

MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BRAND POSTS ON BRAND PAGES AND CUSTOMER BRAND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA IN BANGLADESH

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ON BRAND PAGES AND CUSTOMER BRAND
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BANGLADESH**

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It is a fact that the remembrance of Allah brings peace in the heart. It is better to ponder over the verses to bring us even closer to Allah (swt).

***DEDICATED TO
MY BELOVED PARENTS***

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To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that the thesis on “Measuring the effectiveness of brand posts on brand pages and customer brand engagement through social media in Bangladesh” for the degree of Masters of Business Administration (M.B.A), major in Marketing from Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University carried out by **Tanjina Afrin, Reg. No.- 11-04599** under my supervision. No part of the thesis paper has been submitted for any degree, diploma, title, recognition before.

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Respected Sir,

I am pleased to put forward the thesis on “Measuring the effectiveness of brand posts on brand pages and customer brand engagement through social media in Bangladesh”. This thesis is an indispensable part of the successful completion of my MBA program. While making this thesis. I have tried my best to make the whole thesis informative, efficient as well as fruitful on the basis of information.

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Sincerely Yours,

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Table Of Contents

CHAPTER ONE	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Prelude	2-3
1.2 Background of the study	4-5
1.2.1 Social media marketing Vs traditional marketing	6-7
1.2.2 Motivation of the study	8-9
1.2.3 Research framework	10
1.2.4 Research objectives	10-11
CHAPTER TWO	
2 THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE	12
2.1 Marketing mix	13-15
2.2 Literature review	15
2.2.1 Definition of brand, social media marketing , customer engagement	16- 26
2.2.2 Customer brand engagement through social media	27-29
2.2.3 Factors influencing customer engagement	29- 35
CHAPTER THREE	
3 THE DIGITALIZATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN BANGLADESH	
	36
3.1 Introduction	37- 40
3.2 The overview of social media in Bangladesh	41-43
3.2.1 Digital booming and social media in Bangladesh	43-45
3.2.2 Social media usage in Bangladesh	46-47
3.3 Local brands using social media in Bangladesh	47-48
3.3.1 Top brands in Bangladesh on social media	48-49
3.3.2 Top brands in Bangladesh on Twitter	49
3.3.3 Top brands in Bangladesh on YouTube	50-51

CHAPTER FOUR	
4 RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS	
4.1 Research methodology	
4.2 Research approach and strategy	52
4.2.1 Inductive research approach	52-53
4.2.2 Deductive research approach	54
4.2.3 Data sourcing and collection	54
4.3 Questionnaire	54-55
4.3.1 Sample size and sampling technique	55-56
4.3.2 Data processing	56
4.3.3 Data analyzing and interpretation	58
4.3.4 Social media change the views of customer about a brand	59
4.3.5 Social media allows two way communication between a customer and a brand through brand posts	59
4.3.6 Brand posts can help to differentiate the quality of different brands	60
4.3.7 Most of the brand pages are trustworthy	61
4.3.8 Like, comment and share can affect the purchasing decision of customers	61
4.3.9 User friendly and attractive brand page can draw the attention of new customers	62
4.3.10 Social media marketing can boost the sales of the company	66
4.3.11 Like,comment and share can affect the purchasing decision of customers according service provider	66
4.3.12 Understanding of customer engagement through giving rating after purchase	68
4.3.13 Brand posts can increase purchase intention	68
CHAPTER FIVE	69
5 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	70
5.1 Key findings	70

5.1.1 social media as a new marketing channel	71
5.1.2 The opportunities and challenges of social media marketing	71-72
5.1.3 Different strategies and tactics used by different markets	73-75
5.1.4 The influence of social media on purchase behavior	75
5.2 Recommendations	75
5.3 Limitations of the study	76
5.4 Conclusions	76-77
5.5 Scope of further research	77
References	78
Appendix	79
	80-86
	87-89

Contents of Figures and Tables

Figure 2-1 : Corporate brand identity and reputation matrix	17
Figure 2-2 : Measuring the degree of corporate social media use	23
Figure 2-3 : The communications model	27
Figure 3-1 : The facebook users all over the world	40
Figure 3-2 : Ad networking market share in Bangladesh	43
Figure 3-3 : How consumerism has shifted to instant gratification for digital consumers	45
Figure 4-1 : Perception about brand posts	60
Figure 4-2 : Perception of consumers about brand's trustworthiness	62
Figure 4-3 : Results of Likert scale for attention of customers	63
Figure 4-4 : Perception of customers about boosting the sales	66
Table 3-1 : Top companies who are involving in social media marketing	41
Table 3-2 : Top brands in Bangladesh on Facebook	49
Table 3-3 : Popular Twitter accounts of different brands in Bangladesh	49
Table 3-4 : Top Youtube channels in Bangladesh	50
Table 4-1 : Social media change the views of customers about a brand	59
Table 4-2 : The perception of customers about two way communication	60
Table 4-3 : Like can affect the purchasing decision	62
Table 4-4 : Comment can affect the purchasing decision	62
Table 4-5 : Share can affect the purchasing decision	62
Table 4-6 : Multiple regression analysis	63
Table 4-7 : Like can affect the purchasing decision (Service provider)	66
Table 4-8 : Comment can affect the purchasing decision (Service provider)	.67
Table 4-9 : Share can affect the purchasing decision (service provider)	67
Table 4-10 : Customers give rating after purchase	68
Table 4-11 : Brand posts can increase purchase decision	68

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

2G	Second generation
3G	Third generation
4G	Fourth generation
AMA	American Marketing Association
B2B	Business to Business
IT	Information Technology
Mbps	Megabit per second
RQ	Research question
SEA-ME-WE-4	South East Asia-Middle East-Western Europe 4
SMM	Social media marketing
VPN	Virtual private network

ABSTRACT

In today's competitive business world, no business can survive without proper branding. Branding is therefore important to every business regardless of the size, because it helps differs from a business from its competitors. As a key component of branding, brand communication determines whether a brand is successfully established and eventually turns a profit. People are now – a- days are very much aware about the quality of the product, customers want to aware and get update time to time about a brand. However, social media makes the path so much easier for customer engagement with a brand. Attracted by its potential to drive sales opportunities and to enhance customer engagement, companies of Bangladesh are also coming forward to embrace the full prospects of social media. This paper attempted to measure the effectiveness of brand posts and how it influences customer engagement through social media in our country.

This study is exploratory in nature. Here mainly quantitative analysis is done based primary data from two segments, customers and service providers. In this thesis paper, data are being collected by 30 questionnaire, on 200 samples (100 for customers and 100 for service providers). Sample random sampling and multiple logistic regression analysis are being done for this thesis paper. The findings of my study is that brand posts and customer brand engagement have a positive relationship .

There is no universal communication strategy for all companies , but the appropriate may be build according to the company goals and means. Process of creating the communication strategy should focus on several targets which companies may identify by themselves or with the help of guides. One of those targets is identifying appropriate ways of engaging with the customers with the combination Brand Awareness and Brand Engagement. Now-a-days social media especially Facebook is becoming a tool for business to consumer communication . Recent booming of internet uses in Bangladesh increases the opportunity for all size of companies. They can enjoy the benefit of social media marketing with a cost effective way if they overcome the current challenges.

CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

1: Introduction

1.1 : Prelude

Social media is the catchphrase of today's business world. With social media, consumers can interact instantly with brands and share options on the products they are interested in. It is inherent nature of consumers to buy products that are recommended by friends, family members, relatives and someone they know in real life or even in virtual world. This virtual world has been more interactive with the emergence of social media. Now-a-days when a consumer wants to learn more information about a product or is considering a purchase , they share their queries and views in the social media sites to interact with the other members. They also look for product reviews or consumer opinions on the Facebook fan pages or other social websites. Providing the opportunities of sharing views over other brands, social media is therefore ensuring the brand visibility and playing an important role in brand communication. Social networks have an additional marketing channel that could be integrated with the traditional ones as a part of the marketing mix. The change in the dynamics of the marketing interchange between companies and consumers as introduced by social networks has placed a focus on the non transactional customer behavior. On social media , firms create brand fan pages, where they can place brand posts (containing videos, messages, quizzes etc.) .Customers can become fans of these brand fan pages and subsequently like and /or comment on brand posts. This liking and commenting on brand posts reflects brand post popularity. The engagement of consumers is best explained by *Muntinga, Moorman and Smit* (2011). Their typology of consumers' online brand-related engagement can be divided into three different levels. Users in the first level only consume content. These refer to those who just look at pictures, videos or read text. This level is the passive type of online participation and is also called the minimal level of online activeness. Users in the second level have a higher level of activeness and contribution. At this level, users' contribution to the content on brand page is observed. Typical examples include commenting on posts or responding to a posted question. The third level has the highest level of activeness which includes the behavior of creating user-generated content. At this level, consumers proactively post or share content such as videos, pictures or their own product reviews on brand fan pages.

