



Digital marketing: Analyzing the role as a brand developer in the Indian retail sector

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.66856/ijmer.2026.11.2.11049>

Abstract

Digital marketing has rapidly evolving in business environment and it has emerged as a transformative force, which is reshaping the whole retail sector. The present study examines the role of digital marketing as a main driver of brand development. The study is also analyzing the role of online platforms, social media and data analysis regarding influencing consumer behavior, brand perception, and customer loyalty. The study integrates both qualitative and quantitative approaches, utilizing surveys and secondary data published in various journals and case studies to utilize the impact of digital marketing as tools of retail branding. Findings show that digital marketing significantly enhances brand awareness, customer's engagement and sales performance. It is also improving customer's retention through personalized communication and interactive platforms. Social media has played a vital role in establishing strong brand identification. Digital marketing also identifies challenges and market saturation, privacy concern, and the need for continuous innovation to maintain consumer interest. Smartphone penetration have fallen the data cost. The result confirms that digital marketing is not merely an instrument but a strategic component of brand building. The result also emphasizes the need to adopt integrated digital strategies, invest in skill development and adopt ethical marketing practices to maximize the benefit of digital transformation.

Keywords: Digital marketing, brand development, social media, consumer behavior, brand awareness, retailer

Introduction

Digital marketing is the marketing of products or services by using digital technologies that is internet, mobile phone, display advertising, and any other digital medium. The development of digital marketing is in 1990 and between 2000 and has changed the way of businesses and brand locality. Now digital platforms are increasingly incorporate in marketing plans and day today life. Digital marketing is defined by use of numerous digital tactics and channels to connect with customers where they spend too much of their time on online businesses and purchasing. Digital advertisement, e-mail marketing and on line brochures. There spectrum of tactics falling under the umbrella of digital marketing. In 2000s internet become popular and as the internet become popular the customers started searching products of their needs in online first. Now these days marketers find the digital ways for marketing. Worldwide digital marketing become popular day by day and become necessity of producers. Therefore digital marketing refers to the use of online platforms social media data analytics mobile apps and digital communication tools to engage customer's promotion, brands promotion and build long term relationships between makers and customers.

The concept of brand development has gained increasing importance in India's retail sector due to rising competition and heightened consumer awareness. Digital platforms have transformed how brands interact with customers, while environmental and social concerns have given rise to digital marketing policies. Previous studies highlight that these factors not only enhance market positioning but also shape consumer trust and loyalty.

The Indian retail sectors have rapidly adopted digital marketing to reach customers especially after the introduction of smart phones, internet penetration and social media platforms like instagram, whatsapp, and Face book

Digital marketing has shifted retail branding from traditional way of marketing, advertisement to two way interactive communication allowing real feedback and personalization.

Literature Review

Digital marketing has become a cornerstone of modern brand development. Social media, in particular, offers opportunities for consumer engagement and awareness, though its effectiveness depends on strategic content and promotional integration (Sanny *et al.*, 2020; Shen, 2019). Mangold and Faulds (2009) ^[12, 13, 14] argued that social media is not merely a promotional tool but a hybrid element of the promotion mix that provides both information and interaction. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) emphasized that digital platforms can foster consumer trust and loyalty when strategically managed. However, a mere presence on digital platforms does not guarantee brand development without consistent engagement and value creation (Grubor&Milovanov, 2017) ^[7].

Journal of economics and research highlight that digital marketing significantly influence brand visibility and customer's attraction in product .Kumar& Dangi 2023.

Digital advertising, SEQ, and influencer marketing have a positive impact on brand image and customers trust on product. Nagar& Sharma 2022.

Social media marketing enhances emotional connection with customers leading to brand growth. Singh and verma 2020 in international journal of research in commerce and management.

International journal of management studies finds that green innovation and green alliances have a significant positive relationship with brand trust and image. Sharma and sheth 2022.

Journal of positive school psychology finds that green marketing and Social media together are statistically

significant predictors of brand development in the Indian retail sector. Gupta, Mishra and tiwari 2023.

Journal of business ethics concluded that Social media acts as a trust bridge between business and society and strengthening long term brand sustainability .Agrawal 2023. Bansal and Kumar 2020 found that Indian retail brands using Social media strategically for higher consumer trust and brand loyalty.

Recent studies highlight between digital marketing, activities, communication become effective through digital strategies and lead to stronger brand equity. Similarly, Singh and Verma (2017) [15] observed that integrating sustainability into digital promotions enhances consumer recognition and loyalty.

