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"INVESTIGATING DYNAMICS: A THOROUGH RESEARCH INQUIRY INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTAGRAM AS A MARKETING TOOL IN THE CONTEXT OF MADURAI CITY"

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Abstract

In today's technologically advanced world, social media and online marketing are not new. Social media has evolved into one of the most important aspects of human life. Instagram, a social media platform, was initially released as an unspecialized app. However, Instagram gradually gained popularity as both a marketing platform and an app. Instagram makes it easier for traders around the world to interact with customers and promote their products than ever before. Instagram connects many traders and customers with its diverse user base. People have contributed the ability to market it, despite the fact that it is not intended for that purpose. Instagram provides unique features such as reels, posts, IGTV, and other modes that aid in effective and efficient marketing. The goal of this study is to see if Instagram marketing is truly worth the publicity. There has been discussion about Instagram's potential as a marketing tool, and solid data has been presented.

Keywords: - Effectiveness, Instagram, Marketing tool.

INTRODUCTION

The era of social media and photo sharing apps is fully arrived. Instagram is currently one of the most popular topics on social media. It will explain how to get started and why it's important. Instagram is essentially a smartphone app that allows users to share photos with others in a social network. The world's largest social media network, Facebook, purchased the app from its developers in 2012. Instagram was created to capitalise on the growing technological convergence between smartphones and photography. Every year, the built-in camera features of new mobile devices become a major selling point, primarily because of the growing world of social sharing centred around photos and short videos. Instagram was founded by a group of young, talented entrepreneurs. Instagram can be used to advertise business products and services. Its focus on visual communication distinguishes it from other social media platforms. Instagram is the ideal platform for businesses to promote their brand and movement to customers while increasing revenue.

CONTENTS

1.	Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Consumer Behavior – Ms. P. Akshaya and Dr. V. Devika	1
2.	Purchase Behaviour Towards Organic Food Products in E- Commerce – Ms. S. Alhafeza and Dr. V. Devika	7
3.	Startups: Catalysts for Entrepreneurial Innovation in E-Commerce – Ms. U. Bharathi and Dr. V. Geetha	1
4.	Financial Analysis and Performance of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation-For the Period of 2013 to 2023 – P. Dhanalakshmi and Dr. M. Gurupandi	1
5.	A Study on Job Satisfaction of Women Teachers in Private Schools with Special Reference to Kanniyakumari District – Mr. V. Dhaneesh and Dr. D.M. Hemsilin Nija	2
6.	A Study on Dimensions of Training Need Analysis of Employees with Respect to Export Company, Madurai – Mr. J. Jeyakumar and Dr. N. Rajasekaran	3
7.	Analysis of Housing Loan in Financial Sector with Special Reference to The Income Tax Assessee of Entrepreneurs S. Kasthuripriya	3
8.	Green Banking in India: A Study of Various Strategies Adopted by Banks for Sustainable Development – Ms.S.Lakshmi priyaa and Dr.K.Balasathya	4
9.	Investigating Dynamics: A Thorough Research Inquiry into the Effectiveness of Instagram as a Marketing Tool in the Context of Madurai City – Lawrence Benadict V, Dr. V. Suganya and Dr. J. Suresh	4
10.	Product Line Expansion for Growth in Business – A Study with Reference to Tin Container ManuFacturers – Dr. R. Mahalakshmi and Dr. M. PonnienSelvi	5
11.	A Study on The Evolution of Skill-Based Entrepreneurship – Dr. G. Manimuthu and Dr. P. Iswaryalakshmi	5
12.	Corporate Social Responsibility Practices Followed by Banks in Tenkasi District: A Theoretical Assimilation – Ponmathi A and Prof. S Sheik Abdullah	5