Social media show the online content publicly created and available to the end users. It is becoming one of the main tools used to spread information among consumers. Blogs, social networking sites, online content communities, virtual world or collaborative project all represent groups of people that create and share content inside and outside of professional routines. For marketers this phenomena of high interest as social media is becoming an important source of customer sharing, awareness , support and empowerment (*Kaplan and Haenlein 2010*). Consequently, social media allows businesses to effectively and inexpensively engage in direct client contact , reaching levels of efficiency undoubtedly higher than any traditional marketing communication tools (*Berthon et al.2008*).

There are many evidences and examples how companies use social media for more efficient communication and better results. As of the second quarter of 2016, Facebook had 1.71 billion monthly active users there are 50 million active business pages (brandwatch). Marketers should become more and more aware of the importance of these platforms and the information spread throughout them.

As a key component of branding, brand communication to the consumers has become more important aspects of a company's marketing strategy . Although traditional forms of brand communication via TV, radio or newspaper advertising achieved great success in the past , their effectiveness is decreasing drastically in today's more customer dominated business environment . Virgin America,Inc., a United states based airline , is spending nearly 70% of its total marketing budget in digital and emerging social media platforms (*Frazier 2011*). Converse , American footwear and apparel brand , is one step ahead in spending its marketing budget beyond traditional media. Less than 10% converse's spend is on traditional media (*Frazier 2011*).

While big companies around the world are investing a huge amount o their financial and human resources to carry out their brand communication through both conventional and modern media , Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to conduct a successful brand communication due to lack of both financial and human resources. However, with the blessings of web 2. 0 technologies , it is now possible for both Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Large Enterprises (LEs) to conduct successful and cost-effective brand communication activities

through social media sites. This is why nearly every business organizations of the present world are contemplating and exploring the true benefits of social brand communication.

1.2: Background of the study

Marketers increasingly bring brands closer to consumers' everyday life. The changing role of customers as co-producers of value is becoming increasingly important (*Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004*). *Khan and Mahapatra (2009)* remarked that technology plays a vital role in improving the quality of services provided by the business units. According to *Hoge (1993)*, electronic marketing (EM) is a transfer of goods or services from seller to buyer involving one or more electronic methods or media. E-Marketing began with the use of telegraphs in the nineteenth century. With the invention and mass acceptance of the telephone, radio, television, and then cable television, electronic media has become the dominant marketing force. McDonald's uses online channel to reinforce brand messages and relationships. They have built online communities for children, such as the Happy Meal website with educative and entertaining games to keep customers always close to themselves (*Rowley 2004*). *Reinartz and Kumar (2003)* found that the number of mailing efforts by the company is positively linked with company profitability over time. The primary advantages of social media marketing is reducing costs and enhancing the reach. The cost of a social media platform is typically lower than other marketing platforms such as face-to-face sales or sales with a help of middlemen or distributors. In addition, social media marketing allows firms to reach customers that may not be accessible due to temporal and locational limitations of existing distribution channels. Generally, main advantage of social media is that it can enable companies to increase reach and reduce costs (*Watson et al. 2002; Sheth & Sharma 2005*).

According to *Chaffey (2011)*, social media marketing involves "encouraging customer communications on company's own website or through its social presence". Social media marketing is one important technique in digital marketing as companies can use social media form to distribute their messages to their target audience without paying for the publishers or distributor that is characteristic for traditional marketing. Digital marketing, electronic marketing, e-marketing and Internet marketing are all similar terms which, simply put, refer to "marketing online whether via websites, online ads,

opt-in emails, interactive kiosks, interactive TV or mobiles” (*Chaffey & Smith, 2008*). *Giese and Gote (2000)* finds that customer information satisfaction (CIS) for digital marketing can be conceptualized as a sum of affective response of varying intensity that follows consumption and is stimulated by focal aspects of sales activities, information systems (websites), digital products/services, customer support, after-sales service and company culture.

Waghmare (2012) pointed out that many countries in Asia are taking advantage of e-commerce through opening up, which is essential for promoting competition and diffusion of Internet technologies.

Consumers are booking travels, buying consumer electronics and books online. Although spending per online buyer remains low, some 59% of online consumers in metropolitan India already make purchases online at least once in a month. *Dave Chaffey (2002)* defines e-marketing as “application of digital technologies - online channels (web, e-mail, databases, plus mobile/wireless & digital TV) to contribute to marketing activities aimed at achieving profit acquisition and customers retention (within a multi-channel buying process and customer lifecycle) by improving customer knowledge (of their profiles, behavior, value and loyalty drivers) and further delivering integrated communications and online services that match customers’ individual needs. Chaffey's definition reflects the relationship marketing concept; it emphasizes that it should not be technology that drives e-marketing, but the business model. All types of social media provide an opportunity to present company itself or its products to dynamic communities and individuals that may show interest (*Roberts & Kraynak, 2008*). According to *Gurau (2008)*, online marketing environment raises a series of opportunities and also challenges for social media marketing practitioners.

The main objective of this paper is to identify the effectiveness of digital marketing in the competitive market. The supportive objectives are following:

- To show the various elements of digital marketing;
- To focus on the basic comparison between traditional and digital marketing;
- To discuss the effects of various forms of digital marketing on the firm’s sales and other activities;
- To show the various advantages of digital marketing to the customers.

1.2.1 Social media marketing versus traditional marketing

Social media has evolved beyond our wildest conceptions over the last decade. We no longer live in the times when some of the mainstream social networks were used for merely chatting or posting fancy pictures. The online entity has become a whole new world altogether, with a new breed of enthusiasts for whom, the social media is a profession and a big source of earning. A new branch of marketing called ‘digital marketing’ or ‘social media marketing’ has emerged as one of the most important factors for the growth of a business.

According to report in 2014, 92% of marketers claimed that social media marketing was important for their business, with 80% indicating their efforts increased traffic to their websites. It’s outreach to masses have opened unprecedented ways for marketers to communicate to their audience and diverted them from the traditional sources of marketing. Since then Social media vs traditional marketing becomes the hot topic for digital strategists.

a. Expanded Brand Recognition

Each open door you need to syndicate your substance and enhance your visibility is important. Your online networking systems are quite recently new channels for your image’s voice and substance. This is essential since it makes you less demanding and more available for new clients, and makes you more approachable for existing clients. For instance, an incessant Twitter client could find out about your organization interestingly simply in the wake of discovering it on his news feed and become better acquainted with your brand after seeing your presence on multiple networks.

b. Content is Easily Distributed

Social media has a substantial impact on any content marketing campaign. Before the advent of online networks as a marketing tool, advertisers confronted the difficulties of contacting their target audience in the shortest conceivable time. Today, with the assistance of web-based social networking, organizations can get the message out with a tick of a catch. Online networking through the social media represents a tremendous part of referral activity on the web, which implies that all you have to ensure is that your content represents your brand and interests of your clients.