The literature review shows that digital marketing is a powerful brand development tool in Indian retail sector especially when integrated with offline platform. These findings suggest that digital platforms are initiating and, contributing in sustainable brand growth.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the role of digital marketing in enhancing brand awareness and customer engagement in the retail sector.
2. To analyze the impact of digital marketing strategies on brand development and customer loyalty.
3. To identify the digital tools and platforms used by retailers to promote their brand effectively.
4. To assess the relationship between digital marketing efforts and sales performance in the retail industries.
5. To suggest strategic measures for optimizing digital marketing practices to strengthen brand development in the retail sector.

Hypotheses

H₀: There is no significant relationship between digital marketing and brand development in the retail sector.

H₁: There is significant relationship between digital marketing and brand development in the retail sector...

H₀₂: Digital marketing do not have a significant impact on customer engagement and loyalty.

H₁₋₂: Digital marketing have a significant impact on customer engagement and loyalty.

Methodology

The methodology adopted the systematic approaches for study the digital marketing a driver of brand development in the retail sector. It describes the research design, data collection methods sampling techniques, and analysis tools used in the study.

Research Design

The study follows a descriptive and analytical research design. Its aims to describe digital marketing practices in the retail sector and analyze their impact on brand and customer performances. The research is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Qualitative analysis focuses on marketing strategies and customer perceptions. While quantitative analysis measures the impact of digital marketing on brand growth in data and statistics.

Data collection

Both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 200 respondents including retail managers and marketing professionals and customers. Out of total respondent 162 respondents were replied. (81%). While secondary data were collected through journals research articles, government reports, and company websites.

Closed-ended Likert-scale Questionnaire

1	Strongly Agree,	Very high level of agreement /opinion
2	Agree,	High level of agreement
3	Neutral,(neither agree nor disagree)	Neither agree nor disagree
4	Disagree and	Low level of agreement
5	Strongly disagree.	Very low level of agreement

Questionnaire for the study

1. Digital marketing helps increasing brand awareness in the retail marketing.
2. Social media have positively influences consumer trust in retail brands
3. Online advertisement contributes significantly to customer engagement.
4. Email and content marketing are enhancing customer loyalty.
5. Digital marketing campaigns improve the brand images.
6. Retailers have effectively use data analysis to understand customer’s preferences.
7. Consumers are prefer retail brands with a strong online presence.

Variables Studied

1. Digital Marketing
2. Social media
3. Online advertisement
4. Brand Image
5. Retailer
6. brand online presence

Analysis Method: Findings are presented through simple chart bar.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1= Digital marketing helps increasing brand awareness	44%	30%	16%	7%	3%
2= Social media have positively influences on consumer trust	50%	25%	15%	6%	4%
3=Online advertisement contributes significantly to customer engagement.	40%	34%	16%	7%	3%
4= Email and content marketing are enhancing customer loyalty.	35%	40%	15%	7%	3%
5= Data—driven marketing improve decision-making and brand positioning.	42%	35%	15%	5%	3%

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected through questionnaires were analyzed to understand the influence of digital marketing on brand development in the retail sector.

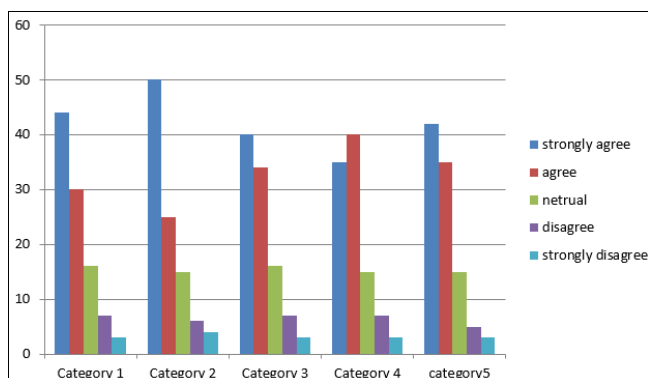
A five point likert scale was used to measure about respondents perceptions of key factors such as brand awareness, customer engagement, loyalty and online visibility.

