

A Comparative Study of Digital Marketing Strategies used by Pharmaceutical Companies in the Indian Market

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Abstract: This project will shed light on digital marketing, its trends in the present, past and future in a globally integrated society. As marketing has grown in importance as a strategy for reaching consumers across all industries, choosing the best marketing medium has gotten increasingly difficult. Every home now has access to digital media, which has made it a crucial marketing tool. A communication strategy for using digital media is known as a digital marketing communication strategy. Examining emerging media possibilities for marketing as well as efficacy of digital media advertising is the goal. For a competitive age a lot of Indian business uses digital marketing.

As a result, the medium of marketing cannot be disregarded, and the current COVID-19 issue has compelled the Indian pharmaceutical marketing industry to advance and become more successful in order to achieve its objective. In the age of digital evolution, 76% of Indian healthcare institutions and 90% of RMPs have access to the internet. In the digital age, marketers must deal with both new obstacles and opportunities. The fundamental goal of digital marketing is to draw customers and give them the opportunity to connect with the company online.

Keywords- Integrated, Strategy, Obstacles, Compelled, Opportunity, Disregarded.

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing is the promotion of your business, organization or brand using channels such as the internet, mobile devices, television and radio in addition to using creative online advertising, video, podcasts and other such methods to communicate your message. Internet marketing in particular plays a huge part in any digital marketing strategy and is becoming the core of many organizations overall marketing strategies, particularly with regard to socialmedia and viral marketing.^[1]

Digital marketing ecosystem is not only concerned with internet marketing and social media marketing, in introduction we discussed that peoples have a belief that internet or social media marketing are same but not same, be clear from beginning itself. Digital marketing ecosystem consists of internet marketing and social marketing. They are just channels for communication, digital ecosystem consists of integrating channels and integrating services.



Digital marketing in Indian pharmaceutical industry

Digital marketing is the developmental stage in Indian pharmaceutical industry. Pharmaceutical companies are using technology-based services; helping patients learn more about their conditions and helping them monitor their health. It may also be useful to give the physicians an insight into the health of patients, any side effects for any particular product. These digital services also make it easier for doctors to communicate their message to patients with ease on certain health condition.^[2] Digital marketing has clearly simplified advertising, awareness campaign organization, and mass reach at low cost efficient methodologies. The use of medical pharmaceuticals is worldwide dependent. Cardiovascular disorders and hypertension are at peak in the developed nations. Although, infectious diseases such as tuberculosis typhoid, and some other diseases are prevalent developing countries. Pharmaceutical-based companies are working hard to keep up with the developments that digital technology has brought in. In recent years, the use of digital marketing in this field allowed companies to take a different approach to targeting costumers, doctors caregivers. Some of the technologies that change the healthcare sector include mobile communication, advanced analytic, the internet and the cloud. Although most Indian companies have restricted their use in creating corporate image, updating therapy, simple diet, guidelines, nutrition, exercise, etc. Nutraceuticals are slightly aggressive in their distribution with only a few firm concerned with goods in the field Over the Counter.

What is digital marketing?

Digital marketing encompasses all marketing efforts that use an electronics device or internet. Business leverage digital channels such as search engines, social media, email and their websites to connect with current and prospective customers.^[3] This can also be referred as 'online marketing', 'internet marketing', or 'web marketing'. Digital marketing is define by use of numerous digital tactics and channels to connect with costumers where they spend much if their time online. From website to business's online branding assets – digital advertising, email marketing, online brochures, and beyond – there's spectrum's of tactics falling under the umbrella of "digital marketing".

Pull

Pull digital marketing technologies involve the user having to seek out and directly grab (or pull) the content via web searches. Web site/blogs and streaming media (audio and video) are good examples of this. In each of these examples, users have a specific link (URL) to view the content.

Push

Push digital marketing technologies involve both the marketer (creator of the message) as well as the recipients (the user). Email, SMS, RSS are examples of push digital marketing. In each of these examples, the marketer has to send (push) the messages to the users (subscribers) in order for the message to be received.^[4]

Background and rationale of the study

The pharmaceutical industry is one of the most lucrative industries in the world, and India is one of the fastest-growing markets for pharmaceutical products. Digital marketing has become an essential tool for businesses to reach out to their target audience, and the pharmaceutical industry is no exception.

A comparative study of digital marketing strategies used by pharmaceutical companies in the Indian market would provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of different marketing strategies, which could help companies make better-informed decisions about their marketing campaigns. Additionally, as the Indian pharmaceutical market is highly regulated, studying the digital marketing strategies used by pharmaceutical companies in India can provide insights into how these companies navigate the complex regulatory landscape.

Furthermore, digital marketing strategies are continually evolving, and it is essential to keep up with the latest trends and techniques to stay ahead of the competition. A comparative study would allow for an examination of how companies are adapting their digital marketing strategies to meet changing market conditions and customer preferences.

Overall, the comparative study of digital marketing strategies used by pharmaceutical companies in the Indian market is important for understanding how companies are reaching out to their target audience, navigating the regulatory landscape, and adapting to changing market conditions. It can provide valuable insights for businesses looking to improve their digital marketing strategies and gain a competitive edge in the Indian pharmaceutical market

Objective and research question

1. Each marketing campaign being run by a company has some fixed objectives, it can be brand awareness or it can be lead generation.
2. Digital marketing helps us completing our business goals by making them into different digital marketing objectives.
3. When anyone wants to build their brand and want to grow their business at first pace, we have to be a very clear on our digital marketing strategies, with accurate and clear objective of our digital marketing plans.
4. Whenever we follow and execute any digital marketing strategy, this will not only build our customer base but also will help us to gain more business also establishing us as a brand.