It takes around six to eight exposures to an website before a client chooses to buy. An unmistakable advantage of web-based social networking is constant presentation of your content/product online. This permits you the chance to help them to remember what you bring to the table, which can shorten your business channel drastically.

c. Enhanced SEO Rankings

SEO requirements are continually changing for organizations to effectively rank on web search tools. It's no longer enough to just improve your web page and routinely refresh your blog. Social media has a significant role to play in measuring these rankings. Organizations sharing their content via social networks are conveying a "brand-signal" to search engines that talk about your brand's authenticity, validity, and dependability. For your brands name to pop up in front of your audience every time they search for a relevant term, you need to be religiously active on the social media.

d.Saves Money

Social networks constitute a huge online community that results as an incredible and a savvy approach to get your brand before fans and potential clients. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest enable you to advance and offer content without your having to spend a dime!Such platforms additionally offer more advanced, but moderately priced tools that you can use to focus on your buyers with targeted statistics, watchwords and interest based marketing.

e. Provides Rich Customer Experiences

Regardless of the possibility that you aren't active on the social media, a large portion of your clients anticipate that you will be. More than 67 percent of purchasers now go to online networking for client benefit. They expect quick responses and day in and day out help—and organizations that convey win out.

f. Geotarget content

Geo-targeting is a viable approach to send your message out to a particular audience in light of their interest area. Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter have features that enable you to impart the correct content to your target audience. For instance, in Social Champ, you can target Twitter messages to devotees in particular countries, or send messages through Facebook and LinkedIn organization pages to

particular communities based on topographical parameters. You can likewise utilize geo-targeting to discover discussions pertinent to your brand.

g. Increase in Conversion Rates

Promotion on social media gives brands a chance to be more humanized by collaborating with people through social channels, which influences people to become more steadfast clients. Advantages of social media marketing result in higher change rates.

h. Brand Becomes More Trustworthy

Social media enthusiasts are likely to have more trust in your image, which makes them visit your website repeatedly. For instance, if your intended interest groups are students, you can offer some web-based social networking benefits for students in your social updates that will pull in and urge them to utilize your product or service.

People are accustomed to conventional ways of promoting their brands. Discovering advertisements in magazines and daily papers, taking a glance at billboards are routine activities individuals still do constantly. However, conventional advertising is achieving just a limited the fact that it is not constrained to one. One of the rudimentary shortcomings of traditional marketing is that the outcomes are not effectively measured. As a matter of fact, conventional marketing costs way more than social media marketing. In fact, the greatest disadvantage of traditional advertising methods today that they are all is static- which implies there is no real way to communicate with people. It's no different than tossing data before individuals and trusting that they choose to make a move.

1.2.2 Motivation of the study

Nowadays, using social media as a marketing tool is almost mandatory for companies of any size in Bangladesh. The new dimension in marketing area is social media marketing have created new opportunities for connecting with customers. In social media platforms, companies can interact with potential and profitable customers from a wide range of nationalities. The interaction opportunities between a company fan page and their followers as one of the fundamental aspects that apart the social media marketing from traditional marketing.

The world of social media is growing rapidly and there are many interesting options to research on it. However, because of the limited extent of this thesis it has been deemed necessary to focus on one platform, namely facebook. As it is most popular social networking site in Bangladesh.

On February 4, 2004 facebook started its journey and regarded as pioneer social networking with 1.79 billion monthly active users around the world (as of January 2017). As it is considered as a large community , it is said that if facebook users constituted a country, it would be the world's third largest, behind China and India . its intention is to help the people to connect and share to become world a very open arena.

Facebook users are like a community in their own world. On Facebook, individuals create a persona profile and begin connecting with others by using the friend request. The most important features of Facebook are the wall; that preserves information regarding an individual's recent and past activity, the status option and the photo and video galleries. Comments are also an important option for Facebook users, and the like button which includes love, laugh, excitement, sadness and anger that allows friends to give short feedback on posts.

For interacting with current and prospective customers, brands have two major options on Facebook, either creating a group or a public profile/ fan page. The fan page has recently become similar in design and functionality to the individual personal profile, except for the fact that users can add themselves as fans (not friends) to the page, by clicking on a like button. For business purpose, Facebook included the recommend option, which enables fans to further support their favorite brands among their peers. Groups, on the other hand, are more selective access- but they need to be considered if a company desires to engage in private discussions with a specific cluster of people on certain topics. Service providers also can use marketplace or advertising on Facebook.

A business owner can use a free Facebook account as a cost effective way of marketing. By customizing the elements of Facebook business page, marketers can establish a brand and create an online hub for information and customer interaction. A Facebook fan page can also be used as a complement to his current strategy to reinforce the power and influence of the brand. As the traditional media can't do so, companies are now diligently establishing Facebook pages to interact with consumers

to market their product and brand, drive sales and profitability, and create brand loyalty.

This thesis does not seek to find answers to which factors increase sales, but focuses on how customer relationships are built and maintained through social media in Bangladesh. The main emphasis of this study will be placed on “Brand posts and customer engagement”. The reason for this is that internet as part of new media increasingly broadens and enhancing today’s communication process. Depending on personal interest and social attributes, Facebook users assemble in various online communities while using their Facebook account and engaging different activities such as networking, studying or shopping. Thus, marketers respectively brand managers focus more and more on social media instead of relying solely on mass media (*Chen, 2014*). Social media represents one of the most critical contemporary communication mediums, which has wide effects on a brands journey.

1.2.3 Research framework

In next chapter, theoretical background and literature provides a brief idea about the evolution of marketing mix from 4P’s to 4C’s. It will be followed by recent application of brand communication through the new digital gateway –social media. This chapter also illustrates how social media are utilizing in customer engagement. It explains the role of social media in a purchase process and its influence on purchase decision around the current world. The literature review describes different strategies, tools, and measurements of social media marketing.

Chapter three is about digitalization and social media marketing in Bangladesh. This illustrates the overall advertising and marketing scenario comparing traditional digital marketing strategies. This chapter focuses on evaluating the different marketing channels and their present status in Bangladesh. Also, it describes the reasons behind the recent booming of internet and social media usage in Bangladesh. Different info graphics shows how and why marketers choose new channel of brand communication and which social media platforms are most accurate and preferable to the Bangladeshi marketers and companies.

Chapter four, the research and analysis section presents the research methods and reasons for the choices of methods. The collection of data has been divided into primary and secondary , which both will be analyzed , interpreted and explained here.

Using SPSS software , the analysis part of this chapter presents the results from primary data.

Finally, chapter five, the conclusion summarizes the results with key findings and finishes the discussion. Based on researchers experience this chapter gives some suggestion about social media marketing activities in Bangladesh.

1.2.4 Research aims and objectives

- Understanding the opportunities of social media marketing in Bangladesh.
- To find out which types of posts: content or media type encourage customer to engage with brands.
- To get a depth knowledge and understanding about customer engagement factors on Facebook brand pages.
- To analyze the relationship between social media marketing and customer engagement.

CHAPTER TWO :THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE

Chapter 02 : Theoretical framework and Literature review

2.1 Marketing mix

The past couple of years have brought a significant development o the information and communication technologies. The ‘Internet era’ has had a serious impact on many aspects from nowadays living, including marketing, leading to the affirmation of a new discipline –Internet marketing. The increasing usage of the Internet and other types of digital media as a support to the existing marketing tools that have emerged, have affected the way on which companies communicate with their customers. Furthermore, customers have acknowledged more about their role , power and influence they can have over the companies within this era. (BrandBa.se)

In addition to this, there have been some implications that reflects on the marketing mix. This paradigm has gone all the way through the process of evolution in marketing theory and has been a constant subject of discussion in both, academic literature and managerial practice (*Dominici,2009*). This outgoing debate of whether the tradition 4P’s marketing mix is still applicable in the 21st century and in the field of digital marketing has led to a vast of controversies between many authors and practitioners.

The first author used marketing mix is *McCarthy* (1960), which refers to it , as “4P’s” (product, price, promotion and place) and is understood as a mean of translating marketing planning into practice(*Bennet, 1997*). McCarthy used the marketing mix in order to discuss marketing manager’s framework-‘concentric circles ith the customer surrounded first by the 4P’s and then by the environmental forces that affect marketing strategy development’(*Anderson&Taylor,1995*).

Throughout the years, many questions were raised regarding the validity of the marketing mix in the 21st century. A study conducted by Rafiq and Ahmed (1995) implied on the high level of dissatisfaction with the 4P model. Different authors launched attacks on this model because o its lack of strategic elements and internal orientation(*Ohmae,1982;Robins,1999*),Which led to developing alternative frameworks such as or Boom and Bitner’s(1981) 7P’s framework, more suitable for the service marketing area and Bruner’s 4C’s(1988)-concept, channels, costs and communication.

