Is Internet Marketing a Contemporary version of (or) Complementary to Traditional Marketing? (A Comparative Study)

Dr.D. Nabirasool

ABSTRACT: The media landscape has dramatically changed over the past decade, with traditional media (e.g., newspapers, television) now supplemented by Internet (e.g., blogs, discussion forums). This new media landscape is not well understood with respect to (i) the joint impacts of traditional and internet on marketing performance (e.g., sales), (ii) how these media types influence each other on Marketing mix, and (iii) the mechanisms through which they affect marketing outcomes. In this paper the author make a comparison between the main points of both traditional marketing and Internet marketing. Here the 4 Ps are mentioned in comparison to each other to give a clearer idea of different issues that either traditional marketing or Internet marketing carry in their tools.

KEY WORDS: Traditional media, modern media, performance, publicity, Marketing Mix.

Objective of the Study: To compare traditional marketing and Internet marketing and show the differences between them in the marketing-mix context.

Methodology: Qualitative research method adopted and used secondary data that already exists. These could be in the form of books, journals, articles, and online data such as web pages.

PRODUCT

Product in traditional marketing is tangible for the customer where as through a website in Internet marketing is just a virtual image. The customer cannot experience the quality and size of the product by seeing it on the website in the same way as seeing the product in a physical store. Not being able to reach and feel the product physically, can create doubts for the customer and have an affect on his/her purchasing decision.

1. Dr.D.Nabirasool, Associate Professor & Head Department of MBA, Srinivasa Ramanujan Institute of Technology, B.K.Samudram, Ananthapuram, AP

When it comes to range of products offered through Internet compared to physical stores, there is an advantage of possibility for a company to offer a wide range of products on their website. The issues that can appear here are cost and space for inventory and store space itself, where there is a connection between cost and space.

One important issue to point out is the customer service and how it can reach the customer. It is more difficult to provide customer service through Internet compared to face to face contact when the customer visits the physical store. The customer can get a quick response and reaction from the staff when getting a service in the physical store, where as through Internet the customer is dealing with a so called fixed service. And even though there might be possibility for communicating through e-mail or support chat function, the response and communication of service will not be as personal and quick as it could be when communicating face to face.

One issue that can affect the customer's choice of purchase is the warranty of the good. This gives comfort to customers, both in traditional marketing and Internet marketing but most importantly it gives the secure feeling to those purchasing online. The customer that cannot see and touch the product when purchasing it would feel more square knowing that there is a warranty on the product and this would make the choice of purchase easier and less risky.

PRICE

The pricing of a product can be based on the costs of its process in reaching the market. When a company does Internet marketing it has a bigger opportunity to save costs and therefore possibility to have lower prices. One of the reasons for this is the cost of space for keeping the products or the cheap way of

communication through internet such as communication by e-mail. When marketing through Internet, the competition is very though which affects the pricing reasons. The competitors are a click away when a potential customer is searching for information on the Internet.

Since payments for purchase through Internet are done by credit card mostly, there can be some security issues that create problems. For example a customer would feel more secure paying in the physical store where they can have more control over the payment process; where as purchasing online they would be taking a risk when giving the credit card details.

PLACE

In traditional marketing, companies have the opportunities to decorate the stores in order to create a specific atmosphere that can attract customers. Some attractive tools to create that atmosphere can be music, colors, etc, but through Internet marketing it is almost impossible to create a real sensation since a website is just a virtual image. Even though many of the websites try to create an atmosphere by adding the same tools for attraction, they cannot create as real experience as can be created in the physical store.

The atmosphere of the store is mentioned to be very important for sales of the products. For example if you see an unorganized store just filled up with some clothes you hardly feel tempted to go in and look for anything. The way the store is decorated gives a message about the company and its style. When one thinks about this, one can realize the importance of the physical existence of the store. Think for example how the company could offer the same atmosphere through the website. As an example we can consider H&M, based on their website their aim is to have the same atmosphere on their website that they have in their stores. But in the end the experience of stepping into the store is different than clicking on computer when shopping. Internet helps companies to be reachable at any time, regardless of openings hours that physical stores require. Also the possibility for the customers to reach the store location online and the range of customers that can do that is much wider compared to the physical location of the store.

PROMOTION

When it comes to promotion, one thing is clear in difference between the communication through traditional tools and Internet and that is the speed. Speed of getting the message of advertisement, news or any type of information through to customers is very quick through Internet. This is a very important issue in the competitive world of business.

Another difference between promotion by Internet and promotion by traditional ways is the durability of the marketing message the marketer wants to communicate with the customers. In traditional manner, the message would receive attention during a limited amount of time, for example as it is aired on TV or sent out as paper advertising. Where on the Internet, the marketer's message to the customers can exist constantly on the company's website for example and it is accessible by the customers 24/7.

Through a website, a company can present itself in many ways where the customer can study different aspects of the company and get to know it well where as this is not possible in the same way through traditional tools for promotion. For example the complexity of wide range of information cannot be easily fitted into a magazine advertising or TV commercial etc. The tools for traditional promotion can be used mainly in communicating the message shortly and consistently.

There is of course the burden of maintaining a website or online commercials that consumes time, resources and money. But this should be weighted out by the accessibility and opportunity they provide. Another issue is the damage that a failed or crashed website or other Internet service can have on a company's image. A good website is very important for succeeding in online marketing. According to Sunday Times, some important guidelines for a good website for a company are:
* "Provide clear information on contacts, delivery and refund policies."
* "Think "user journey" rather than individual pages."
* "Let shoppers browse without having to register."
* "Keep sites simple and easy to use."
* "Offer an effective search engine."
* "Market the site online and link it to search engines."
* "Provide consistency of experience."
* "If the Internet does not offer the full bricks-and-mortar range, say so."
* "Give complaints ID numbers."
* "Build trust."