Advantages & Disadvantages of digital Marketing

Advantages:

- 1. Cost-effective:** Digital marketing is often more cost-effective^[5] than traditional marketing methods, such as print or TV advertising. For example, social media ads can be relatively inexpensive to produce and distribute, and email marketing is a low-cost way to reach customers directly. This is especially important for smaller pharmaceutical companies who may have limited marketing budgets.
- 2. Improved patient education:** Digital marketing can be used to provide patients with educational resources, such as informational websites, social media content, and mobile apps, which can help them better understand their health conditions and treatment options. For example, companies can create online communities where patients can connect with each other and share their experiences, or develop mobile apps that provide patients with personalized treatment plans.
- 3. Improved brand awareness :** Digital marketing can help companies build their brand and increase brand awareness. For example, companies can use social media to share content that showcases their expertise in a particular area, or sponsor online events that attract a large audience. This type of brand building can help companies stand out from their competitors and increase customer loyalty.
- 4. Improved customer insights :** Digital marketing provides companies with valuable customer insights that can help them improve their products and services. For example, companies can use analytics tools to track customer behavior and preferences, or conduct online surveys to gather feedback from customers. This type of data can help companies make informed decisions about their marketing and product development strategies.
- 5. Enhanced customer support :** Digital marketing can be used to provide customers with better support and service. For example, companies can use social media to respond to customer inquiries and complaints quickly, or develop mobile apps that provide customers with real-time support. This type of support can help build trust and loyalty with customers, leading to increased sales and revenue.
- 6. Increased sales :** Ultimately, the goal of pharma digital marketing is to increase sales. By reaching a larger audience, engaging with customers more effectively, and building brand awareness and loyalty, companies can drive more sales and revenue. This can lead to improved profitability and growth opportunities.

Disadvantages :

1. **Regulatory compliance :** One of the biggest challenges of pharma digital marketing is ensuring regulatory compliance. The pharmaceutical industry is highly regulated, and companies must comply with a range of laws and guidelines, including those related to advertising, promotion, and patient privacy. Failure to comply with these regulations can result in serious consequences, including fines, legal action, and damage to the company's reputation.
2. **Lack of trust:** The pharmaceutical industry has historically struggled with issues related to trust and transparency. Many consumers are skeptical of pharmaceutical companies and may be hesitant to engage with them online. This can make it challenging for companies to build trust and credibility with their target audience through digital marketing.
3. **Cyber security risks:** With the increasing use of digital technologies, cyber security risks are a major concern for pharmaceutical companies. Hackers and cybercriminals may attempt to steal sensitive patient information or disrupt the company's digital marketing efforts. As a result, companies must invest in robust cyber security measures to protect their data and systems.
4. **Quality control:** With so much health-related information available online, it can be challenging for pharmaceutical companies to ensure the accuracy and quality of the content they produce. Companies must be careful to provide accurate and up-to-date information, as misinformation can be harmful to patients.
5. **Information overload :** With so much information available online, it can be difficult for companies to stand out and get their message heard. This can lead to information overload for consumers, who may be overwhelmed by the amount of health-related information available online. As a result, companies may struggle to get their message heard and may need to invest in more targeted marketing strategies to reach their desired audience.

Key Terms

1. **DTC Advertising** - The marketing and advertising of pharmaceutical products directly to consumers as patients, as opposed to specifically targeting health professionals.
2. **HCP (Healthcare Provider) Marketing** - Healthcare marketing is the process of creating, communicating, and offering healthcare information. It draws from a variety of fields, including communications, marketing, healthcare analytics, and, of course, patient care.
3. **CRM (Customer Relationship Management)** - Customer relationship management (CRM) is a technology for managing all your company's relationships and interactions with customers and potential customers.
4. **KOL (Key Opinion Leader) Marketing** - A key opinion leader (KOL) is a person who has a substantial influence to influence a group of people due to their credibility and personal branding.
5. **Thought Leadership** - Thought leadership is the communication of your ideas and thoughts as an expert in your industry.
6. **Clinical Trial Recruitment** - Recruitment in a clinical trial includes the following steps: Identifying or sourcing potential participants who may be eligible. Discussing all aspects of the trial with them, ensuring comprehension and voluntariness, and subsequently obtaining informed consent for participation.
7. **Patient Recruitment** - The goal of patient recruitment is to raise awareness of clinical trial opportunities and to encourage enrollment. Services are contracted for by pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology companies, medical device companies, contract research organizations (CROs), or a medical research site.
8. **Medical Education** - Medical education means keeping up-to-date with a rapidly changing clinical practice and technology, and encompasses Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
9. **Disease Awareness Campaign** - Awareness campaigns are intended to influence a wide audience and build awareness not only of the disease and unmet needs, but also potentially to put your company, brand or service in the list

of options of solutions, or positive contributors.

10. **Branded Content** - Branded Content is content that clearly expresses a company's brand – not just visually, but also in terms of subject matter and style.

11. **Content Marketing** - Content marketing in pharma is a strategy that helps healthcare professionals and end-users get informed through online content.

12. **Native Advertising** - Native advertising is a creative way for healthcare companies to promote their product and services and connect with HCPs in a natural and non-intrusive way.

13. **Social Listening** - Social listening for pharmaceutical industry lets you listen to the chatter around your products, campaigns and about the products and reception of other brands too. Positive or negative comments around other brands could help you strategize and improve your own performance.

14. **Influencer Marketing** - According to The Influencer Marketing Hub, “influencer marketing involves a brand collaborating with an online personality to market one of its products or services.” Influencer marketing is a form of marketing where brands partner with a social media influencer to promote their product or service.

15. **Email Marketing** - Email marketing is a form of marketing that can make the customers on your email list aware of new products, discounts, and other services.

16. **Webinar** - A webinar is an interactive presentation given to a large geographically dispersed audience, who are able to engage with the presenter and each other in some way.

