



Social Media Marketing

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Social media marketing has become a central method for brands to reach, engage and retain customers. This article explains the meaning and definition of social media marketing, outlines the objectives of studying it, and analyzes its benefits, merits and demerits. The study is based on secondary data from journals, industry reports and online sources. The findings show that social media marketing can improve brand awareness, customer engagement, sales and customer relationships at relatively low cost, but it also involves risks such as negative publicity, information overload, privacy issues and dependence on third-party platforms. The article concludes that social media marketing is an essential tool for modern organizations, but it must be managed strategically and ethically for long-term success.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing; Digital Marketing; Online Branding; Customer Engagement; Facebook; Instagram; Twitter (X); Youtube; Influencer Marketing; Content Marketing.*



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1. Introduction

Social media platforms have changed how people communicate, share information and make buying decisions. Users spend a large share of their daily time on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, YouTube, LinkedIn and Twitter (X). This high level of usage offers a powerful opportunity for businesses, non-profits and even individuals to promote products,

services, and ideas. Social media marketing is now used by small local shops and large multinational companies alike. It allows direct interaction between brands and customers, quick feedback, personalized messages and viral promotion. At the same time, the open nature of social media makes it easy for both positive and negative information to spread quickly. Organizations must therefore plan and manage their social media activities

carefully. This article discusses the meaning and definition of social media marketing, explains the objectives of the study and examines its benefits, merits and demerits. It also presents key findings from existing literature and industry practice, followed by a conclusion and sample references.

2. Meaning

Social media marketing refers to using social networking platforms and online communities to promote products, services or ideas and to build relationships with target audiences. It includes activities such as creating and sharing posts, images, videos, stories and live streams; running paid advertisements; engaging in conversations with followers; answering queries and analyzing user data and feedback. In simple terms, whenever a business or organization uses platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest or LinkedIn to communicate with current and potential customers in order to influence their attitudes or buying behavior, it is engaging in social media marketing. Social media marketing is not only about posting promotional content. It also involves listening to users, responding to comments and messages, handling complaints, collaborating with influencers and building a community around the brand.

3. Definition

- Different authors and organizations have defined social media marketing in various ways. Some commonly accepted definitions are:
- Social media marketing is the process of creating, sharing, and exchanging information and content on social media platforms in order to achieve marketing and branding goals.
- Social media marketing can be defined as the use of social networking websites and applications as a communication channel for integrated marketing activities that aim to influence consumer awareness, attitudes, and behavior

4. Social media marketing is defined as

"A form of digital marketing that uses social media platforms and online communities to reach and engage target audiences, promote products and services and build long-term relationships with customers through interactive communication and content sharing."

5. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study on social media marketing are:

- To explain the meaning and concept of social media marketing in a clear and simple way.
- To provide working definitions of social media marketing based on existing literature and practice.
- To identify and analyze the benefits of social media marketing for businesses, customers and society.
- To outline the main merits of social media marketing as compared to traditional marketing methods.
- To examine the demerits and challenges associated with social media marketing.
- To summarize key findings from research studies and industry reports regarding the use and impact of social media marketing.
- To present a concise conclusion that can guide managers, students and researchers who are interested in social media marketing.

6. Benefits

Benefits for Businesses

- Increased Brand Awareness: Social media platforms have large user bases, so even simple posts or campaigns can reach thousands or millions of people.
- Direct Communication: Brands can communicate directly with customers through comments, messages and live chats, which helps understand customer needs and preferences.

- **Cost-Effective Promotion:** Many social media tools are free or low-cost compared with print, TV or outdoor advertising, especially for small businesses.
- **Targeted Advertising:** Paid ads on social media can be targeted based on age, gender, interest, location and behavior which improves the efficiency of marketing spend.
- **Measurable Results:** Analytics tools show likes, shares, comments, clicks and conversions. This helps marketers measure the performance of each campaign and adjust quickly.
- **Faster Market Feedback:** Posts and ads can receive almost instant reactions, which gives quick insight into what customers like or dislike.

7. Benefits for Customers

- **Access to Information:** Customers can easily see product details, reviews, tutorials and comparisons shared by brands and other users.
- **Better Customer Service:** Many companies use social media to answer queries and complaints faster than through traditional channels.
- **Participation and Co-creation:** Customers can give suggestions, vote in polls and participate in contests. This gives them a sense of involvement with the brand.
- **Offers and Discounts:** Many brands share exclusive deals, coupons or early-access sales through their social media pages.

