

Impact Of Digital Marketing On Customer Acquisition In The Sirsa Automobile Industry

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of digital marketing on customer acquisition in the Sirsa automobile industry, focusing on the effectiveness of various digital strategies and platforms. A sample of 185 automobile marketing professionals participated in the survey, revealing a workforce predominantly composed of male employees aged 45–55 years, with marketing employees forming the majority. The findings show a strong positive perception of digital marketing strategies, especially in areas like social media, email promotions, and investment in digital tools. Customer acquisition emerged as a significant predictor of digital marketing strategy adoption, with regression analysis revealing a high R-value (0.802) and 64.3% explanatory power. Among the digital platforms, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Google Ads, and WhatsApp Marketing were identified as the most effective for attracting new customers, while influencer marketing and SMS were least favored. The study highlights the growing reliance on digital tools to reach broader audiences and enhance dealership visibility.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Customer Acquisition, Automobile Industry.

INTRODUCTION

New technologies are being implemented over time to perform various business functions, thereby altering the way companies function. With increasing businesses incorporating digital technologies into their everyday operations, particularly after the Covid-19 epidemic, the marketing function is one of the most altered corporate activities. Digital technologies have changed how consumers engage with their favourite brands (and how businesses connect with their customers (Owuor, T. A., 2022). With a small number of registered businesses engaged in intense competition for the same market, the automobile sector is among the most concentrated in the world. Studies state that in emerging countries, the rate of vehicle manufacturing greatly outpaces the purchasing capacity, and in order for motor industry companies to stay competitive, they must incorporate innovative marketing methods (Singh, S., & Sao, A., 2021).

In order to sell and deliver a product to customers, businesses now use digital communication platforms to convey the value of their goods, services, or brands. Advertising, selling, and delivering goods and services to the ultimate customer are all included in marketing activities. At the correct time, place, and with the right language, marketing seeks to enable targeted communication of a product's attributes to the right individuals. Businesses have adopted digital technologies to help with a wide range of tasks, including marketing, after they were praised as crucial communication tools (Dahiya, R., & Gayatri., 2018). Digital marketing is the term used to describe marketing that uses digital communication tools. Digital marketing, sometimes known as online marketing, is the practice of connecting with potential customers and promoting brands through digital communication technologies like social media, email, web-based advertising, text messaging, and multimedia messages (You, Y., & Joshi, A. M., 2020).

According to studies, email marketing and social media are the most widely used digital marketing techniques. These studies contend that utilising digital marketing platforms boosts consumer involvement, which in turn significantly impacts their propensity to buy. The chance or readiness to buy particular things is referred to as buying intention. It is a part of consumer behaviour and can be used to describe how a person feels about the need for a product. Many studies assert that a number of indicators, including a customer's individual repurchase rate, propensity to recommend particular goods and services to potential consumers, and interest in particular goods, can be used to determine their purchase intention. Digital marketing raises brand awareness, which is favourably connected with purchase intention. Sellers now have quick, easy, and affordable options to publish and distribute information about their goods and services thanks to the rise of social media platforms like Facebook,

Twitter, and YouTube. More consumers than ever before conduct internet searches before focussing on particular purchase options. This phenomena demonstrates how important digital channels and marketers are in influencing consumers' decisions to buy (Tolani, K., Saraiya, A., & Manohar, S., 2024).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to various study businesses are currently undergoing a significant shift from conventional marketing strategies to complex virtual environments driven by Industry 4.0 technologies. According to studies digital technologies have raised consumer knowledge and shortened the time needed to decide whether to make a purchase (OKECHUKWU, E. C., 2023). According to the report, Indian dealerships have used social media and search engines extensively in order to obtain a competitive edge. The capacity of Indian car companies to market their goods on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram as well as their customised and interactive websites helped them stay strong during the pandemic (Li, J., 2023). According to various studies digital marketing has greatly enhanced businesses' ability to attract younger clients, who are the demographic group most familiar with technology. The social media marketing tactics produce online word-of-mouth (WOM), which significantly influences luxury brand purchases. The dramatic rise in digital payments is proof that digital marketing has led to a rise in online consumer purchases. Previous Studies makes sure that more technological integration with marketing allowed Indian auto dealers to anticipate client needs (Bauer, H., 2018). According to studies TATA Motors has effectively used digital technology to rebrand their image and boost sales in the context of business rebranding. Automobile salespeople have been able to convert traditional points of sale into points of delivery by utilising digital marketing. asserts that social media marketing has greatly increased the competitiveness of the Kenyan auto industry. Despite the fact that the majority of research indicates a favourable correlation between digitisation efforts and customer purchase intention, Adam and Hikmah (2020) raise concerns about the adoption of specific services because websites have shown low user and customer uptake (Wang, Y. Y., Guo, C., Susarla, A., & Sambamurthy, V., 2021).

