



DIGITAL MARKETING, THE GAME CHANGER - A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Abstract:

“Times have changed drastically and quickly. The world we live in today is truly a Digital World and newer generations have different values, views, beliefs, preferences and attitudes that is shaping the way business and marketing should now be conducted” – Tony Corsini.

Game changers are people who bring great ideas into the market. They are givers to the society and not the takers. They are driven by their inner creativity which they transform into an innovation for the society. The game changers are men of great mettle and they change the face of the field of business in which they are interested. Their modus operandi, their vision and their relentless efforts at securing their goal are exemplary. The very concept of marketing has been transformed into an innovative way by adding wings to it like e CRM, banner advertising, content marketing and finally into an integrated marketing communication on blended physical and digital environments.

All of the physical, chemical, and biological conditions together act on an organism or an ecological community and influence its growth and development. Soil, air, water, climate, plant and animal life, noise level, and pollution are all components of an environment. To survive, organisms must often adapt to changes in their environments.

Nothing is static in this world. Change is the law of nature and the Marketing system which is dynamic is slowly getting transformed into a different customer satisfying mechanism. So, the present marketing system has been witnessing fast changes. Philip Kotler speaking about the evolution of marketing system mentions the following four stages of Marketing:

>> Marketing 1.0 is Product based

>> Marketing 2.0 is Customer based

>> Marketing 3.0 is Human centric

>>Marketing 4.0 takes customers from awareness to advocacy, where Marketing adopts to the changing nature of customer paths in the digital economy.

Kotler says in Marketing 4.0 that connectivity has fundamentally changed human lives and the connectivity is the most important game changer in the history of marketing.

Key Words: Game changer; Gen. next; e- CRM; Modern Marketing; Digital Marketing.

Marketing is a multiplier and provides a systematic discipline to an economic activity. It promotes growth and exchange economy. It is enterprising, adventurous and is replete with challenges and surprises. Owing to the economic liberalisation, a good percentage of people have been fortunate to find surplus money in their hands. Owing to this, they have been eager to take any risk for obtaining the product of their choice. It is recently reported that an Indian Ameen Ahmed Dolia flew to Singapore and stood in the queue there for thirteen hours to buy a mobile phone of the newly released “Apple brand” to present it to his daughter. The new advances in technology have offered a new impetus to marketing for its all-round growth. From barter to digital, from local to global, what an astounding transformation in Marketing!

Philip Kotler defines Marketing as a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others.

Nothing is static in this world, and discoveries in all fields of human endeavour never cease, so no idea remains constant, uncontested and unchanged forever. It is only through the **free** exchange of ideas inherent in academic freedom, on which the progress of the human race rests.

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Philip Kotler says new marketing concepts always emerge as a reaction to the changing business environment. Business environment is more important today than ever before. It is the most important force influencing the marketing activities of a company.

In the words of Kotler, "Marketing 4.0 is a marketing approach that combines online and offline interaction between companies and customers. In the digital economy, digital interaction alone is not sufficient. In fact, in an increasingly online world, offline touch represents a strong differentiation. Marketing 4.0 also blends style with substance. While it is imperative for brands to be more flexible and adaptive due to rapid technological trends, their authentic characters are more important than ever. In an increasingly transparent world, authenticity is the most valuable asset".

India has the second largest population in the world and its basic economy is agriculture. So the first five year plan of 1951 concentrated on agriculture. Agricultural production is risky and uncertain and so the focus was shifted to the industrial production in the second five year plan of 1956. Owing to the large numbers of Indian people, goods and services had become scarce. Production was not sufficient to meet the ever-increasing consumption and this resulted in the increase of the prices of goods and services.

There was an imbalance in the economy as the distribution system was weak and not able to deliver goods to the masses. Economic power was concentrated in a few hands which resulted in the high pricing of essential goods ignoring the interests of consumers. Manufacturers concentrated on production and ignored Marketing. But this environment is slowly changing. The consumer has become king at least in theory and marketers have started looking into his priorities.

