

Digital Marketing in small and Medium-sized Companies (SMEs)

Marketing digital en las pequeñas y medianas empresas (PYMES)

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Abstract

The objective of the research is to determine brain dominance based on the Ned Hermann model, the way of thinking, as is the way of learning of the students of the marketing career of the Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo.



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The research will allow the facilitators to know the communicative and cognitive power of the students and their level of thought to address the skills, values and identity from a creative, participatory point of view in the teaching-learning process. The results indicate the presence of single and double dominance profiles in marketing students, ruling out the triadic and total profiles; 40 individuals (66.7%) have a simple dominance profile, 16 people (26.7%) have a double dominance profile and 4 of the 60 students under study (6.7%) do not have any type of profile. The research will allow teachers to know the communicative and cognitive models of the students.

Keywords: SMEs, marketing, digital marketing, SEO, SEM.

Resumen

Las PYMES utilizan el marketing digital en sus canales digitales para llegar a sus clientes de forma global. El marketing digital ha evolucionado a lo largo de los años y seguirá creciendo en el futuro. El uso de diferentes herramientas actuales por parte de las PYMES ha permitido que muchas de estas empresas se posicionen y mejoren su presencia digital. Es así, que este artículo presenta, una revisión de cómo el marketing digital orientado a las páginas web se ha convertido en un complemento para las técnicas de mercadotecnia. Igualmente despliega las estrategias y herramientas que más utiliza en el ámbito de las PYMES para contribuir a que se logren los objetivos de estas unidades empresariales.

Palabras clave: SMEs, marketing, digital marketing, SEO, SEM.

Introduction

SMEs' development has resulted in SMEs getting a platform for marketing their products, services, and brands. SMEs can reach out to more customers in the market. This is done through the digital media utilized by the digital marketing campaigns. Digital marketing has played a significant role in promoting SMEs as all businesses, small or large, are given equal chances by digital marketing (De Pelsmacker et al., 2018). The SMEs optimize their website so that when it is visible, the customers cannot leave their website, have not purchased a product, or find specific information about

the product or services they require. SEO, therefore, increases the customer purchasing power of products from a website. To boost their Search Engine Rankings SMEs, invest in Search Engine Optimization. SEO ensures more web engagement for customers who need purchasing products. SEM increases the visibility of the brand, products, and services to the target customers.

Different studies show how web accessibility and SEO and SEM are related. An increase in web traffic reflects customers' interest in the website and increases the potential for more sales to be sold on the web. The digital marketing strategies put into place by these SMEs include understanding their brand and their target customers. They define S.M.A.R.T. and create customer personas. They use some tools to conduct their online research marketplace. They also perform competitive analysis. New web technologies have contributed to digital marketing. The new technologies include artificial intelligence, chatbots, blockchains, and others (Kotane et al., 2019). These positively impact the SMEs product as they allow customers to try the product before using it, tracks customer behavior, optimizing their campaigns in real-time.

To reach prospective customers, digital marketing is used in both small and medium-sized companies (SMEs). Digital marketing includes the use of email marketing, mobile phone messaging, and others. Digital marketing enables SMEs to reach more targeted customers at a lower cost; it increases the ROI, enhances CRM, and allows effective tracking of future campaigns in these businesses. In digital marketing, customers are greatly influenced by both the negative and the positive reviews of a product. It is, therefore, empowerment to customers, customers are offered a personalized experience, and the brand image is improved (Herhausen et al., 2020).

Development

Digital marketing evolved in the year 1990. The coming of the internet and the development of the Web 1.0 platform resulted in the digital age. Web 1.0 was a platform that allowed individuals to search for information over the web but not share using the website. The digital marketing era began in 1993 when Hot-wired purchased some banner ads for advertisement (Shalauddin, 2022). New technologies like Yahoo

emerged in the digital market the following year. The launch of Yahoo, which made close to one million hits, made the wholesalers change in the digital marketing era space. Small and medium-sized businesses started optimizing their websites to pull in higher search engine rankings. In 1998 google came to place, and Microsoft launched the MSN search engine while Yahoo brought Yahoo web search into the market. The internet burst is giving space to more and more businesses to operate effectively.

However, search engine traffic was identified in the year 2006. This search engine traffic grew to about 6.4 billion in a single month. The development of the Web 2.0 made people become more active participants rather than passive. Its development allowed people to interact with businesses. In 2004 the US businesses reported \$2.9 billion through internet marketing and advertising. Social networking sites exist, resulting in small and medium-sized businesses getting opportunities to market their brands and products. To tailor promotions and marketing, cookies were developed to track the customers' browsing habits and usage patterns of the business web (Kaabi et al., 2019). Customers are therefore able to access products digitally marketed.