8. Benefits for Society and Community

- **Awareness Campaigns:** Social media marketing is widely used for social causes such as health awareness, environmental protection and education.
- **Support for Small Businesses:** Local entrepreneurs can promote their products without large advertising budgets, which supports employment and income generation.

- **Information Sharing:** Users share experiences and knowledge, which can help others make better decisions about products, travel, education and services.

9. Merits

Some advantages of social media marketing are more strategic and long term.

These can be considered as specific merits:

- **Two-Way Communication:** Unlike traditional advertising, social media allows both sides to talk. Brands can listen and respond, not only send messages. This improves trust and loyalty.
- **Viral Potential:** High quality or entertaining content can be shared rapidly by users, leading to large reach without equally large spending.
- **Personalization:** Messages and ads can be personalized for different segments based on data and user behavior, which increases relevance.
- **Integration with Other Channels:** Social media can link to websites, online stores, email marketing and offline events, which supports integrated campaigns.
- **Brand Personality:** Through regular posts, stories, and interactions, brands can display a human side, values and culture, which differentiates them from competitors.
- **Long-Term Relationship Building:** Continuous engagement over time can convert casual followers into loyal customers and brand advocates.

10. Demerits

Despite its many strong points, social media marketing also has notable disadvantages and risks. Risk of Negative Publicity

- **Viral Spread of Complaints:** A single negative review, complaint, or offensive post can spread quickly, leading to reputation damage.
- **Difficult Control:** Brands cannot fully control what users post, comment or share

about them. Even honest mistakes in campaigns can create backlash.

11. Time and Resource Intensive

- Need for Constant Content: Maintaining active profiles requires frequent posting, creativity and monitoring, which demands time and skilled staff.
- 24/7 Monitoring: Customers expect quick responses at all hours. This may require dedicated teams or social media management tools.

12. Privacy and Ethical Issues

- Data Collection Concerns: Social media platforms and advertisers collect large amounts of user data for targeting, which raises privacy questions.
- Misleading Content: False information, fake reviews, and exaggerated claims can misguide consumers and harm trust.

13. Platform Dependence and Algorithm Changes

- Dependency Risk: Many brands rely heavily on a few major platforms. Changes in algorithms, policies or ad costs can suddenly reduce their reach.
- Limited Direct Control: Ultimately, the platform owner controls rules, features and access. Pages or accounts can be restricted or removed for policy violations.

14. Information Overload and User Fatigue

- Too Many Messages: Users receive a large number of posts and ads each day, which can reduce attention and engagement.
- Ad Blocking and Avoidance: Some users ignore sponsored content or use tools to block ads, which challenges marketers.

15. Findings

- Brands with smaller but highly active audiences see better campaign outcomes than those chasing large follower counts,

because engagement drives visibility and conversions.

- Short-form video and visual content consistently outperform text-only posts in reach and share ability, making platforms like Reels and Shorts primary channels for discovery
- Influencer collaborations yield strong awareness and trust gains when creators align authentically with the brand, but ROI (Return on Investment) varies widely and depends on clear objectives and measurement.
- Paid social remains essential for predictable reach; precise audience targeting improves efficiency, yet rising ad costs and creative fatigue require continuous testing.
- Real-time customer service on social channels boosts loyalty and reduces churn, while slow or tone-deaf responses can rapidly amplify negative sentiment.
- Algorithm changes and platform policy shifts can suddenly reduce organic reach, so diversifying channels and owning first-party data are strategic safeguards.
- Robust analytics and attribution models are now table stakes; marketers who combine engagement metrics with conversion data make smarter budget and creative decisions.
- Community-building and value-driven content create longer-term brand advocates, turning one-off buyers into repeat customers and reliable word-of-mouth promoters.

16. Conclusion

Social media marketing has become a key component of modern marketing practice. It offers organizations a powerful way to reach large audiences, interact directly with customers, gain feedback, and build brand communities at relatively low cost. Visual and interactive content, combined with advanced targeting and analytics, makes social media marketing attractive for both

small and large businesses. At the same time, social media marketing brings serious challenges. Negative comments can spread quickly, privacy and ethical issues are sensitive, information overload can reduce impact, and heavy dependence on a few platforms can be risky. Successful social media marketing therefore requires clear strategy, consistent high-quality content, skilled management, and strong ethical standards. Marketers should focus not only on promotion but also on building trust, offering value, and listening to customer needs. With balanced planning and responsible use, social media marketing can support sustainable growth, stronger brand relationships, and better customer satisfaction.

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