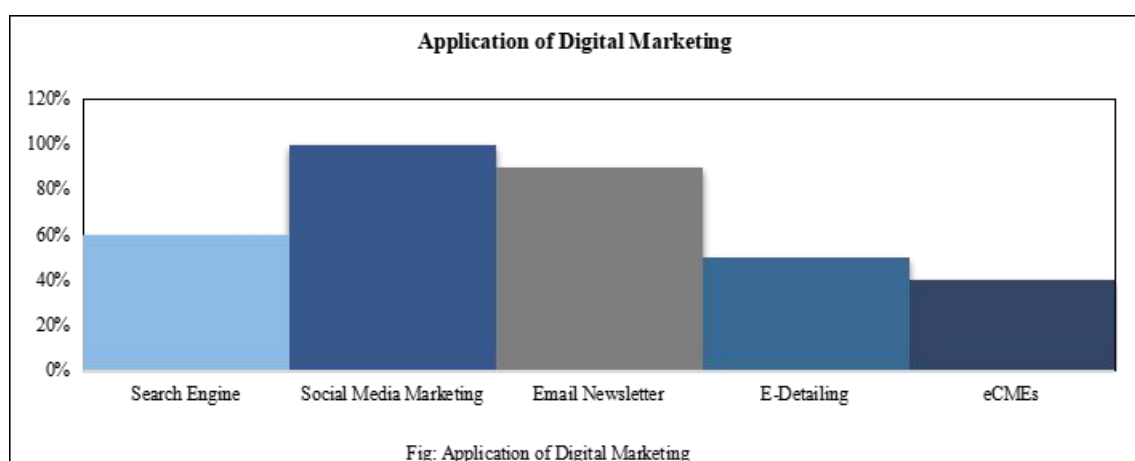
17. **Search Engine Marketing (SEM)** - SEM helps companies bring their products and services to the attention of audiences through paid search engine advertising. SEM is an online marketing strategy in which organizations buy targeted ad space at the top of search engine result pages (SERP).

18. **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** - Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of optimizing websites and its content to bring more opportunities to the website via Google and other search engines.

19. **Display Advertising** - Display ads are images, videos, or gifts shown to users on websites or apps. Most display advertising uses square, landscape or skyscraper formats with images to entice users to click. Display ads resemble ads you might see in a newspaper or magazine but they appear on web.

20. **Programmatic Advertising** - Programmatic advertising is the automated bidding and placement of ads on a given platform. Traditional ad placement involves a long, tedious process of negotiations, bidding, contracts, and requests for proposals. Programmatic, on the other hand, streamlines the process into mere seconds

Types of digital marketing



1. Search engine optimization: As consumers search the most used search engines they first turn into Google, Yahoo or MSN / Bing. Searching health information among internet users of all ages is one of the most common activities. The most popular way to find products or details via search engines is said by 47 percent of web users. The top 10 search results receive 78% higher visitors than trailing lists, other businesses use SEO to ensure their sites are high on the list. Nearly every day, SEO approaches change. Search ranks are manipulated with the help of search engine optimization strategies, which improve Google or any other search engine's search ranking. This is a significant opportunity to reach their target audiences with companies that use Search Engine Optimization (SEO) approaches. Organizations which are not in search engines lose a massive chance to reach the target population. The keyword use of titles and URLs, internal links from your own page, backlinks^[6] from other pages, proper use of image tags and the social network operation are important aspects of search engine optimization.

2. Pay Per Click Ads: Ads may be bought from Google if there is inadequate traffic from the company's website. Announcements are also available on other blogs and through the various ad networks. Pay-by-click or PPC adds based on the keywords used by Google's search engine. The client will determine the success rate of PPC campaigns through Ad Analytics software. The client just charges if someone clicks on the attach button.

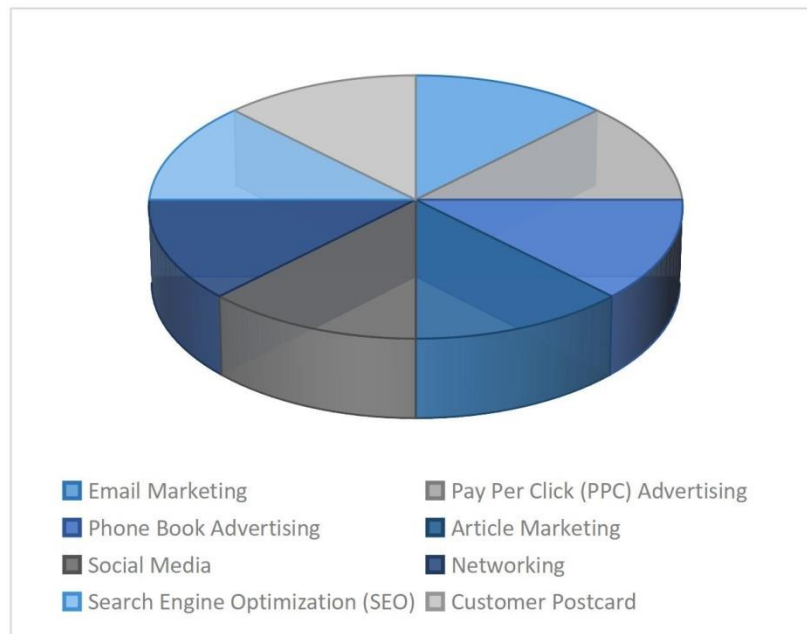
3. Email Newsletters: The 2012 User Preference Survey by Exact Target showed that the email is still the first direct channel that users will choose for everyday use both for customer and marketing communications. However, smart phones and tablets are commonly used and allow consumers to quickly access the emails. In fact, 77% of customers prefer to receive authorization-based marketing messages via e-mail relative to social media (6%) and text messages (5%). Email gives consumers the sense of control and personalization in which to opt for a conversation and then supply them with only the information they want. Search engines use social media activity as a marketing tool. Facebook shares, twitter retweets.

4. Social Media Marketing Google+1 help your position on the results pages for search

engines. Marketing in social media allows the company to be connected directly to its consumers. This strengthens the corporate values and improves the organization's image. In the public forum the negative experiences can be overcome through the delivery of company website alerts and debate. Modern life, including pharmaceutical marketing and the healthcare sector, is the result of social media usage. Almost all (97.8 percent) of participant participants to the study were active social network users, which coincides with the effects of social media development in the United States as defined by Moorhead et al

5. E - Detailing: The Indian industry has yet to be embraced at an early stage. There are very few firms that are active players on the e-detailing market in India. While e-details were initially skeptical by the sales force and they were curious whether marketing online would make the conventional sales call irrelevant, most members saw actually the opposite effect: e-details actually increase the total time they spend with the rep.