1. An analysis of responses reveals that majority of respondents over 75 % (strongly agree 45% & agree 30%) believes that digital marketing have significantly enhanced brand awareness and customer engagement. This suggest that online campaigns, search engine optimization and social media promotions makes retail brands more accessible and visible. This study also indicates that consistent digital presence helps brand in customer mind.
2. About 75% of respondents agreed that social media marketing actively helps retailers through comments, like share, feedback, dislike etc. through social media retailers have made stronger relationship from customers.
3. Nearly 75% respondents have expressed that digital marketing, e-mails, helps in building long term relationship with trust and transparency with customers.
4. The data shows positive correlation between digital marketing and sales promotion. The retailers who are using digital platforms reported higher sales growth. This indicates that digital marketing not only support brand loyalty but also contributes to business growth.
5. Only 10 of respondents have shown disagreement and about 15% shown neutral view otherwise majority are indicating about positive perception of digital marketing.
6. This suggest that digital marketing are significantly contributes to brand development. Respondents viewed that brand with active online presence become more reliable and customer centric.

Challenges Identified

Despite the benefits the study identified few challenges like high competition in digital spaces leading to brand saturation and difficulties in measuring the exact ROI of digital campaigns. Need of continuous content updates and skilled manpower.

Chart showing impact



Results of Hypothesis

Digital marketing and brand development relationship: Hypothesis Ho1

The results of data analysis indicates that digital marketing has a major influence on brand development in retail sector. The statistical data shows that digital tools such as social media, online advertisement and content marketing have shown higher levels of brand visibility, brand recall and customer trust. Hence the Ho1 null hypothesis is rejected and confirming alternate hypothesis H1, the digital marketing and brand development have significant relationship.

Hypothesis: Ho2

Digital marketing has no role in customer engagement; Analysis shows that there is strong and positive relationship between digital marketing efforts and customer engagement. The data result reject the null hypothesis HO_2 and accept the alternate hypothesis. This indicates that digital marketing plays an important role in enhancing customer engagement in retail sector. The empirical finding demonstrate that digital marketing contributes significantly to both brand development and customer engagement within the retail industry. The rejection of both null hypothesis confirms digital platforms act as effective brand building tools and enhance customer interaction

Findings

Base on the data analysis, survey results and literature review, the following main findings have been drawn.

1. Major respondent have agreed that digital marketing tools such as social media, online advertising and SEO have made retail brands more visible, recognizable and accessible to consumers.
2. Among various channels platforms like Instagram, Facebook and Youtube emerged as most effective channels in connecting retailers with their customers.
3. Makers give quick response to customer's queries and personalized marketing efforts strengthen trust and relationship...
4. E-mails and other contents like blogs, videos and newsletters help in maintain consistent communication with customers.
5. Digital marketing positively influences sales growth and improvement.
6. Data analysis plays a main role in strategic decision making and retailers successfully understand consumer behavior.
7. Consumers believes that digital brands have more transparent, responsive, and technologically advanced.

Conclusion

The present study established that digital marketing serves have a major catalyst for brand development in the retail sector. The evolution of digital technology has changed the way of retailer's connection with customers. The findings of the research supported the survey data and analysis. The digital marketing is not a supplementary tools but a strategic necessity for competitive growth in modern retaking. Digital marketing plays a crucial role in expanding brand visibility and awareness. The study reveals that social media platforms like Integra face book and YouTube have essential channels for integrative marketing. These platforms provide retailers two way communication with customers, and helps retailers to build emotional connections and communities around their brands. This is resulting in greater customer's loyalty. The analysis indicates a strong correlation between digital marketing and sales performance.

The study indicates that digital marketing has revolutionized brand development in the retail sector by shifting the focus from product centric strategies to customer centric strategy. Retailers who adopted digital transformation have strengthened their brand. Overall digital marketing acts as a powerful driver of brand identity, customer loyalty and business performance. The future of brand development in

retail sector will be defined by how effectively business integrates digital strategies with innovation and creativity.

Suggestions

On the basis of above findings, the following suggestions are made to enhance Brand Development through Digital marketing.

1. The retailer should design creative and consistent social media campaigns and using interactive content, live sessions, and influencer collaboration to maintain customer interest.
2. Retailers will use advance analytics, online and artificial intelligence to improve target and predict customer's trends.
3. Continuous training of marketing staffs in latest digital tools and platforms make it necessary to keep maintain with technological advancements.
4. Collaboration with influencers and content creators help in expanding and improving brand authenticity among young customers

Future Scope

The present study establishes the role of digital marketing in shaping and strengthening brand development within the retail sector. However the role of digital technology is open in several promising avenues like comparative analysis of online and off line branding. Researchers can also explore how digital marketing is integrating with traditional marketing. Researcher can also study about consumer psychology and Digital behavior upon social media influence and online reviews regarding product.

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