The explosive growth of Internet, alongside with the expansion of the commercial networks has resulted with an increasing number of Internet users (*Aldridge, Forcht & Pierson, 1997*). Many advanced companies tried to take the advantage of the new generation technologies , needed for modifying the key elements of marketing mix , and with the ultimate goal o achieving a leading role the revolutionary digital world (*Peattie, 1997*). The use of the internet and the digital media as supporting pillars in crafting the marketing activities has led to a new discipline called internet marketing.

Varadarjan and Yadav (2009) noted that according to one examination of the literature , the terms internet marketing, interactive marketing, e-commerce and online marketing to large extent are used interchangeably. Therefore, they define the term interactive marketing as, “the use of an information infrastructure network and devices connected to the network for mediating interactions between an organization and its customers in the context of activities and processes employed by the organization for creating, communicating and delivering products that offer value to customers in an exchange”.

Within this new environment, the focus of the marketers has shifted towards understanding and satisfying individual and personalized , rather than collective needs, while placing more emphasis on customer’s retention, customer service and relationship marketing (*Constantinides, 2002*). In addition, the customer’s behavior patterns are altered to a new level in which they have better informed, wired and required a greater degree of control over the marketing process (*Hoffman, Novak & Schlosser, 2000*).

With the establishment of interactive marketing as an important theoretical and managerial practice, many people have again brought up the question regarding the inadequacy of the McCarthy’s model. As lack of interactivity and personalization , lack of community building, as well as the well known statements regarding the model’s internal orientation and lack of strategic elements (*Costantinides, 2006*). Hence, the supporter’s of this thesis, (*Mosley-Matchett 1997; Evans & King 1999, Chaffey et al. 2000; Schultz 2001; Constantinides 2002*) favor new approaches and some of them propose different alternative models such as 5W’s (*Mosley-Matchett, 1997*) and 4S’s (*Constantinides, 2002*) that more suitable for the changing society.

The first element of the traditional marketing mix is product. According to *Kotler and Armstrong* (2009), a product is “ anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need”. Some of the differences that the internet has brought to the products are the customization and personalization- two integral processes that give power to customers in designing their own product that will satisfy their needs and wants (*Thirumalai & Sinha, 2011*). By providing “ the right content in the right format to the right person at the right time” (*Tam & Ho , 2005*), companies are trying to provide solutions to their customers, rather than selling them a single product. With this, the companies create value-“ the net worth to customers from buying and using seller’s product”(*Woodruff, 1997*) and reflect closeness to their customers , generate appreciation of benefits that are desired by customers in terms of style, choice, uniqueness etc. (*Dennis, Fenech & Merrilees, 2005*).

The second element of the traditional marketing mix is the price-“ everything given by the acquirer in terms of money, time and effort to obtain the product”(*Yudelso, 1999*). Promotion is the third element of McCarthy’s marketing mix. *Bunn and Banks* (2004) define the promotion as as a set of tactical marketing techniques that are formed within a strategic framework, with the ultimate goal of adding value when reaching specific sales and marketing objectives.

Traditionally , the process of communication was consisted of: advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing , public relations and personal selling (*Winer, 2009*).

According to *Fill* (2006), the new technology has given a rise to a number of different media and enabled new interactive forms of communication. Internet has made it easier to send messages from one organization to another and smooth the business functions.

Moreover, this shift towards interactivity and digital themes (*Winer, 2009*) is referred to as a “hypermedia” environment (*Hoffman & Novak, 1996*) and had a drastic impact on the nature of the communications model (*Hoffman & Novak, 2009*).

In the online marketing, everything is about convenience. The internet provides an opportunity for customers to purchase their products from their homes (*Smith, 2003*).

Moreover, it eliminates regional and local protections and allows consumers to buy from anyone in any region of the world (*Kung, Monroe & Cox, 2002*).

A major challenge in the e-commerce is the fact that goods have to be available quickly to the customer. For that purpose, the internet marketing has caused the process of

Disintermediation- "removing the middleman to deal direct with customers instead through agents, distributors and wholesalers", which allows companies to interact more directly with their customers and develop a deep understanding of when and where do customers want the products and services (*Chaffey, 2009*).

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 Definition of Brand, Social media marketing, Customer engagement

The American Marketing Association (AMA) define a brand is " a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors". A traditional definition of a brand was: "the name associated with one or more items in the product line, that is used to identify the source of character of the item(s)" (*Kotler 2000*). Brand has a power to differentiate the quality of products. Brand is an identifiable product augmentation that user desires relevant unique added values which satisfies their needs most closely. Furthermore, its success results from being able to sustain these added values in the face of competition (*De Chernatony and McDonald, 1992*).

Brand names are like that help people to trust a product, to recognize a reliable, trusted products or services which can be consumed without thinking anything. Similarly, brands help consumers to understand the features, quality and many more vital elements which are very important for choosing any brand. Many companies having a strong brand ensure creating loyal set of customers and sell goods or services for a premium. A brand having strong attributes ensures higher brand equity which results in higher brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand associations. It's not only attracts and retain consumers but also influence channel partners, businessman, government and stakeholder of business.

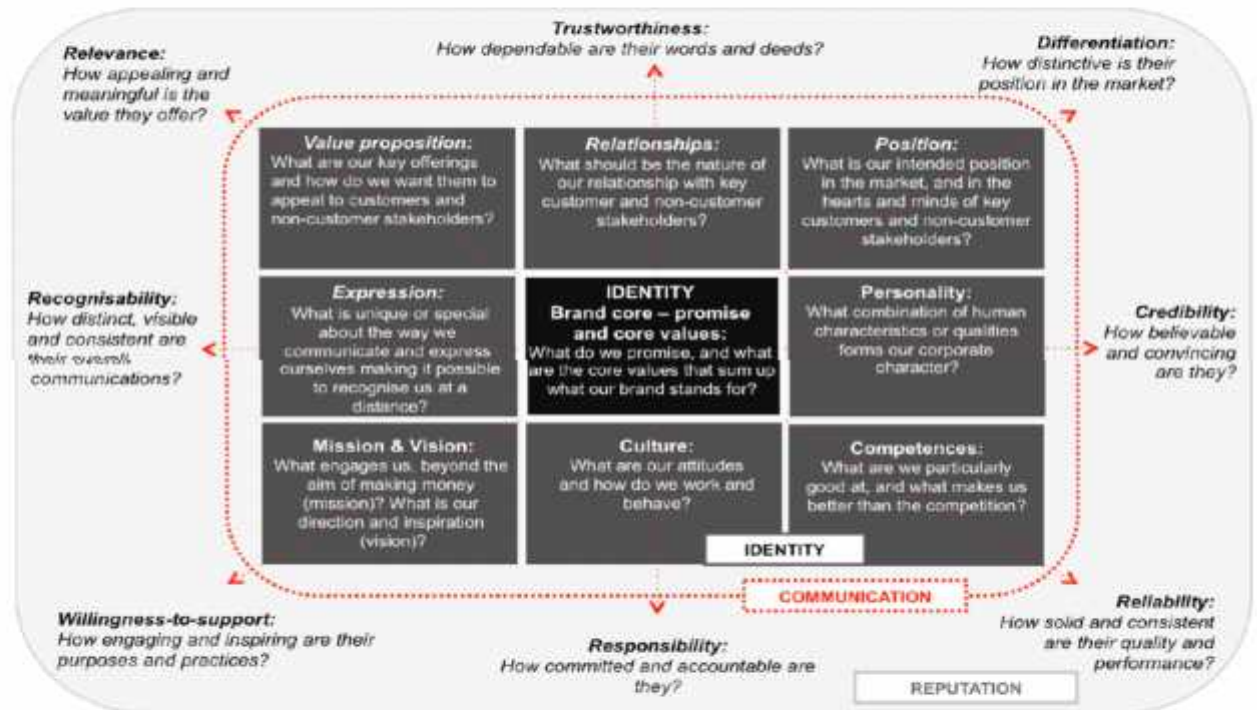


Figure 2-1 :Corporate brand identity & reputation matrix
(adapted from Urde&Greyser by C. Hoffmann & L. Weithaler, 2015)

Based on this matrix brand identity can be converted to brand reputation through effective “ brand communication ”. Mainly , brand communication can be divided into two parts : brand touch point and brand message (Kapferer,2012). Brand touch point can be seen as of contact , where a certain message is transferred from the sender to receiver. Brand messages , refers to brand identity elements , which are communicated in a certain way(Kapferer, 2012).