Free market economies go through what is termed a business cycle, says Satish Y Deodhar in his book, "Day to Day Economics". A business cycle is the tendency of business activity to fluctuate regularly between boom and depression. Booms occurred at intervals of 7 to 8 years and there was a slump in between two booms and all were affected by these ups and downs. This is also a part of business environment and businessmen should be cautious about this fact. Now the internet, e-commerce and the explosion in communications and computers around the world have started a new era in Marketing. But they do not eliminate all of the fundamentals from previous eras and the best traditional marketing practices will continue. "It is just the pace and potential brought about by the digital era that makes Marketing different" says John Mariotti in "Smart Marketing".

What has changed more than anything else is the speed in the global reach of Marketing. This is owing to the developments in technology, especially information computing and telecommunications. What has not changed is the people. They are still people and their relationships matter a lot - especially in Marketing. Customers are people with motives, emotions, needs and wants. Understanding them and communicating them to the concerned organisation is the job of CRM (Customer Relationship Management). There is one significant development noticed by Philip Kotler. Customers have lost their trust in business corporations and other concerns and so they do not invest money in them. This vertical distrust goes both ways. Financial institutions have also stopped giving credit to consumers.

Consumers developed horizontal trust, believing more in fellow consumers and even strangers than they believe in companies. They are influenced by opinions posted online. Social networks like You Tube, Twitter, Face book and blogs...are very influential in promoting a product. Philip Kotler forecasts that in the new decade "marketers will target niche markets. The focus will be on senior citizens, the health-conscious people who spend a lot on health and on health products. There will be a growing demand for light food and cosmetics. The mini adults (children and teenagers) will become smart consumers who shop electronically. Brands will continue to be important and brands in the first two positions only stay in the market and others will be knocked out of the market. With less advertising and more sales promotion and price incentives, brand differences will be eroded. Many companies sponsor social issues such as environmental protection and helping the homeless. Thus, they build not only a business character but also a civic character and earn interest, respect and loyalty".

Philip Kotler advises companies to address consumers as whole human beings. According to the book "Compassionate Capitalism" corporate philanthropy is a great way for companies to start building a good business. It is reported in the press that the Tata Trust will invest \$70 million to start a project on eradicating Malaria from India.

According to Kotler, Marketers need to adapt to this new reality and create brands that behave like humans - approachable and likeable but also vulnerable. Brands should become less intimidating. They should become authentic and honest, admit their flaws, and stop trying to seem perfect.

So far, the consumer is king only in words. Really, he has been exploited in a thousand ways. Some companies and producers are deceiving the consumers by supplying inferior products at exorbitant rates, by offering spurious drugs and adulterated milk and oils. All these malpractices may be eradicated through the new wave of marketing which stresses consumer welfare. If the new marketing program is executed, products of good quality will be made available to the consumers at reasonable prices without delay through online or offline

channels. It is hoped that the system of Marketing will be purged of its undesirable attributes. How far it is feasible will be known in future only. In the meanwhile, it had been better to be optimistic and hope for the best. Data driven marketing and taking the Millennials into confidence are mandatory and very challenging, but they are very important for achieving marketing goals. The Millennials are the population born between 1979-96. India's consumption story is being shaped by its 440 Millennials. People born after 2000 are called Gen.Z. The size of youth offers great potential to marketers and their brands in the near future. This population has tremendous purchasing power, and they are the most potent connected generation ever that effortlessly move across instant messaging, emojis, social media platforms, gaming sites and portals. This makes them real game changers and their affinity to technology makes them both informed and choosy customers.

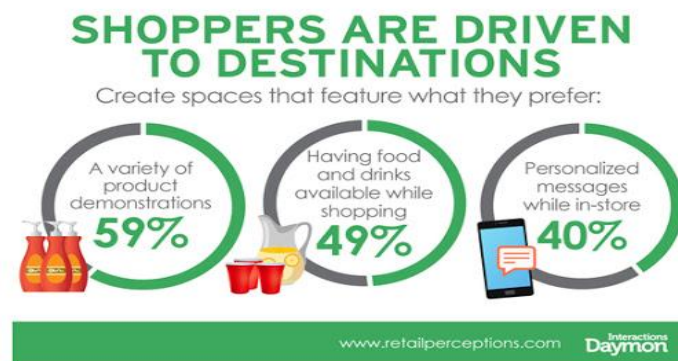
Data driven marketing based on collecting the big data is gaining momentum now. It has connected the entire world and so change is occurring faster than before. Data is the ultimate game changer, and the analytic part of the data is very significant. It is disruptive and companies should embrace it to change for the better. It is all about performance and data is a strong driving tool and a catalyst. It comes closer to the consumer and helps in making right decisions. Previously people were collecting data and then were analysing it for decision making. But now, data is omni present and is within our reach. Now, we need not ask people about their behaviour and opinion anymore, they are expressing it on the Web. Technology enables us to capture the needed data and information. Satellite mapping of Geography combined with Consumption Profile of the households in that area coupled with retailer output in the same area can offer insights that enable mass customisation of sales and marketing programmes.