6. eCMEs (electronic continuing medical education) / Webinars Hybrid meetings are events which combine live and virtual elements. These are also great opportunities and one of the most important developments in the preparation of events. Live broadcasting by means of streaming video of a conference will enable event organizers and organizing organizations, including people following the conference online, to extend their meeting visibility. This is one of Indian Pharmaceutical Industry's most cost effective strategy.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry

This literature review examines the current state of digital marketing strategies in the pharmaceutical industry. With the rapid advancements in technology and the increasing use of digital channels by consumers, pharmaceutical companies are adopting various digital marketing strategies to effectively reach their target audience. This review analyzes scholarly articles, industry reports, and case studies to provide a comprehensive overview of the digital marketing strategies employed in the pharmaceutical industry. The findings highlight the benefits, challenges, and key considerations for implementing digital marketing strategies in this highly regulated and competitive sector.

By examining the literature on digital marketing strategies in the pharmaceutical industry, this review provides insights into the current trends, challenges, and opportunities for pharmaceutical companies to effectively leverage digital channels in their marketing efforts. It serves as a valuable resource for researchers, marketers, and industry professionals seeking to understand and optimize digital marketing strategies in the pharmaceutical sector^[7].

Regulatory framework and guidelines for digital marketing of pharmaceutical products in India

As of my last knowledge update in September 2021, I can provide you with information on the regulatory framework and guidelines for digital marketing of pharmaceutical products in India. Please note that the regulations may have changed or been updated since then, so it's important to consult the latest official sources and regulatory bodies for the most up-to-date information.

In India, the primary regulatory authority responsible for overseeing pharmaceutical products and their marketing is the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), which operates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The CDSCO enforces various regulations and guidelines to ensure the safety, efficacy, and proper marketing of pharmaceutical products, including those related to digital marketing. Here are some key aspects of the regulatory framework and guidelines:

1. **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940:** This is the primary legislation governing pharmaceutical products in India. It regulates the manufacture, distribution, and sale of drugs, including provisions related to advertising and promotion.
2. **Schedule H and Schedule H1:** The CDSCO has classified certain drugs as prescription-only medicines and has specified guidelines for their sale and promotion. These guidelines extend to digital marketing as well, and prescription-only drugs cannot be advertised directly to consumers through digital channels.
3. **The Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette, and Ethics) Regulations, 2002:** These regulations govern the code of conduct for medical professionals in India. It includes guidelines related to the promotion of drugs,

which also apply to digital marketing activities. Medical practitioners are expected to adhere to ethical standards and avoid misleading or inappropriate advertising.

4. **Guidelines for Advertisements of Drugs:** The CDSCO has issued specific guidelines for the advertisement of drugs, including those for digital marketing. These guidelines outline various requirements, such as ensuring accuracy, avoiding misleading claims, and providing essential information about the drug. Digital advertisements must comply with these guidelines and clearly identify the intended audience, including healthcare professionals or consumers.

5. **Online Pharmacy Guidelines:** The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released guidelines in 2018 to regulate the sale of drugs through online pharmacies. These guidelines cover various aspects of online pharmacy operations, including advertising and promotion. Online pharmacies must comply with these guidelines when engaging in digital marketing activities.

It's important to note that while the above regulations and guidelines exist, their effective enforcement and monitoring can be a challenge, particularly in the digital realm where information dissemination is rapid and widespread. The regulatory authorities are continuously working to update and adapt the regulatory framework to address the evolving digital marketing landscape and ensure patient safety.

To ensure compliance, it is advisable for pharmaceutical companies and marketers to consult with legal experts and stay updated with the latest guidelines and regulations issued by the CDSCO and other relevant authorities in India. Please note that the information provided above is based on the knowledge available up until September 2021. It's essential to verify the current regulations and guidelines by referring to official sources such as the CDSCO and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for the most up-to-date information.

Types of digital marketing channels used by pharmaceutical companies in India

Pharmaceutical companies in India use various digital marketing channels to promote their products and reach their target audience. Some common types of digital marketing channels used by pharmaceutical companies in India include:

1. **Websites and Landing Pages:** Pharmaceutical companies maintain their official websites and landing pages to provide information about their products, services, and company details. These websites serve as a central hub for online marketing activities.
2. **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** SEO techniques are employed to improve the visibility and search engine ranking of pharmaceutical company websites. This involves optimizing website content, keywords, and metadata to ensure higher organic search rankings.
3. **Search Engine Marketing (SEM):** SEM includes paid advertising on search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo. Pharmaceutical companies may use pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns to display targeted ads to users searching for relevant keywords.
4. **Social Media Marketing:** Pharmaceutical companies utilize popular social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram to engage with their audience. They share updates, educational content, product information, and engage in discussions with users.
5. **Content Marketing:** Companies create and share relevant and informative content, such as blog posts, articles, videos, and infographics, to establish thought leadership and engage with their target audience. Content marketing helps in building trust and credibility^[8].
6. **Email Marketing:** Email marketing is used to reach out to healthcare professionals, doctors, pharmacists, and potential customers directly. Companies send newsletters, product updates, educational content, and promotional offers via email.
7. **Mobile Marketing:** With the increasing use of smartphones, pharmaceutical companies leverage mobile marketing strategies like mobile apps, SMS marketing, and mobile advertising to reach their target audience effectively.
8. **Influencer Marketing:** Collaborating with healthcare professionals, doctors, or medical experts who have a significant online following can help pharmaceutical companies gain credibility and reach a wider audience. Influencers can endorse products or provide educational content.
9. **Online Advertising:** Pharmaceutical companies may use banner ads, display ads, or native advertising on relevant websites, online publications, and healthcare portals to increase brand awareness and drive website traffic.
10. **Online Communities and Forums:** Engaging with online communities, forums, and discussion platforms related to healthcare and pharmaceuticals allows companies to provide valuable information, address queries, and build

relationships with potential customers.