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REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Sirisha Deepthi Sornapudi and Meenu Srivastava (2021) Retailers are continuously coming up with new and creative ways to draw in customers and foster brand loyalty, according to an eye-opening study on the influence of Instagram on clothing purchases. The goal of the paper is to offer a thorough understanding of the research that has been done thus far on Instagram and its impact on consumers worldwide. The impact of user- and marketer-generated content on consumers' mental states is discussed. It is talked about how Instagram users' purchasing decisions are influenced by influencers. The concept of Establishing brand communities and co-creating value on social media is presented. **Alexis Renee Jones & Seung-Eun (Joy) Lee (2021)** in Factors influencing engagement in fashion brands' Instagram posts says that the purpose of this study has two parts: a) to investigate how fashion brands use Instagram as a marketing tool, and b) to identify factors of Instagram posts influencing followers' engagement. Based on the engagement ranking, a content analysis was done on Instagram posts from the top ten fashion brands. They noted the various facets of fashion brands' Instagram usage as well as the various components and approaches that work well to boost follower engagement. According to our findings, Instagram features like captions, emojis, images, and mega-influencers can all be very effective at boosting engagement. The findings of this study contribute to social media marketing literature by exploring social engagement on fashion brands' Instagram pages. The results provide practical implications for fashion brands in ways in which they can effectively use Instagram. **Daniel Augustinus, Universitas Pelita Harapan, Agnes Agnes (2020)** Social networking sites have emerged and revolutionised the world, bringing people and the globe closer together, according to research on the influence of Instagram marketing adoption towards consumer purchase decisions in the fashion industry. The purpose of this study was to look into how social networking sites affect consumer choice in the fashion industry. In order to collect the required information and data, questionnaires are distributed to 110 respondents who use social media in Medan. The results of this research it is concluded that social networking sites (the usability of Instagram) influences and give impact towards consumer purchase decision on fashion. The results also demonstrate that Instagram influences fashion consumer purchase decision through its usability such as good metrics, eye catching content, and recommendations from others. **Xin L. Wong, Rose C. Liu, Deshan F. Sebaratnam (2019)** within Instagram's changing role in #medicine indicates that social media is becoming a necessary component of everyday life and that the healthcare industry is using it more and more. Instagram is a free social media platform for sharing photos and videos that has been widely used in medical fields with a strong visual component. Here, we go over the benefits and drawbacks of using it in contemporary medicine. **Vaibhavi Nandagiri & Leena Philip (2018)** This study examines the work of well-known social media influencers and the effect they have on their followers according to Impact of influencers from Instagram and YouTube on their followers. The influencer forums selected for social media are exclusive to YouTube and Instagram. The researcher aims to determine whether an influencer's work that involves reviewing or endorsing a product benefits their followers. For the experiment, ten participants between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one were chosen, and they were shown pictures and videos of YouTubers and Instagrammers. It was concluded that the work of an Influencer is positive and that they do have an impact on the followers, as the followers see that the influencer is a credible source and thus are willing to try out the products reviewed and endorsed. The influencer also notices favourable feedback from their followers as well as from the brands they support. **Ahmadinejad, B., & Najafi Asli, H. (2017)** in E-business through social media: a Quantitative Survey (Case Study: Instagram) says that E-marketing is not only associated with selling products and services. This study prioritised statistical findings over theoretical topics. In fact, an online survey was randomly distributed to 80 Instagram users, as a result of their lack of proper knowledge regarding social media and its growing popularity. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics inference were the two areas of analysis for the results. The results of inferential statistics indicate that people are looking for brand awareness and are Curious about the messages of the brand. The study showed that there is significant relationship between commenting on posts and brand awareness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Identify Instagram as a marketing tool in general.
- Analyse Instagram's marketing mix among users in South Tamil Nadu.
- Evaluate the impact of Instagram usage on customer satisfaction and business outcomes.
- To make suggestions based on the findings of the current study.

Scope of the Study: - One type of social media marketing is Instagram marketing, which involves advertising a brand on the platform. This social media platform helps brands reach a large audience, raise their profile, and boost sales. Instagram marketing allows brands to reach a large audience that actively interacts with them and wants to buy from them. This is one of its primary benefits. This social network functions as a marketing tool and provides a few other benefits.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

One hundred and Sixty people were given a well-designed questionnaire. Convenient sampling is the sampling technique. Respondents were given Google forms that were created. IBM SPSS STATISTICS version 28.0.1.1(15) was used to analyse the collected data. The study's secondary data came from books, magazines, journals, and websites.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

Table 1 Preference of Instagram as A Marketing Tool

PERFERENCE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Easy to communicate	56	35
It can reach lot of people	86	53.7
Keeping an eye on competitors	10	6.3
It increases the brand name	8	5
TOTAL	1600	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 demonstrates that because Instagram simplifies communication, 35% of respondents prefer it. 53.7% of respondents said they preferred it because it is widely available. 6.3% of respondents said they preferred it because it's a great way to monitor your competitors. Five percent of respondents believe it enhances the brand name.

Table 2 Frequent Selling Product Through Instagram

PRODUCTS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
All items	2	1.3
Clothes	64	40.0
Cosmetics	40	25.0
Digital arts & gifts	28	17.5
Nothing	2	1.3
Organic	24	15
TOTAL	160	100

Source: Primary Data

According to Table 2, 40% of respondents believe that clothing is the best-selling product on Instagram, while 25% believe that cosmetics are the best-selling product. According to 17.5% of respondents, digital arts and gifts are the most popular products in India. According to 15% of respondents, organic products sell better on Instagram than any other product. 1.3% say none of the products mentioned sell better on Instagram; and 1.3% say every product mentioned sells better on Instagram.

Table 3 Best Practices In Instagram Marketing

PRACTICES	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
High quality visuals	62	38.75
Top of nstagram changes and updates	62	38.75
Pay attention to what the viewer's need	10	6.25
Tell visual stories	26	16.25
TOTAL	160	100

Source: Primary Data

According to Table 3, 38.8% of respondents believe that the best practices for Instagram marketing are high-quality visuals and staying up to date with Instagram changes and updates; 16.25% believe that telling visual stories is the best approach, and 6.25% believe that paying attention to what viewers need is the best approach.