The rapid rise of the mobile technology facilitates the themes of disruption and innovation. The business of marketing communication produces seismic changes, and the movers are the Millennials. TV viewership is divided between rural and urban India and this shows the power of the rural TV watching market. This rural and urban divide is a recent development. The formation of BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council) is responsible for that and now thousands monitor it for better marketing. This leads to what is known as Content marketing. Creating and developing content is a new strategic marketing approach. It not only helps to acquire customers but also to retain them for a long time. The content presented in a story telling format appeals to the customer and can be a strong tool for brand building and for keeping the customers attracted and attached to the brand. Amul- The taste of India, Eureka Forbes- Pani ka Doctor, Nestle's coffee video launched on Twitter and You Tube successfully placed the brands on a firm foundation. The 4 Ps, the basic tenets of marketing Product, Price, Place and Promotion still hold good. But their new forms Platform, Practice, Partnership and Performance are the new disrupters.

According to Tony Corsini, a Social Media Consultant, Next Generation Marketing coverage is as follows:

- Social Media – Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, SEO, Blogging, Mobile, Digital
- Marketing Fields for the NEXT Generation - Event Marketing, Content Marketing, Mobile Marketing, Experiential Marketing, Real Time Marketing, Viral Marketing, Green Marketing, Social Marketing, Search Marketing, Location-Based
- NEXT Generation Branding & Promotions- Limited Edition Launches, Seasonal Specials & Discounts, Exclusive Content, Product Samples, Event Souvenirs (Swag) Online Contests
- Next - Generation Market Research Tools: Keyword Research
- Google Alerts – used for monitoring, allows us to track brand mentions and listen into conversations.
- Google Search Engine – annual reports pdf,
- Twitter Search – trending,

Based on the above background, the following picture focuses on the very transformed nature of the shoppers of the present day:



The next generation marketing will secure the brand's future. It uses a cutting-edge marketing approach to jump-start business growth. It will position products for maximum visibility and elevate the brand status and guarantee the results.

The next generation marketers will certainly follow the following 8 ways to win, as suggested by Philip Kotler and Milton Kotler in their book, "Market your Way to Growth". The creative marketing strategies will help marketers to compete for a limited customer base in a painful slow growth economy.

- "Build Your Market Share- Marketers are to outperform their competitors and grow their market share.
- Develop Enthusiastic Customers and Stake holders – Marketers are to attract fans and develop dedicated supply chain partners.
- Create a Powerful Brand - Marketers have to design a powerful brand that serves as a living platform for their organisations' strategy and actions.
- Innovate New Products, Services & Experiences – Marketers have to develop a culture of innovation and think freshly about new offerings and experiences.
- International Expansion – Marketers have to identify international macro and micro markets of high growth and enter them successfully.
- Acquisitions, Mergers & Alliances – Marketers grow via attractive partnering opportunities through acquisitions, mergers, alliances and joint ventures.
- Build an outstanding Reputation for Social Responsibility – Marketers should improve their company's social character to win more respect and support from the public and stakeholders.
- Partner with Govt. & NGOs – Marketers should successfully bid to provide services and products that governments all over the world need".

If these strategies are implemented, marketers will certainly achieve the growth rates that their competitors will envy.

Here it's not out of place to refer to one of the very popular next Gen. companies, "Next Generation Marketing Incorporation".



As rightly said in Facebook, "Next Generation" is such an amazing company and it provides the tools to success, help utilize them, and celebrate the successes. "Next Generation" has a fun, friendly, and inviting atmosphere while maintaining professionalism that is hard to come by in a lot of other companies. Next Generation five stars for sure!!

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