It's important to note that pharmaceutical companies must comply with regulations and guidelines set by authorities such as the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) and the Medical Council of India (MCI) when engaging in digital marketing activities.

Challenges and opportunities of digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry in India

Digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry in India presents several challenges and opportunities. Here are some key points to consider:

Challenges:

1. **Regulatory Restrictions:** The pharmaceutical industry is highly regulated, and there are strict guidelines regarding the promotion and advertising of pharmaceutical products. Adhering to these regulations while implementing digital marketing strategies can be challenging, as the rules may limit the scope and methods of marketing.
2. **Data Privacy and Security:** The healthcare industry deals with sensitive patient information, and ensuring data privacy and security is crucial. Digital marketing efforts need to comply with data protection laws and implement robust security measures to safeguard patient information. Maintaining compliance with regulations like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) adds an extra layer of complexity.
3. **Lack of Digital Literacy:** Despite the increasing adoption of digital platforms in India, there is still a significant digital literacy gap, particularly among older demographics and rural areas. This limits the reach and effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns, as a substantial portion of the target audience may not be easily accessible through online channels.
4. **Trust and Credibility:** Building trust and credibility is essential in the pharmaceutical industry. The online space is filled with misinformation and fake products, making it challenging for pharmaceutical companies to establish trust with their target audience. Overcoming these trust barriers and ensuring the authenticity of digital marketing efforts can be a significant challenge.

Opportunities:

1. **Increased Reach and Targeting:** Digital marketing allows pharmaceutical companies to reach a wider audience through various online platforms. It enables precise targeting based on demographics, interests, and online behaviors, ensuring that marketing efforts are directed at the right audience, thereby optimizing the return on investment.
2. **Customer Engagement and Education:** Digital marketing provides an opportunity to engage with customers directly and provide them with valuable educational content. Through websites, social media platforms, and online communities, pharmaceutical companies can share information about diseases, treatment options, and general healthcare, thereby empowering patients and healthcare professionals with knowledge^[9].
3. **Personalization and Customization:** Digital marketing enables personalized and customized communication, allowing pharmaceutical companies to tailor their messages according to individual preferences and needs. By leveraging data analytics and marketing automation tools, companies can deliver targeted messages, offers, and recommendations, enhancing the overall customer experience.
4. **Real-Time Feedback and Analytics:** Digital marketing provides access to real-time data and analytics, enabling pharmaceutical companies to measure the effectiveness of their campaigns, track customer behavior, and make data-driven decisions. This data-driven approach helps optimize marketing strategies, improve campaign performance, and identify new market opportunities.
5. **E-commerce and Online Sales:** With the rise of e-commerce platforms, pharmaceutical companies have the opportunity to sell products directly to consumers online. Establishing an online sales channel can streamline the distribution process, reduce costs, and provide convenient access to medications, especially for customers in remote

areas.

Overall, while there are challenges to navigate, digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry in India offers significant opportunities to enhance customer engagement, educate the target audience, and drive business growth.

METHODOLOGY

Research design and approach

The research design and approach of digital marketing strategies used by the pharmaceutical industry in India can vary based on the specific objectives and resources of each company. However, I can provide you with a general outline of the key components typically involved in the research design and approach for digital marketing strategies in the pharmaceutical industry.

1. **Define research objectives:** The first step is to clearly define the research objectives. This could include increasing brand awareness, promoting specific products, reaching target audience segments, generating leads, or improving customer engagement and satisfaction.
2. **Conduct market research:** Before designing digital marketing strategies, it's important to conduct market research to understand the target audience, their preferences, behavior, and online habits. This can involve surveys, focus groups, interviews, and data analysis to gather insights.
3. **Identify digital channels:** Based on the research findings, identify the most effective digital channels to reach the target audience. This may include search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, email marketing, content marketing, mobile apps, and online advertising platforms.
4. **Develop content strategy:** Create a content strategy that aligns with the target audience's needs and preferences. This could involve producing educational articles, blog posts, videos, infographics, and interactive content that provide valuable information about diseases, treatments, and pharmaceutical products^[10].
5. **Implement SEO techniques:** Optimize the website and digital content for search engines to improve visibility and organic search rankings. This may include keyword research, on-page optimization, metatags, and link building strategies.
6. **Engage in social media marketing:** Leverage popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram to engage with the target audience, share relevant content, answer queries, and run targeted advertising campaigns^[11].
7. **Email marketing and newsletters:** Build an email subscriber list to regularly send newsletters and promotional content to interested individuals. Personalize the content based on their preferences and provide value-added information.
8. **Compliance and legal considerations:** The pharmaceutical industry is heavily regulated, and adherence to legal and compliance requirements is crucial. Ensure that all digital marketing activities comply with the regulations set by the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, guidelines from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), and other relevant authorities.
9. **Monitor and analyze performance:** Continuously monitor the performance of digital marketing campaigns using analytics tools. Track key metrics such as website traffic, engagement rates, conversion rates, and return on investment (ROI). Use this data to make informed decisions and optimize strategies for better results.
10. **Stay updated with industry trends:** The digital marketing landscape is constantly evolving. Stay updated with the latest trends, technologies, and best practices in the pharmaceutical industry. Attend conferences, webinars, and industry events to network with experts and learn from their experiences.

Remember that each pharmaceutical company may have its unique research design and approach, depending on its specific goals, target audience, budget, and competitive landscape. It's essential to tailor the digital marketing strategies to meet the company's specific needs while adhering to regulatory requirements^[12].