Branding should both precede and underlie marketing effort and branding is not any push or pull, it is the expression of the essential truth or value of an organization, product or service. Brand is a combination of characteristics , values and attributes that clarify what this particular brand is and is not. A brand has the power to encourage someone to buy a product , and it directly supports whatever sales or marketing activities are in play, but the brand doesn’t say “buy me”, instead I says, “

This is what I am. This is why I exist. If you agree, if you like me, you can buy me, support me, and recommend me to your friends.” (*James Heaton*)

Bangladesh recently has about 65 million internet users. Internet has reached to various functions all over the world as well as in Bangladesh. The way of sharing and interaction is hugely influenced on internet by the virtue of various technological evolutions and applications, and Facebook is the most widely used way for social interaction.

Bangladesh recently has about 65 million internet users. Internet today has reached to Various functions all over the world. The nature of sharing and interaction is hugely influenced today on internet by the virtue of various technological evolutions and applications. Internet has been flooded with the information which is enormous. Because of information overload some argues that internet would not be a reliable platform for marketing or promotion of products and services. Maintaining customer commitments and continuity in interaction is becoming difficult as majority of consumers are having less time left for brand engagement (*Rowly J., 2004*). So, online branding will become the need of time in near future. In Bangladesh because of several factors like globalization, increasing digitization and increasing importance of customer relationships, a rapid change is happening in industry practices and market structures.

Market researcher found that the majority of businesses are striving for bigger online presence. In our country, Social Media Marketing (SMM) is now used very actively by brands like Grameenphone, Robi, Banglalink, Unilever, Ekhanei.com, Bikroy.com and the numbers are increasing day by day. Internet, specially, social media is gaining popularity and importance as a medium of viral or word-of-mouth marketing. On the other side, social media can also generate negative publicity for brands. Brands that stay away from new media like social media will become extinct and would lose contract with their customers in future (*Lovett J., Owyang J., 2010*).

Marketing has recently undergone significant changes in the way information is delivered to the customers (*Mangold and Faulds, 2009*). Social networks (SN), as a part of web 2.0 technology, provide the technological platform for the individuals to connect, produce and share content online (*Boyd and Ellison, 2008*). As such, for brand owners ,they offer the potential for (1) advertising—by facilitating viral

marketing, (2) product development –by involving consumers in the design process, and (3) market intelligence-by observing and analyzing the user generated content (UGC) (*Richer et al. ,2011*). As an outcome of this change in the field of marketing , new dimension , known as social media marketing (SMM) was introduced. Social media marketing , a form of WOM marketing that is also known as viral marketing , buzz, and guerilla marketing is the intentional influencing of consumer-consumer communication through professional marketing techniques (*Kozinets et al.,2010*). This is not to be seen as a replacement for the traditional marketing techniques but also considered as an additional marketing channel that could be integrated with the traditional ones as a part of marketing mix.

The advantage of this new electronic channel is that it can be used globally and to enrich the marketing sector toward consumers at the personal level (*Mangold and Faulds, 2009*). Through user’s feedback on social media , a company can learn about customer’s needs, potentially leading to involvement of members of the community in the co-creation of value through the generation of ideas (*Palmer and Koenig-Lewis, 2009*). Despite the general popularity, viral marketing on SNSs has not yet reached the high expectations set (*Clemonset al., 2007*). Although many SMM channels have already been created, the activities of these channels remain unknown. Social networks, as the largest social media platform, may play a key role in the future of marketing; they an increase customers-engagement and help to transform the traditional focus on control with a collaborative approach suitable for the modern business environment , leading towards the concept of SMM (*Berthon et al.,2012; Harris and Rae 2009;Mangold and Faulds, 2009*).

SMM can be defined as usage of existing social media platforms for increasing the brand awareness among consumers on online platforms through utilization of WOM principles (*Drury, 2008*). As such , it supports two forms of promotion : 1) traditional marketing promotion , which refers to communication driven by the companies toward their customers and (2) Social promotion , which means unique for social media platforms and is embodied with within the consumer-consumer communication (*Mangold and Faulds, 2009*). SMM is related to relationship marketing, where the firms need to shift from _trying to sell to_making connections with consumers (*Gordhamer, 2009*). Companies need to keep away from big campaigns and stick with

small acts since some small campaigns can easily reach to lots of people and accomplish the objectives in a very short period of time (Coon, 2010).

According to various definitions social media as content that has been created by its audience (Comm, 2009); as online tools and platforms that allow internet users to collaborate on content, share insights and experiences, and connect for business or pleasure (Strauss and Frost,2009,p.326). There is a definitive typology of different types of social media (Kaplan andHaenlein, 2010). The common characteristic is that these social media is that social media allow individuals to engage in social interactions , in a way and on a scale that were not possible before (Fischer and Reuber, 2011).

Attracted by the large number of users , companies have created brand communities in social media such as Facebook, which boasts having more than a billion monthly active users (Facebook,2013). Facebook began as a series of forums through which young people connected , and rapidly evolved into platforms for social and commercial exchange. When a registered Facebook user visits a page, that user can become a fan by clicking on the button-like . This permits the page owner to post informational content that will be appeared in the news for their fans, who will react by liking it, commenting on it and sharing it. In this way, Facebook gives brands a scope of voice and establishes an active conversation with Facebook users.

Essentially on Facebook, users can participate in the following types of activities (Patterson, 2012): Status , Facebook messages , Facebook wall posts , Facebook pokes Smith et al.(2012) reviewed studies on Facebook and concluded that they focusing on the site's functionality and norms and how and why people use it , as well as identity management and self presentation on the site . However, it remains to be seen whether the investments in Facebook or social media are well spent. While much is written on pages that garner a lot of likes and fans , most literature is silent regarding facebook effectiveness to reach customer engagement. In fact, Chapman (2008) recommends looking beyond the friend, fan metric since they are a simple numbers game.

The internet has revolutionized the way individuals, company and the whole society communicate. During its existence, the characteristics of the internet have changed and it has become a more interactive platform. People are increasingly discovering the

new communication challenges that the internet can offer. They are no longer connecting to the internet to find information on different web pages but also contributing to discussions with their opinions , experiences or other types of content. Platforms, where people can share information, knowledge , and opinions ,are called social media .(*Drury 2008*).

Vollmer and Preccourt (2008) give opinion that, consumers are turning away from the traditional sources of advertising, like radio and television, and they consistently demand more control over their media consumption. Consumers always require on – demand and immediate access to information at their own convenience and consumer are turning more frequently to various types of social media to conduct their information searches and to make their purchasing decisions (*Vollmer and Precourt, 2008*).

According to *Mangold and Faulds (2009)* , people are witnessing an explosion of internet based messages transmitted through these media. These have a major influencing factor in different aspects of consumer behavior including awareness , information acquisition, purchase decision , opinions and post-purchase communication. Recently some studies have shown that the estimated 3.5 billion word-of-mouth conversation that occur around the world each day , about 2.3 billion of them roughly two out of three make a reference to a brand, product or service. Word-of-mouth is increasingly manifesting itself through digital platform of social media, where it spreads both farther and faster. The use of the social web is increasingly important to marketers (*Evans, 2008*). Consumers receive social media as a more reliable, trustworthy source of information regarding products and services than corporate-sponsored communications transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotional mix (*Foux, 2006*).

Social media are computer –mediated technologies that all the creating and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. The variety of stand alone and built in social media services recently available introduces challenges of definition. However, some common features are below:

1. Social media are an interactive way of web2.0 internet –based applications.
2. User-generated contents like text posts or comments, digital photos or videos, and data generated through all online interactions, are the lifeblood of social media.
3. Users create service-specific profiles for the website or app designed and maintained by the social media organization.
4. Social media or facebook facilitate the development of online social networks by connecting user’s profile with those of other individuals or groups.