Table 4 Preference of Mode Of Payment

MODES OF PAYMENT	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
COD	20	25.0
Online payment	58	72.5
Other	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

Source: Primary data

Table 4 shows that when it comes to Instagram marketing, 72.5% of respondents prefer online payment methods, 25% prefer cash on delivery (COD), and 2.5% prefer both.

Table 5 MISTAKES MADE IN INSTAGRAM MARKETING

MISTAKES MADE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Lack of unique selling proposition	22	27.5
Failing to earn repeat customers	30	37.5
Not using Instagram stories	11	13.75
No engagement with an audience	17	21.25
Total	80	100.0

Source: Primary Data

According to Table 5, 27.50% of respondents believe that not having a unique selling proposition is a mistake in Instagram marketing; 37.50% believe that users' failure to gain repeat business is a mistake in Instagram marketing; 13.75% believe that not using Instagram stories is a mistake in Instagram marketing; and 21.25% believe that not engaging with an audience is a mistake in Instagram marketing.

FINDINGS

- The majority of responders (83.75%) are between the ages of 18 and 25.
- Majority of the respondents (46.3%) are residents in Semi-Urban areas.
- Students make up the majority of respondents (63.7%).
- Every respondent (100%) uses Instagram.
- Due to Instagram's large user base (53.7%), the majority of respondents said they preferred it.
- The majority of respondents (40%) stated that the most popular product on Instagram is clothing.
- The majority of respondents (38.75%) think that the best practices in Instagram marketing are both having high-quality images and staying up to date with updates and changes on the platform.
- The majority of respondents (72.5%) favour making payments online.
- The majority of respondents (37.50%) believe that the error made in Instagram marketing is not gaining recurring business.

SUGGESTIONS

- It is suggested that Instagram marketing is a useful tool for marketing right now and that using Instagram to promote a wide network of people is made easier. Instagram is a more profitable platform for product marketing and sales, especially in the wake of COVID-19.
- According to the respondents, Instagram is a useful tool for marketing and for product sales. Additionally, they stated that Instagram marketing and online shopping are highly beneficial to users these days, meaning that both buyers and sellers can benefit from them. They claim that Instagram offers more profit than real sales and is safe and secure for online purchases and sales.
- It is essential to actively engage with the community. Getting back to followers in Madurai through messages, comments, and mentions is helpful in establishing a rapport. By fostering a sense of community around the brand, this two-way communication helps to humanise and trust the brand. Businesses should also think about holding surveys, quizzes, and Q&A sessions to promote communication and input.
- Collaborating with local influencers is another effective strategy for Instagram marketing in Madurai. Finding regional influencers with a sizable fan base can help a brand gain more recognition and reach. These influencers have the ability to offer genuine viewpoints on goods and services that appeal to the community.
- One proactive way for a brand to demonstrate its connection to Madurai is to promote and participate in local events, festivals, and celebrations. Businesses can demonstrate their commitment to the community and increase brand visibility by coordinating their marketing efforts with the city's calendar. This way, they can take advantage of the heightened attention during special events.
- Promoting user-generated content enhances the brand's authenticity on Instagram. Companies can design challenges or campaigns to inspire Madurai followers to produce content about their goods or services. Putting this user-generated content on the brand's profile highlights authentic experiences in the context of the area while also fostering trust.
- Giveaways and competitions catered to the Madurai audience's interests can increase participation and draw in new fans. Giving Madurai Instagram followers-only offers or discounts fosters a sense of exclusivity and entices users to follow the account in order to take advantage of exclusive promotions.

- It is essential to regularly analyse Instagram Insights in order to optimise the marketing plan. Companies should monitor how well their content is performing, spot trends, and modify their strategy as necessary. By using a data-driven strategy, marketing campaigns on Instagram are kept efficient and in line with Madurai's audience preferences.

CONCLUSION

One of the most effective substitutes and contemporary forms of marketing in the age of social media usage is Instagram marketing. According to our research, Instagram marketing will eventually have a wider audience and better response. In the city of Madurai, Instagram is a potent and useful marketing tool. The platform presents a distinctive chance for businesses in Madurai to establish a connection with their target audience, enhance brand awareness, and stimulate engagement due to its extensive popularity and emphasis on visuals. Instagram's visually rich content enables companies to present their goods or services in an enticing way, giving customers a more tailored and interesting experience. Additionally, the platform features like Reels, IGTV, and Stories offer a variety of channels for inventive marketing approaches, helping Madurai businesses stay current and engage their audience in fresh ways. The utilisation of location tags, hashtags, and partnerships enhances the outreach of marketing campaigns, enabling companies to penetrate local markets and cultivate a feeling of community. In order to stay competitive and build a strong online presence, businesses in Madurai should take advantage of Instagram's marketing capabilities as the platform continues to change and adapt to the ever-changing social media landscape. Instagram has the potential to significantly contribute to business growth and success in Madurai through careful planning, interesting content, and regular audience interaction.

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