Data collection methods

The pharmaceutical industry utilizes various data collection methods for digital marketing. These methods aim to gather insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and trends, enabling pharmaceutical companies to develop targeted marketing strategies. Here are some common data collection methods used in the pharmaceutical industry for digital marketing:

1. **Website Tracking:** Pharmaceutical companies often track user behavior on their websites. They collect data on page views, click-through rates, time spent on each page, and other metrics. This data helps them understand which content is popular, identify user interests, and optimize their website for better user experience.
2. **Cookies and Tracking Pixels:** Cookies are small text files placed on users' devices to track their online activities. Pharmaceutical companies may use cookies to gather information about users' browsing habits, such as the websites they visit, products they view, and searches they perform. Tracking pixels, transparent images embedded on web pages, can also be used to track user interactions and collect data.
3. **Online Surveys:** Surveys are a common method to collect data in the pharmaceutical industry. Companies may conduct online surveys to gather feedback on medications, treatment experiences, or opinions on specific health conditions. Survey responses help them understand patient needs, preferences, and attitudes, which can inform marketing strategies.
4. **Social Media Monitoring:** Pharmaceutical companies monitor social media platforms to gather insights into consumer sentiment, discussions, and trends related to health and medications. They analyze user-generated content, such as posts, comments, and reviews, to understand public perception, identify influencers, and tailor marketing messages accordingly.
5. **Data Aggregators and Third-Party Sources:** Pharmaceutical companies may also obtain data from third-party sources and data aggregators. These sources collect data from various channels, including social media, websites, mobile apps, and purchase histories. The aggregated data provides valuable information on consumer demographics, interests, and behaviors, which can be used for targeted advertising^[13].
6. **Electronic Health Records (EHRs):** With proper consent and adherence to privacy regulations, pharmaceutical companies may collaborate with healthcare providers to access anonymized patient data from electronic health records. EHR data can offer valuable insights into treatment patterns, medication usage, and patient demographics, enabling targeted marketing efforts.
7. **App and Wearable Data:** Some pharmaceutical companies develop mobile apps or integrate with existing health-related apps and wearables. These apps and wearables collect data on users' health parameters, activity levels, medication adherence, and more. The collected data can be used to personalize marketing messages, provide relevant health information, or offer incentives for medication adherence.

It's important to note that data collection in the pharmaceutical industry must adhere to privacy regulations and ensure the protection of personal information. Pharmaceutical companies should obtain user consent, anonymize data where necessary, and comply with applicable data protection laws and regulations.

Tools of digital marketing

There are several digital marketing tools that can be used in the pharmacy industry to promote products and services, reach new customers, and engage with existing ones. Here are some of the most common tools:

1. **Website:** A well-designed and user-friendly website is a crucial component of digital marketing in pharmacy. It should provide information about the pharmacy's products and services, location, contact information, and hours of operation^[14].
2. **Search engine optimization (SEO):** SEO is the process of optimizing a website's content to rank higher in search

engine results pages (SERPs) for relevant keywords. This can help increase the visibility of the pharmacy's website and drive more traffic.

3. **Social media:** Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram can be used to share information about the pharmacy's products and services, as well as engage with customers and respond to inquiries.
4. **Email marketing:** Email marketing involves sending promotional messages to customers and subscribers via email. This can include newsletters, special offers, and updates on new products and services.
5. **Online advertising:** Online advertising includes methods like pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, display advertising, and social media advertising. These methods can help promote the pharmacy's products and services to a wider audience.
6. **Content marketing:** Content marketing involves creating and sharing valuable and relevant content, such as blog posts, info graphics, and videos. This can help establish the pharmacy as a trusted source of information and increase brand awareness.
7. **Mobile apps:** Mobile apps can be used to provide customers with access to pharmacy services and information, as well as enable them to make appointments and refill prescriptions.

Sampling strategy

The few strategies that be adopted by pharmaceutical companies to increase their chances in the digital world like-

1. **Introducing mobile apps:** The FDA released the guidelines on mobile medical applications, easing the pharmaceutical sector's long-term wait. Mobile applications in one go help patients to understand their diagnoses and medicines better before they are released. Apps that allow better direct marketing to customers can include complete details about any drug. If they partner with companies that can deliver the applications^[15] in context of patient management, including symptoms and medicines, not specifically disease management, pharmaceutical companies would be more profitable.
2. **Collaborative business model:** behind its conventional obstacles, the pharmaceutical industry is increasingly innovating by collaborating with and beyond its partners. Comprehensive collaboration is possible thanks to the availability of digital technologies. The workers can work and develop new treatments effectively and efficiently. Pfizer, for instance, has developed a ground-breaking cloud-based clinical data platform to collect, interpret and visualize patient data in clinical tests through trials and medical programs and to help smart test design, precision medicine, pharmacovigilance^[16] and regulatory enquiries.
3. **Sharing data on population studies:** Extensive overtime data collected appears to be wasteful if not analyzed. The results of the data should be reported. The combination of point, mobile and analytical content will be the real transformation in digital healthcare.
4. **Ensure IT support:** Adequate IT support is required to solve digital marketing problems.
5. **Create a new digital marketing organizational structure:** appoint a e-marketing strategy manager, e-marketing product manager, digital marketing committee, etc., to help boost company digital marketing innovation, and to develop digital strategies.
6. **Business partners:** Digital strategies involve partnerships with companies that deal with complementary disease aspects. For example, companies marketing atrial fibrillation anticoagulants should partner with medical device firms that identify such patients with remote cardiac monitoring. It is not difficult to introduce a digital marketing method.
7. **Patient and Healthcare Provider services (HCPs):** Patient and Healthcare Provider services (HCPs) are also expected to provide patients with technology-based services that can support patients with quality monitoring and administration by using more software on a daily basis. These services can also contribute substantially to new therapies research and development^[17]. To order to support and show outcomes, it also connects partners across the broader healthcare community. Patient services that are digitally enabled, such as apps or on-line platforms or educational resources linked to a wider range should be used to assist patients and HCPs dealing with health issues.