Various bodies of literature suggest that SMEs have grown at a higher rate in the last decade and have recently gained momentum. The SMEs have been started by young entrepreneurs who are against the traditional business rules. The young entrepreneurs extensively work on innovation while taking higher risks. They are set apart from the crowd by their entrepreneurial attitude. SMEs' primary source of customer acquisition is online marketing; therefore, these young entrepreneurs enter the market knowing their products would sell through online marketing. SMEs enterprises must create awareness of their business to attract their target customers. It might be doom for such enterprises' failure to accomplish brand awareness. Digital marketing, therefore, enables customers to keep on buying from these enterprises when they are aware of the products sold. SMEs utilize digital marketing to market products and services (Febriyantoro et al., 2019).

In order to reach out to more customers in the market, digital media are utilized in digital marketing campaigns. The power of the internet is primarily used by the

campaigns to ensure magnification of the effects of the campaign, and their impacts are measured through online monitoring and measuring tools. For SMEs, the internet has created a helpful marketing option for them. Digital marketing has played a significant role in the promotion of SMEs. Equal chances are given to every business by digital marketing (Desai, 2019). Regardless of the size of the business, there is a similarity in the competitive environment.

SMEs have equal opportunities in the digital world. It also enables SMEs to earn more impressive ROI. This is achieved because digital marketing focuses more on how to make money from the marketing efforts. Online marketing offers an impressive return on investment to SMEs. Digital marketing allows for the tracking of SMEs' effectiveness. It makes it easy for these enterprises to monitor the effectiveness of their campaigns. Campaigns can be monitored in real-time to understand if they work or not (Μπαρούτης, 2022). Digital marketing is sure for SMEs as it is cost-effective and the return on investment is much higher when compared to the traditional method used by the SMEs, which includes print and electronic media.

The digital marketing strategies put into place by these SMEs help define their brands; they use and understand them. They identify their unique selling points (USPs) to ensure their businesses succeed. It becomes easier for them to define their brand once the USPs have been identified. Another strategy is to create customer personas by understanding demographic information such as age, location, and gender and incorporating the things that motivate customers to choose their products and services. Google Analytics helps create the buyer personas and defines S.M.A.R.T. as a strategy for marketing their business objectives and KPIs. The S.M.A.R.T. stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound goals (Medne et al., 2019). It is defined by, for example, increasing the leads generated within six months from the contact form by 20%.

SMEs identify their target market for their customers. Using a tool such as Google Keyword Planner, Google Trends, or Facebook Audience Insights, the SMEs research online marketplace places and identify their potential marketplaces, thus knowing

where to get their customers. They perform competitive analysis by analyzing their competitors using Social Bakers, SEMrush, and Similar Web tools. This information enables SMEs to formulate business strategies ahead of their competitors. Social Media is a strategy that SMEs use and plays a significant role in the marketing plan. It is affordable and relatively effective; therefore, it works for B2b and B2C marketing (Mitrega, 2019).

In the purchase decision process, most of the growing number of businesses in SMEs use social media platforms. The business type determines the social media platform that can optimize the strategy put into place by the business. Another digital marketing strategy is an online advertisement. Most SMEs have started recently, and it is unrealistic for businesses to expect customers to flock into the business immediately. Exposure for these businesses can be increased through organic search and paid advertisements such as display ads and Google AdWords. The paid ads offer different benefits, including target customer reach, payment only when the customers click the ads, budget control, and immediate results gain (Dumitriu et al., 2019).

The process of improving the visibility of the website is termed SEO. SEO uses organic search through different rankings algorithms on search engine results pages. The SMEs optimize their website so that when the website is visible, the customers cannot leave their website having not purchased a product or find certain information about the product or services they require (Poturak et al., 2022). SMEs use SEO experts to identify the best keywords to optimize their website, thus increasing rankings in organic results on search engines. SMEs invest in Search Engine Optimization to boost their Search Engine Rankings. They use this practice to attract and get more valuable traffic.

To increase their global reach and competition with more significant businesses and corporations, SMEs use Search Engines. Therefore, SEO enhances SMEs' global business visibility (Kumar et al., 2021). The effectiveness of the SEO approach puts small companies ahead of large and well-known companies. While engaging in SEO campaigns, SMEs tend to enjoy their benefits from this campaign. This includes an

increase in the number of customers who visit the website, and more engagement of the site, thus increasing sales growth per day; thus, sales revenues are raised.

SMEs endorse their goods, services, and brands through digital marketing, including websites, social media, email, apps, and others. According to the research, customers rely heavily on digital means to purchase products and services. Insights from the google market revealed that customers who begin their searches on the Search Engines include 48%, those at the brand sites include 33% and those that use the mobile apps include 26%(Wang et al., 2016).In the US, SMEs have implemented different digital marketing strategies, which have increased their market growth. They contribute to 50% of the US economy's gross domestic product and are growing by 11 percent annually.