Nowadays a large group of consumers have the problem of time but have the money to spend so therefore it can be easier for them to shop online, by saving time when spending. The image, speed, design and generally every aspect of the website of a company is very important and in a case of failure it can have big damages to the company that can't be even compared to lost sales. Communicating through Internet gives an opportunity to the marketer to reach the targeted group easily and have a continues relationship with them.

Of course there are some great advantages in communicating through traditional tools of promotion such as face to face communication with customers where the company can get straight feedback and can measure the result more quickly. The communication in this way is both sided where the customer has more opportunities to react on the information or offer received.

COMPARISON MODEL

The authors have created a list of the main advantages of both traditional and Internet marketing based on the theories presented above. The points mentioned in this model highlight the main differences between the two approaches of traditional and Internet marketing. The model is created to help the reader get a clearer picture, when studying the differences in the parts of the marketing mix theory.

The positive aspects of either approach pointed out in this model can be radically important for some businesses. One can see here that some points in both sides are not replaceable by marketing through the other approach. Each point/advantage presented in the comparison model is based on the books and articles used for theories.

Figure 3 The Comparison Model (created by authors of this thesis)

CONCLUSION

Based on our study, we cannot generalize and suggest which approach is better than the other after comparing Internet marketing with traditional marketing. Depending on companies' goals, products and target group etc. the right choice of marketing tools can differ.

As the authors of this paper have realized through this study, there is no one correct way of marketing when comparing traditional marketing with Internet marketing. Both of these approaches have different positive qualities that can help a company reach its target group and gain revenue.

As mentioned in the above, Internet is a channel for communication. It still seems to have kept its main purpose but it has developed and is more versatile now. It is to some degree considered a marketing tool that cannot be taken away without negative consequences. It seems to be a developing and more opportunity giving part of promotion which has added value to traditional marketing.

There are many sides to different ways of marketing, the advantages and disadvantages that they can have. There can also be different goals to achieve and different types of target groups to reach, which can affect on the right choice of marketing tools. Even though it can seem confusing but it appears as all aspects in the marketing process depends on each other and affect the decisions made about marketing approaches used.

There is no meter to measure the efficiency of either way of marketing to give a 100% correct answer that we are looking for. All that is available is theories that support specific ideas about this subject, some marketers' experience and point of views. In the frame of this paper with the possibilities available keeping in mind the limitations, there has been some relevant data gathered that has helped the authors and hopefully the readers of this thesis to come to a conclusion.

It has become more and more clear that the combination of both traditional marketing and Internet marketing would be the most effective approach but if there is a need of making a choice between the two, a company should consider what is to be achieved and which approach would be appropriate specifically for reaching that goal and target group. Placing both traditional marketing and Internet marketing against each other to figure out the more effective one was difficult because they complement each other. There are different kinds of benefits in using either one which makes it difficult to weight them against one another.

The question stated earlier "Is the Internet marketing a contemporary version of traditional marketing and are the two kinds of marketing independent or complementary to each other?" can be answered now. Based on the gathered information in this paper, Internet marketing does not seem to be a contemporary version of traditional marketing but it appears to be complementary to traditional marketing. Internet as marketing tool has added value to the marketing concept in general which makes the process of marketing more complete together with the traditional tool.

REFERENCES

Books:
[1]. Dave Chaffey et al. (2000), Internet Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice, Pearson Education Limited
[2]. Philip Kotler (2003), Marketing Management, Eleventh edition, Pearson Education Limited Pervez Ghauri& Kjell Gronhaug (2005), Research Methods in Business Studies, third edition, Pearson Education Limited
[3]. Robert K. Yin (1994), Case study research: Design and Methods, Second Edition, Sage Publications Tony Hines & Margaret Bruce, (2007), Fashion Marketing, Contemporary Issues

Articles:
[1]. Allen, E. and Fjermestad, J, E-commerce marketing strategies: a framework and case analysis, Logistics information Management, Vol.14, number ½, 2001, pp14-23
[2]. Donna L. Hoffman, Thomas P. Novak, Marketing in Hypermedia Computer-Mediated Environments: Conceptual Foundations, Working Paper No. 1 (Revised July 11, 1995)
[3]. D P S Verma, Gaytri Varma, on-line pricing:concept, methods and current practices, Journal
[4]. of Services Research, Gurgaon, Apr-Sep 2003, Vol. 3,Iss. 1,pg. 135-156
[5]. Fang He, Peter P Mykytyn, Decision Factors for the Adoption of an Online Payment System
[6]. by Customers, International Journal of E-Business Research, Hershey:Oct-Dec 2007. Vol. 3, Iss. 4, pp. 1-11,13,15-16,18-32

[7]. Jennifer Rowley, Remodeling marketing communications in an Internet environment, Internet Research, Bradford, 2001, Vol. 11, Iss. 3, pp. 203(10 pp)

[8]. Riyad Eid, Myfanwy Trueman, The Internet: New international marketing issues, Management Research News, Patrington: 2002, Vol. 25, Iss. 12, pp. 54-67

[9]. Ulrika Hoffman,Ulrika Lindgren, Marketing on Internet, Luleå, June 1999

[10]. Van Waterschoot Walter, Van den Bulte Christophe, The 4P classification of the marketing mix revisited, Journal of marketing 1992

Websites:

[1]. www.scb.se

[2]. www.dn.se/DNet/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=3130&a=748658

[3]. www.veromoda.com

[4]. www.polarnopyret.se

[5]. www.heartsofbrands.se

[6]. www.hm.com