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College Of Pharmacy

A Comparative Study of Digital Marketing Strategies used by Pharmaceutical Companies in the Indian Market

Multi-channel digital marketing

Multi-channel digital marketing refers to the use of multiple online channels to promote a product or service to potential customers. These channels may include social media platforms, email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, and other forms of online advertising.

The idea behind multi-channel digital marketing is to reach potential customers through various touch points in their online journey, rather than relying on a single channel. By using a combination of channels, marketers can increase their reach, engage with their target audience in different ways, and ultimately drive more conversions.

However, it's important to note that not all channels will be effective for all businesses or audiences. It's essential to research and understand your target audience, their online behavior, and which channels are most likely to reach them. With this information, you can create a comprehensive multi-channel digital marketing strategy that effectively reaches and engages your target audience^[18].

Data analysis techniques

Data analysis techniques play a crucial role in pharmaceutical digital marketing by providing insights into customer behavior, campaign effectiveness, and market trends. Here are some key data analysis techniques used in pharmaceutical digital marketing:

1. **Customer Segmentation:** Segmenting customers based on demographics, behavior, and preferences allows pharmaceutical companies to tailor their marketing efforts to specific target groups. Data analysis techniques such as clustering algorithms and decision trees can be used to identify distinct customer segments and develop personalized marketing strategies for each group.

2. **Campaign Attribution Analysis:** Determining the effectiveness of different marketing campaigns is essential for optimizing marketing spend. Attribution analysis helps identify which marketing channels, messages, or tactics contribute most to customer conversions or desired actions. Techniques like multichannel attribution modeling, time-series analysis, and A/B testing can be employed to attribute the impact of specific marketing activities^[19].
3. **Social Media Listening:** Social media platforms provide a wealth of data about consumer sentiment, preferences, and discussions related to pharmaceutical products. Analyzing social media data using natural language processing (NLP) techniques, sentiment analysis, and topic modeling can help pharmaceutical companies understand public opinions, identify key influencers, and respond to customer needs effectively.
4. **Predictive Analytics:** Predictive analytics leverages historical data to forecast future trends and outcomes. Pharmaceutical companies can use predictive analytics techniques such as regression analysis, machine learning algorithms, and time series forecasting to predict customer behavior, anticipate market demand, and optimize marketing campaigns accordingly.
5. **Real-Time Data Monitoring:** Monitoring real-time data streams from various digital marketing channels allows companies to track campaign performance, identify anomalies, and make data-driven decisions promptly. Data visualization tools, dashboards, and automated alerts can aid in monitoring key performance indicators (KPIs) and taking immediate actions when necessary.
6. **Competitive Analysis:** Analyzing competitor data helps pharmaceutical companies understand market dynamics, benchmark their performance, and identify areas of opportunity. Techniques like web scraping, text mining, and data aggregation can be employed to gather and analyze competitor data, including pricing information, product launches, and customer reviews.
7. **Ad Performance Analysis:** Analyzing the performance of digital advertisements can provide insights into ad reach, engagement, and conversion rates. Key metrics such as click-through rates (CTRs), conversion rates, and return on ad spend (ROAS) can be tracked and analyzed to optimize ad placements, targeting, and messaging.

It's worth noting that data analysis techniques should comply with applicable privacy and data protection regulations, such as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), when handling sensitive customer and patient data in the pharmaceutical industry.

RESULTS

Comparison of digital marketing strategies used by domestic and multinational pharmaceutical companies in India

Strategies that made HUL a great success in India as an MNC

M&A strategy: 1990s was the M&A decade for HUL. HUL tends to eat up its competition or buyout firms which they think can be better managed by HUL leadership. This strategy of HUL proved beneficial at the turn of the century, where it had good market share across segments

1993 – Brooke Bond (HUL subsidiary), acquired the Kisan business (jams and ketchup) from the UB Group, and Dollops ice-cream from Cadbury's

1994 – Merger of HUL's key competitor, Tata Oil Mills Company; JVs with US-based Kimberly-Clark (for baby and women hygiene products) and Tata's Lakme (for cosmetics)

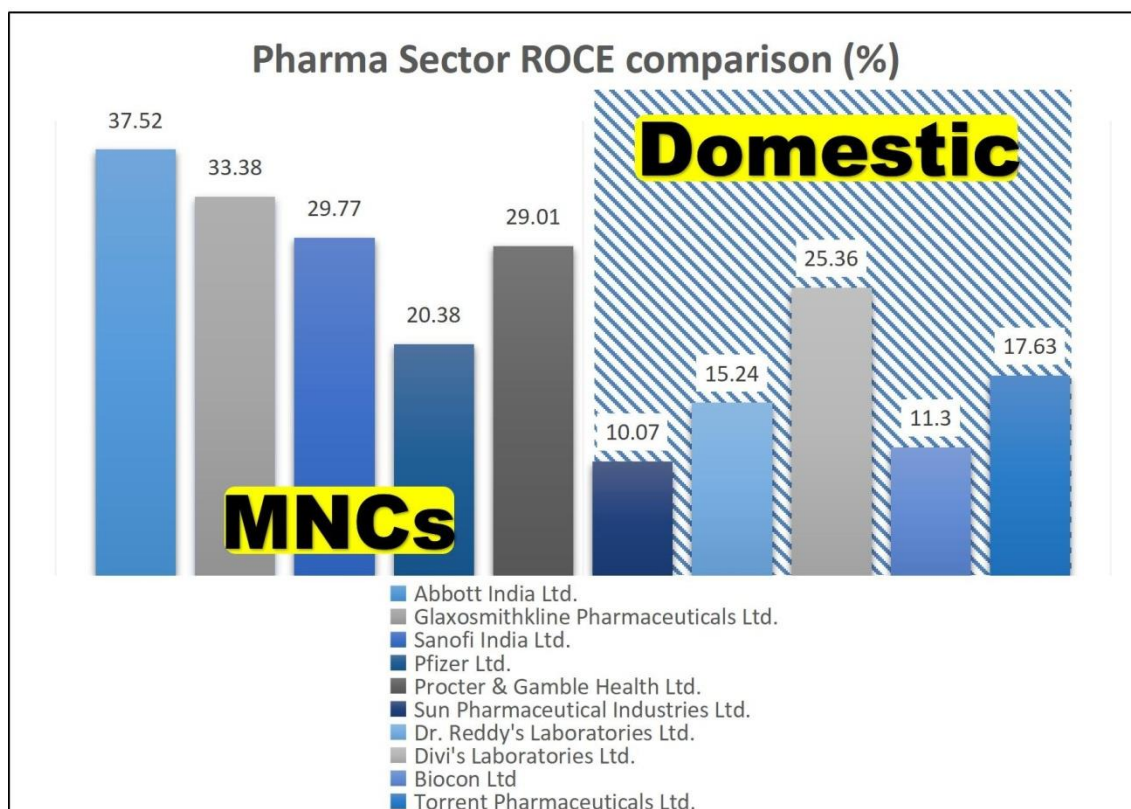
1998 – Merger of Pond's India with HUL, acquiring Tata's 50% stake in the Lakme-Lever JV, and buying 74% in Modern Foods

