reach upto 420 Mn where rural India is growing with faster rate than urban India. According to the report from IAMAI (Internet and Mobile Association of India) and IMRB, in December 2016 there were 389 Mn users were active in India. In urban India 51% of penetration which will be soon reaching to saturation point whereas 16% in rural India which is the future market.

(LiveMint, 2017) Facebook became the largest audience country for social media giant with more than 241Mn active users compared to 240Mn in US. As per the announcement from the officials of the Facebook it has more than two billion monthly users around the world. In past six months, number of active facebook users raised upto 27% i.e. more than 50 Mn compared to growth of 12% i.e. more than 26 mn in the US over the same period.

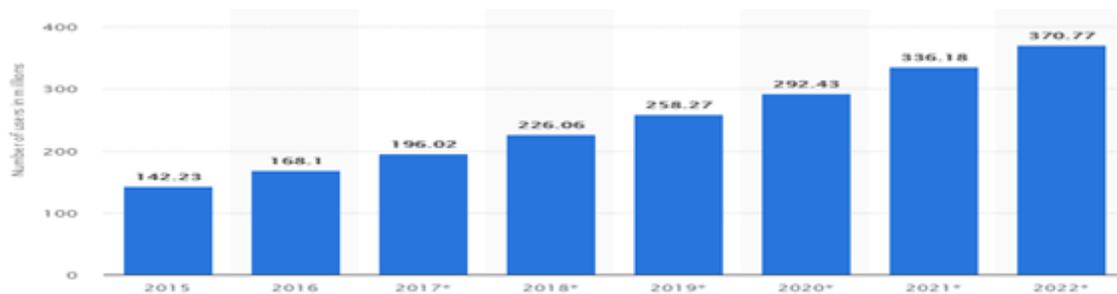
(Wikipedia, 2017) Social media platforms like Youtube, Facebook, What's app etc. are used in Social Media Marketing. Even though some terms like digital marketing, e-marketing, internet marketing is dominant in the academia whereas on both the parameters of practitioners and researcher social media marketing is more popular. All most all the social media platforms are equipped with data analytics tools which help them in understanding social trend. Companies do prefer to interact with their customers (including existing and potential) through social media.

(Techopedia, 2017) Social Media Marketing is a tool which targets social applications and platforms to spread Brand awareness or promotion of a specific product or service to their existing and potential customers. Social Media Marketing is considered to be the best platform for targeting appropriate customers with the help of advertising and therefore it is believed to be most effective tool for creating brand awareness. Generally, Social Media Marketing Campaigns move around:

- Setting up Social Media Presence on major platforms
- Creating and Sharing Advertorials and other sharable contents
- Collecting customer's feedback throughout various social media campaigns through various contests and surveys.

(DSIM, 2017) Himalaya Drug Company had taken technological advantage of Social Media Marketing. Its official Facebook page has over 2Mn fan followers and 8k followers on Twitter whereas a strong community claims about its active engagement. The company has also moved ahead of their competitor beyond social media platform to look at other digital platforms such as YouTube with 8K subscribers and microsites. The Company assigns 5% of total marketing spends for personal care to social marketing. Now the company has consumers in 67+ countries which rely upon Himalaya's products.

(The Statistics Portal) The following statistics indicates that the number of social media users in India from 2015-2021. In 2019, the probable social media users in India will be around 258.27Mn, up from close to 168Mn in 2016. In India, most favorite social media were Facebook and Youtube followed by WhatsApp. In India by 2021, Facebook is expected to reach nearer to 319Mn.



Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278407/number-of-social-network-users-in-india/>

(Dasgupta, 2017) In an interview with Financial Express, Mr. Ameve Sharma said that, they had tied up with two large Distributors of America for long term distribution partnership and their products will be expected to available around 8,000 stores by the end of the year. He also said, company has tied up with Indus Net Technologies, an Internet Consulting Firm, for digital innovation and marketing to boost up online sales. As a traditional Aayurvedic Company, the average age of the Baidyanath products users is 35 years. Now by using digital channel and offering a wide range of 'lifestyle' products the company is targeting young generation. By considering the young generation as a mass users of social media, company has focused on Social Media Marketing channel. Now online sales has already boosted and the company was expecting to grow total sales volume by 25% year on year for next 5 years and out of which at-least 10% should be from digital media i.e. with the help of social media.

7. CONCLUSION

While going through the discussion it is observed that most of the companies of Aayurveda Industry have started using social media platform for creating awareness of their products and services as well as promotion of the same. Day by day the number of social media users is increasing whether it may be Facebook, YouTube WhatsApp etc. As the cost of marketing through social media is very less as compared to other marketing tools, companies like Himalaya, Patanjali, Baidyanath had started using it frequently. Most of them have making provisions under marketing budgets of the company. Some of the marketing professionals have quoted that innovative ideas from Social Media Marketing will lead all the other marketing tools and it will be the future of Marketing.

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