In a study by Moreno et al., (2013), there was a clear relationship between the web accessing instructions and SEO on-page factors. Based on the results of this study, it was found that there is a negative effect of the rankings on the SERPs caused by the website accessing barriers. It was identified that the use of SEO techniques improved the accessibility of SME websites. Webpage low rankings can be caused by poor navigation on the website and the availability of specific web scripts. This is because it is a barrier to user interactions and accessibility to the website. The web accessibility and the SEO case study were done previously by experts in those fields. There was evidence showing the relationship between web accessibility factors and SEO. According to the study, search rankings can be negatively influenced by accessibility barriers. It also showed that the link between web accessibility and SEO is the accessibility to the web content. The study also showed the additional benefits of using SEO.

An increase in web traffic reflects customers' interest in the website and increases the potential for more sales to be sold on the web. At the retailer level, an increase in web traffic predicts the number of sales that are likely to be sold. Web traffic is another measure of the goal achievement for internet websites. This is because higher traffic generates higher advertisement revenues placed on the site. Another indication of web

accessibility is the customers' visit duration, which increases through SEO. Measurement of visit duration to the customer is measured and has some advantages. Visit duration is tied directly to the website revenue and promoting benefits. A longer duration of website visits maintains the user's interest in that site. It gives more time to customers to make decisions and complete their purchase transactions for acquiring the product (Makrides et al., 2020). Repeat visits are generated with the help of the user interest, thus returning resulting in the long-term sales. SMEs use the website duration as an indicator of future earnings. This is because the more extended web visits result in higher returns in that particular month.

According to a study conducted in the United States, research dealt with 138 US web-based businesses. It analyzed the visibility of the web-based on the search engines, how it was ranked, its popularity, and its brand image (Serrano-Cinca et al., 2010). The study found that SMEs achieve higher positions than large companies because they are popular with their customers in digital marketing, especially blogs and online marketing. With the help of Search Engine Optimization, they attained a higher position because many websites linked to their virtual shops. However, the research could have done more research on the relationship between internet positioning and the performance of webs.

SEM is a form of digital marketing that allows SMEs to market themselves using paid adverts on search engine results pages (SERPs). Bidding of keywords is done by the advertisers in Google or Bing, which the customers might enter while looking for a product or a service (Peter et al., 2021). This, therefore, allows the advertiser ads to appear alongside results for the search queries. It is the only medium that allows the advertiser's products to be seen by the customers when they need to purchase products or services.

Search Engine Marketing has become an important marketing strategy for SMEs. SEM allows businesses to reach customers when searching for the products and services that are offered in the business. SEM allows businesses to target specific customers in regions, states, or cities. SEM allows businesses to schedule ads within the desired

period. It is cost-effective for businesses that work with smaller budgets. Upon the customer seeing the ad, it is when the advertiser can pay. Using SEM ensures that businesses are more visible to online users, thus increasing the number of customers to visit the web, thus sales growth. Incorporating SEM into marketing allows a business to be ahead of its competitors (Acuna-Salazar et al.).

The development of new web technologies has contributed to the increased effectiveness of digital marketing. The development of bots which are relatively affordable for SMEs and flexible has made these businesses improve their customer service. It is achieved through the bots quickly giving data and related answers, and they take requests. The bots can be integrated into a website and get information to use in digital marketing strategies (De cosmo et al., 2021). Cloud technology has allowed SMEs to get massive customer data, thus giving away big data. Through this technology, corporations can understand their customers, thus helping them create more accurate targets and ads that are personalized.

Artificial intelligence has come into existence to hold the promise of making more accurate, fast marketing decisions and predictions. AI is cognitive reasoning used and applied in the computer and algorithmic process (Mufadhhol et al., 2020). This has unleashed the creativity of digital marketing. Machine learning executes and tests billions of data points which help marketers adapt and optimize their campaigns in real-time. Blockchains have enabled marketers to use blockchain to track and keep audiences engaged in their adverts. Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality allow customers to try the products online before they buy thus allowing them to explore products, ensure brand engagement, and buy simultaneously.

Conclusion

Digital marketing developed over the years and has resulted in the growth of SMEs. SEO and SEM increase brand awareness by making products and services visible to customers globally. Customers are greatly influenced by both the negative and the positive reviews of a product in digital marketing. They also allow the SMEs to target specific customers depending on the products they sell (Bala et al., 2018). Recently,

customers have relied heavily on digital means to purchase products and services. The incorporation of SEM by SMEs allows them to be ahead of their competitors. Digital marketing has been impacted by the new web technologies. The use of bots, for example, allows more accessible and quick replies to the customer's request for their product. Blockchains have enabled marketers to use blockchain to track and keep audiences engaged in their adverts. Different digital marketing strategies implemented by SMEs include; understand their brands and unique selling points. Creation of customer personas. They are performing competitive analysis. SMEs should incorporate digital marketing in their businesses to grow and reach a wide range of customers globally. New web technologies should be applied in digital marketing.

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