Demographic Diversification: What Samsung and Xiaomi did with smartphones in India, HUL has been doing this for the past 2 decades. It creates products for every person in the demographic value

chain. From Rs.10 to Rs.500, it has products with different names catering to different sections. Soaps: Lux, Lifebuoy, Dove, Pears, etc. (Pan India), Breeze, Liril, Moti, Hamam, Rexona (Region focussed) Shampoo: Sunsilk, Tresemme, Clear, Dove

Additionally, some names are itself big brands producing different products. Essentially, at times HUL products are competing with themselves only:

Dove is in body washes, hand and body lotions, facial cleansers, deodorants, shampoos, conditioners Lifebouy: Bar soaps, liquid handwash, hand sanitizer and talc.



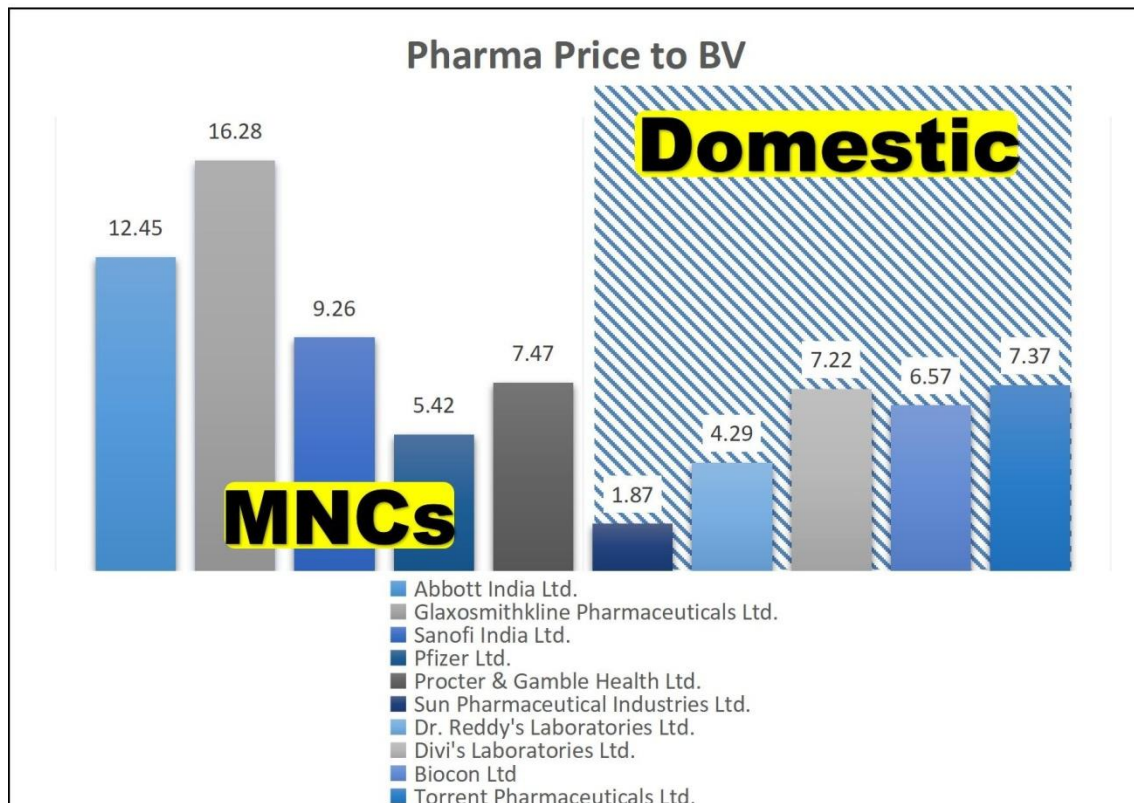
Strategies that made Marico a great success in India as a domestic franchise

Core Business: Marico knew that it did not have the parental support what HUL had in the form for Unilever. Also, it didn't have the deep pockets to just acquire anything under the sun. Thus, it focussed on brand leadership (Parachute and Saffola) and extension of these winning brands under different segments (Oats, Honey, Body Lotions).

Safeguarding winning brands and maintaining leadership: Marico took on HUL's Nihar brand in the late 90s and by 2006, it compelled the mighty HUL to sell off its Nihar hair oil to Marico. This was the aggressive nature of Marico to protect and extend its market leadership. Marico never allows competition to creep in, especially in the hair oil segment.

Simple Innovations: In early '80s, coconut oil was sold in big tins. Marico decided to change that from tin to plastic to save cost. Also, it started distributing smaller SKUs of oil for greater portability and ease of use. However, rats started attacking the plastic and the oil also oozed out of the bottle, as the bottles were square shaped. Thus, Marico applied a very unique approach to make the bottle round shaped such that rats would not grip it properly and also packed the bottle in such a way that there was no leakage.

Thus, both HUL and Marico used different approaches to capture market share and grow their respective franchise. There is no one formula fits all solution in the Indian context.



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