Social media or facebook use web based and mobile technologies on smartphones and tablet computers that creates highly interactive platforms through which individuals , communities , organizations can share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content or pre-made content posting on online. They introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communication between businesses, communities and individuals. Social media changes the way how individuals and organizations can communicate. These changes are focusing on the field of techno self studies. In America, a survey reported that around 84% of adolescents in America have a Facebook account.

Social media differs from paper-based or traditional electronic media like TV which broadcasting in various ways including quality, reach, frequency , usability and permanence. Social media operates in a dialogic transmission system . This is in contrast to traditional media which operates under a monologic transmission model , like newspaper which is delivered to many subscribers. Some of the most popular social media website are Facebook , messenger, Whatsapp, Instagram , Twitter, BaiduTieba, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Gab, Google+, Youtube, Viber, Snapchat, Weibo and Wechat. These social media websites have more than 1 billion registered users.

Observers have shown that a range of positive and negative impacts from social media use . Social media can help to improve individuals sense of connectedness with real and online communities and social media can be an effective communication or marketing tool for corporations, entrepreneurs, nonprofit organizations , including advocacy groups and political parties and governments. Nielsen has shown that, internet users continue to spend more time on facebook than on any other site. Over 60 percent of 13 to 17 years old’s have at least one profile on facebook , with many spending more than two hours on it.

Classification of social media of how social media are important for each of a company's operational function like marketing.

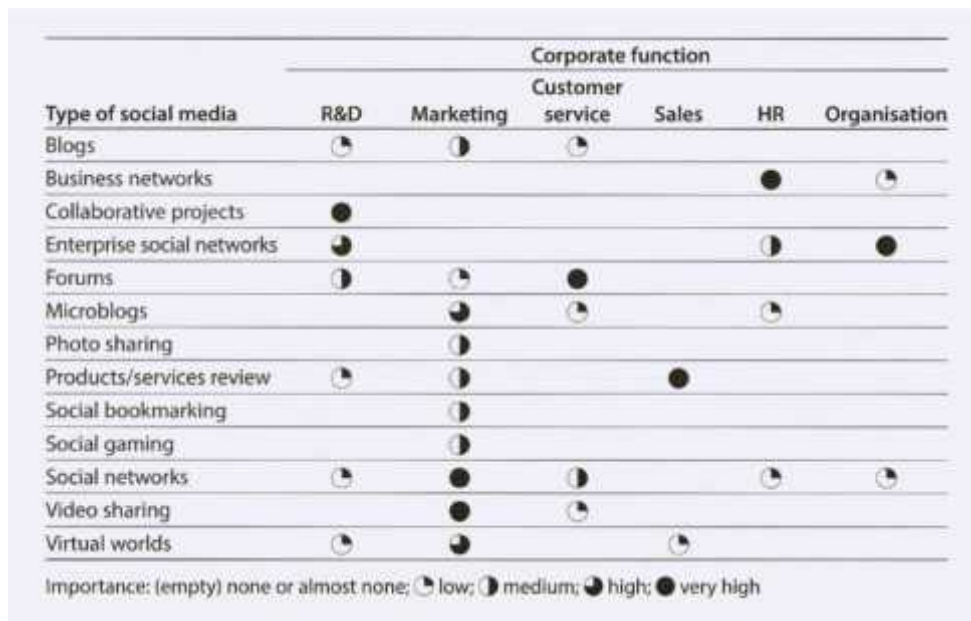


Figure 2-2 : Measuring the degree of corporate social media use

Source :Aichner, T.and Jacob, F.-Aichner,T. and Jacob, F. (March 2015)

Brand community on social media

A Brand community consists of individuals who are specialized , non-geographically bound community based on a structured set of social interactive relationships among admirers of a brand (Muniz &O'Guinn, 2001). A brand community allows followers to share the information about the specific brand to others. Brand communities facilitate interactions through exchange of opinions about the brand or specific product among customers, thus engaging their members in a form of word of mouth marketing communication (McAlexander et al., 2002). Further, a brand can become an informational and interactive resource for the members of the community and provide customer service. Creating a strong brand community is a key step in developing a strong relationship marketing strategy.

Facebook's emergence as an important marketing channel due to brand pages as they establish direct communication with Facebook users like fans and customers. As social media websites are so much popular , several companies are using social networking sites to support the creation of brand communities (Kaplan &Haenlein,

2010; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Facebook fan pages allow a brand to create an online community of brand users through the social networking sites. Communities in Facebook are created through Facebook fan pages and Facebook groups. The people who "like" the page means who press the like button on the page become fans. When a user clicks on the like button, a link to this page will appear on the user's timeline. There are mainly 6 types of posts to choose from on Facebook pages :Video, photo, Link, Question, Event and Text (Olczak & Sobczyk, 2013). Photos along with questions create link of lot of interactions and drive engagement among fans. Brand community members join a community based on either the positive or negative feelings they have toward a brand (Wilimzig, 2011). Otherwise, individuals choose to join a Facebook brand community because they are loyal to that brand. Other motivations for joining such brand communities have economic benefits like discounts and entertainment. Providing exclusive deals and discounts available only to members on facebook brand community is an excellent way for customers to join the community (Vorvoreanu, 2009).Synapse (2013) report has shown that 42 percent like a brand page to get a coupon or reward .Weman (2011) found that consumers are not interested to join in a brand communities to make new friends or socialize and connect with strangers.

Facebook page enables three interactions features that is connected with each post : like, share and comment. When a user likes a post , it means that also other users can see that he has liked it including their friends. The more the likes the post gained, the higher value it has in the context of page marketing value. The feature of share makes it possible to publish someone's post on own profile (Time-line) or Page's . This is the way content goes viral in social media. The most engaging are comments- a feature that enables Facebook users sharing their thoughts, opinions about the post(Olczak &Sobczyk, 2013). This feature might be risky in the sense that, if a customer is dissatisfied , he attacks the company , criticizing its products or service. It can damage brand reputation, if there's no proper reaction from the page moderator. Almost every major brand and company in Bangladesh has a Facebook Page.

L.M de Souza Almeida (2014) found that, branding has changed because the digital media and the communication between brands and consumers now occur through a two-way channel . Conversation is no longer one way and it represents not only a

challenge but also an opportunity. It is suggested that a digital toolkit includes social media , search engine optimization . online advertising , email marketing and customer relationship management (CRM).

Borges (2009) found that modern buyers want to be engaged differently than past and many traditional marketing tactics simply do not work anymore. Social media marketing is a revolutionary way to build a good relationships with buyers. Low cost, brand building , loyalty and level playing field are key benefits of social networking sites as a successful marketing media

According to *Ricadela* (2007), Coca-cola has been running promotions on MySpace for the past two years for brands including Cherry Coke and Fanta has promoted Diet Coke and other drinks on Google's YouTube. The Coca-Cola company has established a s a global brand blueprint in 200 countries with unique identity. For example, in Spain, Coca-Cola wanted to reach to young adults. Because the internet is a large part of that audiences lives, the Spanish team elected to make the web a key component of the marketing strategy through an interactive online game. Some promotional activities like sixteen –stop bus tour of the country's major universities , where students could board the bus, play the new game and sample Coca-Cola products. The game was designed to align with the Coke brand and the goals of the campaign . There was no violence was allowed ; instead the game focused on building a sense of community and bringing people together. The campaign was aimed at liking Coke with other pleasurable experience like surfing the web. Their messages revolved around a common theme, “ Come interact with your peers online and let Coke be a part of the experience , Surf refreshed (IBM Global services). This example tries to signify the phenomenon of capturing people's attention . As majority people spend their most time on social media networks it is advisable to use engaging strategy over this new media.

Typically most people enjoy sharing their experiences with these products, whether it is to talk about their new iPhone or the pair of designer jeans they just bought. Social networking sites offer the venue for those conversations to occur. Social media advertising is deal for promoting brand recognition, though it is click-through rates

are not so strong. Still, there is no doubt that advertising via social media sites is an effective way to increase the overall revenue stream (*Brinlee, 2007*).