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the influence of digital marketing strategies on customer acquisition in the automobile sector of Sirsa.
2. To identify the most effective digital platforms used by automobile dealers for attracting new customers.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher uses a descriptive research design for the investigation. Car dealers who operate in the Sirsa region make up the study's sample. To obtain pertinent answers, a structured questionnaire served as the main tool for data gathering. Purposive sampling was used in the study to choose dealers who actively use digital marketing tools. There are 185 dealers in the entire sample.

Analysis and Interpretation

The demographic profile of the respondents provides a clear understanding of their background in terms of gender, age, and designation.

Table No. 1: Percentage Analysis – Demographic Profile

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	163	88.1
	Female	22	11.9
	Total	185	100.0
Age	Less than 35 Years	11	5.9
	35 - 45 Years	71	38.4
	45 - 55 Years	84	45.4
	Above 55 Years	19	10.3
	Total	185	100.0
Designation	Marketing Employee	131	70.8
	Marketing Manager	33	17.8

	Marketing Executive	21	11.4
	Total	185	100.0

Source: (Primary data)

The survey reveals that a vast majority of the respondents are male (88.1%), while only 11.9% are female, indicating a gender imbalance in the marketing workforce of the Sirsa automobile sector. In terms of age distribution, the largest group falls within the 45–55 years range (45.4%), followed by 35–45 years (38.4%), suggesting that most respondents are experienced professionals likely to have significant industry exposure. Younger participants under 35 years constitute only 5.9%, while 10.3% are above 55 years. Regarding designation, marketing employees make up the highest proportion (70.8%), followed by marketing managers (17.8%) and executives (11.4%), reflecting a strong representation of operational-level professionals who are directly involved in implementing digital marketing strategies. This demographic distribution provides valuable context for interpreting the study's findings on digital customer acquisition practices.

The descriptive statistics provide insights into respondents' perceptions of various digital marketing strategies used in the Sirsa automobile industry.

Table No. 2: Descriptive Statistics - Digital Marketing Strategies

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Digital advertising efforts are aligned with current market trends in the automobile industry.	185	4.2865	.82031
Social media platforms are effectively utilized for promoting automobile products and services.	185	4.2757	.90572
Email campaigns and online promotions contribute to increased visibility of automobile dealerships.	185	4.2432	.77338
Investment in digital marketing tools enhances the overall marketing performance of the dealership.	185	4.2649	.87855

Source: (Primary data)

The results indicate a strong positive perception of digital marketing strategies among respondents. The statement "Digital advertising efforts are aligned with current market trends" received the highest mean score of 4.29, suggesting that dealers believe their digital advertising is in sync with evolving market demands. Close behind, "Social media platforms are effectively utilized" had a mean of 4.28, highlighting the central role of platforms like Facebook and Instagram in reaching potential customers. The effectiveness of email campaigns and online promotions was also acknowledged with a mean of 4.24, indicating their contribution to dealership visibility. Furthermore, the belief that investment in digital tools enhances marketing performance was reflected in a mean of 4.26. The relatively low standard deviations (ranging from 0.77 to 0.91) suggest a high level of consensus among respondents. Overall, these findings demonstrate that digital marketing is well-integrated and widely supported in the marketing strategies of automobile dealers in Sirsa.

This section presents descriptive statistics related to the impact of digital marketing on customer acquisition in the Sirsa automobile industry.

Table No. 3: Descriptive Statistics - Customer Acquisition

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Online marketing activities lead to an increase in inquiries from potential automobile buyers.	185	4.2973	.91678
Digital promotions significantly contribute to attracting first-time customers.	185	4.3297	.75501
Search engine and web-based advertisements have a measurable impact on walk-in and online leads.	185	4.2757	.81073

Digital marketing efforts help in reaching a wider customer base beyond the local market.	185	4.3297	.80382
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Source: (Primary data)

The data reveals a highly favorable perception of digital marketing's role in customer acquisition. The statements "Digital promotions significantly contribute to attracting first-time customers" and "Digital marketing efforts help in reaching a wider customer base beyond the local market" both received the highest mean score of 4.33, indicating strong agreement among respondents regarding the strategic importance of digital campaigns in broadening customer reach and drawing in new buyers. The item "Online marketing activities lead to an increase in inquiries" had a mean of 4.30, emphasizing the effectiveness of these strategies in generating buyer interest. Additionally, "Search engine and web-based advertisements" scored a mean of 4.28, showing that these tools have a measurable influence on both walk-in traffic and online leads. The standard deviation values, all below 0.92, reflect consistent responses across the sample. Collectively, these results suggest that automobile dealers in Sirsa recognize digital marketing as a critical driver for attracting and engaging new customers.

The regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of Customer Acquisition on Digital Marketing Strategies among automobile dealers in Sirsa.

Table No. 4: Regression Analysis – Impact of digital marketing strategies on customer acquisition

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	0.802	.643	.640	.60550		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Acquisition						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.290	1	29.290	178.133	.000 ^b
	Residual	30.090	183	.164		
	Total	59.380	184			
a. Dependent Variable: Digital Marketing Strategies						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Acquisition						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.194	.232		5.145	.000
	Customer Acquisition	.713	.053	.702	13.347	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Digital Marketing Strategies						

Source: (Primary data)

The model shows a strong positive correlation between customer acquisition and digital marketing strategies, with an R value of 0.802. The R Square value of 0.643 indicates that approximately 64.3% of the variation in digital marketing strategies is explained by customer acquisition. The Adjusted R Square of 0.640 further supports the model's reliability, and the standard error of the estimate (0.60550) shows relatively low prediction error.

Table No. 5: Percentage Analysis - Which of the following digital platforms are considered most effective for attracting new customers?

Which of the following digital platforms are considered most effective for attracting new customers?			
		Frequency	Percent
	Social Media Marketing (e.g., Facebook, Instagram)	31	16.8

Which of the following digital platforms are considered most effective for attracting new customers?	Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	36	19.5
	Google Ads / Paid Search Campaigns	35	18.9
	WhatsApp Marketing	32	17.3
	Online Auto Portals (e.g., CarDekho, OLX Autos)	27	14.6
	Dealership's Official Website	20	10.8
	Influencer Collaborations / Video Marketing Platforms (e.g., YouTube)	2	1.1
	SMS Marketing	2	1.1
	Total	185	100.0

Source: (Primary Data)

The data highlights the preferences of automobile dealers in Sirsa regarding the most effective digital platforms for attracting new customers. Among the options provided, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) ranks highest, with 19.5% of respondents identifying it as the most effective, closely followed by Google Ads/Paid Search Campaigns (18.9%) and WhatsApp Marketing (17.3%). Social Media Marketing, such as Facebook and Instagram, also holds significant importance with 16.8%, indicating that visual and interactive content remains a key tool for engagement.

Meanwhile, Online Auto Portals like CarDekho and OLX Autos account for 14.6%, suggesting moderate effectiveness in driving leads. In contrast, Dealership's Official Websites are perceived as less effective (10.8%), possibly due to lower traffic or lack of SEO optimization. Platforms such as Influencer Collaborations/YouTube and SMS Marketing are considered least effective, with only 1.1% each, reflecting their limited role or possibly underutilization in the local context.

Findings

The survey reveals a gender imbalance in the marketing workforce of the Sirsa automobile sector, with 88.1% of respondents being male and 11.9% female. The majority of respondents are experienced professionals with significant industry exposure, with the highest proportion falling within the 45-55 years age range. Marketing employees make up the highest proportion (70.8%), followed by marketing managers (17.8%) and executives (11.4%).

The results show a strong positive perception of digital marketing strategies among respondents, with the highest mean score of 4.29, suggesting that dealers believe their digital advertising is in sync with evolving market demands. Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are also considered effective in reaching potential customers. Email campaigns and online promotions are acknowledged as contributing to dealership visibility. Investment in digital tools enhances marketing performance, with a high level of consensus among respondents.

Digital marketing's role in customer acquisition is highly favorable, with the highest mean score of 4.33, indicating strong agreement among respondents regarding the strategic importance of digital campaigns in broadening customer reach and drawing in new buyers. The model shows a strong positive correlation between customer acquisition and digital marketing strategies, with an R value of 0.802, indicating that approximately 64.3% of the variation in digital marketing strategies is explained by customer acquisition. Among the most effective digital platforms for attracting new customers, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) ranks highest, followed by Google Ads/Paid Search Campaigns and WhatsApp Marketing. Social media marketing, such as Facebook and Instagram, holds significant importance, while Online Auto Portals account for 14.6%.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that digital marketing plays a critical role in customer acquisition within the Sirsa automobile industry. Dealers widely acknowledge the effectiveness of strategies such as SEO, paid search campaigns, WhatsApp, and social media platforms in expanding customer reach and enhancing dealership performance. The statistical analysis confirms a strong and significant relationship between customer acquisition efforts and the adoption of digital marketing strategies, explaining over 64% of the variation. These insights emphasize the need for automobile dealers to strategically invest in high-performing digital channels while minimizing reliance on less impactful tools like SMS and influencer

marketing. Overall, the findings reinforce digital marketing as a core pillar in driving growth and competitiveness in regional automobile markets.

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