A research found that control of friends to buy of users in an online social network reveals the category of users with different behavior. The category of users like low status group (48% of users) is disconnected, shows very poor interactions with different users and is not biased by social pressure. The middle status group (40% users) is not properly connected, tends to logical non-buying action on the site and has a well-built and positive effect due to friends buying. The high status group (12% of users) is perfectly connected and dynamic on the site. This research indicates the difference between purchasing habit and effect of advertising on habit.

Online communities are also useful which creates more interaction amongst customers. Customers can interact through chatting, sharing a message, commenting and by giving rating. Some research says that marketing to online communities gives positive message and makes customers understand a product and successful online communities creates a strong sense of belonging among participants. Pete Blackshaw (2008) points out that six critical drivers of brand credibility trust, authenticity, transparency, affirmation, listening and responsiveness for successful creation of online brand.

Social media turning into an influential marketing channel for many companies and organizations. The social media marketing is as a process that empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through social channels and to communicate with a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. It connect service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers (*Weinberg, 2015*). Some argues that social media marketing is not only for the largest corporations, it might be even easier and more effective for a small and medium size company to take maximum advantage of it.

Drury (2014) emphasizes that marketing with social media is about building a relationship and conversation with target audience. Marketing is no longer one dimensional, it has become a two way process. Marketing within social media is not

about telling and giving a message , it is more about receiving and exchanging perceptions and ideas. Also, the ay of segmentation changes radically with the event of social web. Demography like gender, age, education ,income together with lifestyle factors have become less relevant compared to what people do, think like and dislike. Further, the communication in social media is less creating contained and controlled messages and more about creating compelling environments to which people are attracted.

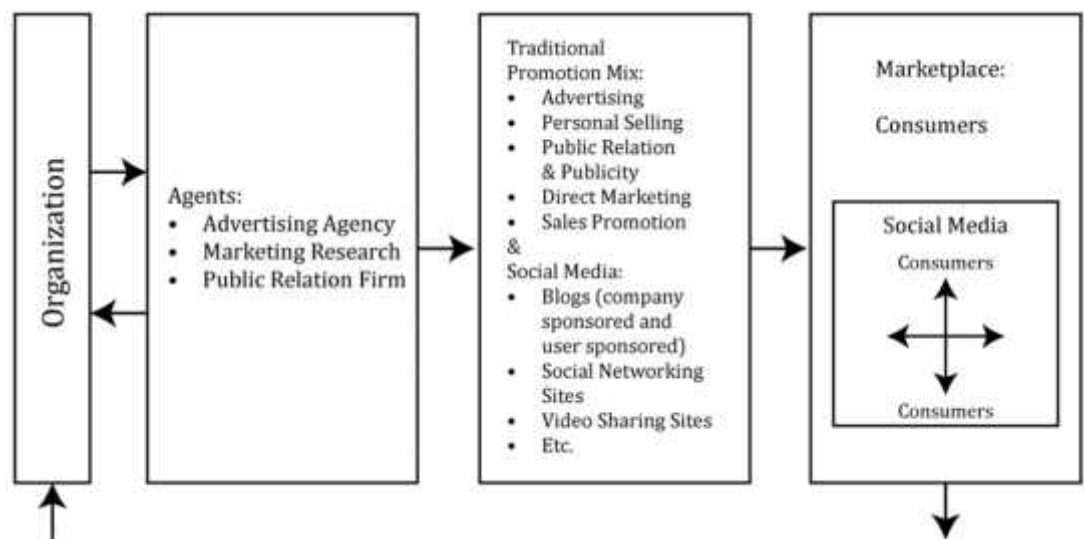


Figure 2-3 : The communications model

Source :Mangold and Faulds(2009)

Above illustration described that in the era of social media , marketing managers control over the content, timing and frequency of information is being severely eroded. In the new era , information about products and services also originates in the marketplace. This information is based on the experiences of individual consumers and is expressed through the traditional promotional mix.

2.2.2 Customer brand engagement through social media

In this digital era, “ customer engagement” typically refers to the ways in which consumers engage with brands through digital channels , such as the brand’s website , blogs, social networking sites and videos. The term “engagement” is defined as a mental state of enjoyment of an action or object. The Consultancy defines

engagement as an outcome of repeated interactions that strengthen the emotional, psychological or physical investment a customer has in a brand (*Mollen & Wilson, 2010, p.919*). Many other researchers define engagement as the simple act of participating in an online environment (*Harden & Heyman, 2009; Solis, 2010*). The engaged users metric can be found within Facebook insights at both the page and post. Engaged users are not limited to brand fans, anyone who engages with brand page is an engaged user. The page engagement is calculated by dividing absolute interactions such as, like, comment and share by total fans. The number of comments, likes and shares is not an absolute measure, but is related to the number of fans at the moment of posting, a ratio to the number of fans was used as more accurate engagement measure (*Robinson, 2014*).

Customer engagement is a psychological state, but can be manifested into action (*Van Doorn et al., 2010 p.13*). *Bowden* (2010) defines engagement as a sequential psychological process that customers move through become loyal towards a brand. *Brodie et al.*, (2011) makes an extensive analysis of definitions and conceptualizations of engagement in social sciences and management disciplines and the term customer engagement in the marketing and service literature. All the customer engagement behaviors are proposed to form five dimensions: Valence (positive or negative), form and modality, scope (temporal or geographic), nature of impact and customer goals. Customer engagement has been explored as a new perspective in the field of customer engagement (*Verhoef, Reinartz & Kraft, 2010*). *Vivek* (2009) found that various disciplines including psychology, sociology and management and defines consumer engagement as the intensity of consumer's participation and connection with the organizations offerings and organized activities.

Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) formulated a conceptual framework in which they propose that digital engagement on a social network site depends on several elements like, a) the type of content published, the nature and content and nature of the messages, b) the post format which can be understood as the messages's wrapper and c) the time of publication, which refers to the chronological timing of the post. *Reitz* (2012) found how perceived Facebook company page features (i.e. perceived information quality, perceived enjoyment and perceived interactivity) predicted online engagement loyalty and purchase content. 233 online survey's findings shows

that face book characteristics influence online engagement , which influences loyalty and ultimately purchase intent.

Firms are recognizing the pressing need to focus on building personal two way relationships with customers who foster interactions (*Kumar et al., 2010*) . Customer engagement has been known as an emotional connection between a company and its customers focusing on interaction with customers. The main element of customer engagement is knowledge exchange, so that information and communication technologies provide immense opportunities for organizations to exchange knowledge and engage with customers (*Vivek, 2009*). *Bowden (2009)* understood customer engagement as a mental and psychological process that models the underlying mechanisms by which customer loyalty toward a service brand is formed in new customers, as well as the mechanisms by which that loyalty is maintained for repeat purchase customers of a service or brand. *Vivek et al. (2012)* defined customer engagement as the intensity of individual participation and connection with the offers and activities of the org. initiated either by the customer or by the organization.

According to *Mollen and Wilson (2010)* , online customer engagement is defined as the cognitive and affective commitment of the customer to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer mediated entities designed to communicate brand value. Each of these concepts represents a single theoretical scope, which has complicated the achievement of greater conceptual advances , reflecting the lack of absolute consensus (*Hollebeek, 2013*). For engagement majority use a multidimensional perspective on engagement on three dimensions : cognitive, emotional and conation (*Vivek et al.,2012*), although the self expression of these dimension can vary in accordance with the specific concept of engagement is used, as well as the relative importance of each one in accordance with the context (*Brodie et al., 2013*).

2.2.3Factors influencing customer engagement

Users who are brand pages fans can see the posts and engage with them by liking, commenting and sharing (*Araujo and Neijens, 2012; Lin and Lu , 2011, Ruiz –Mafe*

et al., 2014). The challenges faced by companies is to attract people's attention to brand posts and persuade them to view the content.

a. Vividness influences customer engagement

The media type of a post corresponds for sharing the action undertaken by a page administrator within a Facebook brand page (*DeVries et al.*, 2012). This includes a status update , photo or a link. These media types represent various levels of media richness, which is commonly referred to as vividness of online content (*Coyle and Thorson*, 2001). Vividness or richness is the extent to which a brand post stimulates various senses . Therefore, multimedia content has the potential to be engaging for users because of its direct impact on various senses. A high degree of vividness appears to be most effective in enhancing attitudes toward a website and increasing click-through rates. The click-through rate is regarded as engagement behavior.

b. Interactivity influences customer engagement

Interactivity can be defined as the degree to which two or more communication parties can act on each other on the medium and on the messages , and the degree to which such actions are synchronized. A brand post with only text is not interactive, where as a link to a website is interactive , because users can click on it. Interactivity is widely regarded as an essential factor in determining a variety of affective and behavioral outcomes such as satisfaction, attitude and involvement. Hence, information presented with a high degree of interactivity generates a high level of engagement.

c. Description of a product can influence customer engagement

If a brand post contains information such as the date of new releases and product details; fans are motivated to interact and consume (*DeVries et al.*, 2012). If users are motivated , they are likely to respond to posts (*Cvijikj and Michahelles*, 2011).

d. Entertainment influences customer engagement

Entertainment is the most crucial factor affecting the behavior of SNS users . Information enriched with entertaining elements is typically positively evaluated by recipients and leads to a higher intent to re-visit a website or page than does information without entertainment features.

e. Content novelty influences customer engagement

A novel content evokes greater amount of unique messages cues and external stimuli (*Tokunaga, 2013*). The role of novelty in the communication process lies in its power to capture the audience's attention. Naturally people are drawn to unique and unusual information because such information sparks interest and is intrinsically rewarding. According to *Rhom et al., (2013)* five primary motives that drive consumers to interact with brands through social media . They includes, entertainment, brand engagement, access to consumer services and content , product information and promotions.

Constantinides and Fountain (2008) point out that the customer preferences about the products and services offered either in traditional or electronic outlets is not based any more exclusively on information made available through traditional mass media or corporate websites. The customer preferences and decisions are increasingly based on inputs provided by parties beyond the control of online marketers like peer reviews, blogs, tagging, social networks , online forums and other forms of user generated content , which is uncontrollable by the marketer. Consumers are turning more frequently to various types of social media to conduct their information searches and to make their purchasing decisions.

Some researchers point out that the popular business press and academic literature offers marketing managers very little guidance for incorporating social media into their marketing communication strategies. Social media should be included in the marketing promotion mix when developing and executing their integrated marketing communication strategies. It is regarded as an element of the promotion mix because it combines characteristics of the traditional integrated marketing communications tools with a highly magnified for word of mouth whereby marketing managers can't control the content of such information.

With using right strategy, social media can be utilized to corporate advantage. It can be used as tools for influencing the conversations that are of concern to the company. A company cannot have control and to tell customers what to think. However, they can listen what customer want to say, measure it and monitor the progress over time. Thus, the information can be used to modify and improve what is offered and the way it is offered in.

The main purpose of social media in business context is to engage people (*Safko and Brake, 2009*). Engagement is a kind of involvement , interaction , intimacy and influence customers. Engagement leads to a desired action or outcome. For a customer , the desired outcome may be an additional purchase of a product or service. There are four ways to engage people including communication, collaboration, education and entertainment.

Mangold and Faulds(2009) support the view that customers are engaged with a product , service or idea are more likely to communicate through social media. The engagement can be creatively understood for products and services which generate less psychological involvement of customers. Traditional as well as Internet based tools can be used in engaging customers. Customers can also be engaged by using online customer loyalty programs where the participants are asked to do different things. Online voting used as a tool gives a user a sense of ownership of engagement. They allow consumers to see others using the product can entertain and engage customers while communicating product benefits. Also, online games provide a natural venue for engaging and entertaining.

Consumers are more likely to talk about companies and products when they feel they know about that product. They know another tactic is to provide exclusivity for some customers when they feel like special. Feelings of being special can be grown by offering products, information and special deals that are available only for few customers. Most consumers are likely to talk to others about products when those products support their desired self-image, or the way they want others to see them. Product design and promotion effort should be undertaken with the desired self image in mind. Consumers tell others about products to which they are emotionally connected. Organizations can increase emotional connections by embracing one or more causes that are important to their customers (*Mangold and Faulds 2009*).

Measuring the success of social media marketing efforts can be started with analyzing the audience it reaches to them. Reach means the percentage of population a company wants to get hold on. It refers to how many people have the chance or opportunity to see a company's brand in general and the campaign message in particular (*Sterne, 2010*). Reach explains how far the campaign message is travelling. It can be explained by the number of links the story has garnered, the number of people

tweeting about it or the number of connections is accumulated since company listed their fan page on social media.

Weber (2009) has shown that various metrics for media influence, influence on target audience and business impact. He explained that. The easiest and cheapest to obtain is the media influences which includes visits and page views, unique visitors, no of reviews, comments, links history and files embedded. These metrics can be monitored for example by using some free tools like Google Analytics, Technorati and Yahoo! The influence on the company's target audience can be monitored by analyzing metrics like sentiment of reviews and comments, brand affinity, time spent on the site number of downloads. The business impact of social media activities can be measured by monitoring the number of leads and net sales figures.

According to *Haven and Vittal (2008)*, marketing's new key metrics is engagement which they define as the level of involvement, interaction and influence an individual has with a brand over time. They explain that involvement metrics are helpful in measuring activities following discovery. A person can notice a brand in three primary ways by observing others. By initiating the discovery on his own or encouraged by others. Involvement measures a person's presence and what a person does after discovering a product. In order to engage with a brand, a person needs to know about it. Involvement metrics contain unique site visitors, web site page views, time spent per page, which help the company to understand how and when a person discovers a product or service.

When a customer discovers a brand, he enters into the next phase in a buying process which is evaluation. Interaction metrics can be used for tracking actions following evaluation. Customers use three primary criteria when evaluating a brand, they are credibility, assessing viability and relevance.

Interaction metrics measure some specific actions when people take decisions whether a product is right for them or not. First time purchases online or offline, loyalty card registrations, comment on blogs, user generated content and click-through on banner ads are all interaction metrics. When a company analyzes these metrics, the company gains more understanding on how and when prospects evaluate products, supporting their transition into customers.

What a person thinks about a product during and after using it can be monitored with intimacy metrics which are useful to accomplish a goal, usability of features and functions when in operation, and the desirability based on repeated activity with the product or service. Intimacy measures people's attraction toward the brand after a person acquires the product or service and uses it. Intimacy metrics include satisfaction rates, sentiment in customer service calls, and sentiment in online forums and review sites like TripAdvisor.com.

The last and important phase in a buying process, when a person develops affinity, can be monitored with influence metrics. According to *Haven and Vittal(2016)*, a person's feelings manifest themselves in three main ways which are passion level for the brand such as favorable or not, expression of passion through sentiment such as verbal conversation, written text produced content, and advocating for, or against, the brand. Influence is an opportunity for service providers to measure the impact individuals have on others, feeding into their discovery process. Metrics for influence include Net promoter scores, friend connections in online, fan web sites, viral user generated content and loyalty. Understanding those metrics will help the company to understand the affinity of brand engenders, and gives insights how these can turn to favor of the company.

More recent works have focused on empirical studies and particularly on ways companies may foster levels of customer engagement. According to *Jahn and Kunz (2012)*, factors that could convert consumers into loyal fans. In addition, *De Vries(2012) et al.* examine the popularity of brand posts, making an analogy between brand posts on Facebook. The selection of Facebook as an underlying platform was based on the causes that Facebook is currently the largest and fastest growing SN (*Alexa 2012*). In addition, according to Hubspot (2012), Facebook is considered by the companies as the most attractive social media platforms to be used for marketing, specially for B2C businesses. Facebook provides five opportunities for companies to utilize the platform for marketing purposes, Facebook ads, Facebook brand pages, Social plugins, Facebook applications, Sponsored stories. Of them, Facebook pages provide the largest number of engagement by direct interaction.

Brand engagement is the total number of fans interacting with brand page marketing content. According to Ehrenberg-Bass Institute, only 1 percent of fans of the biggest

brands on facebook are actually engaging with brands (Creamer, 2017). Engagement rate is the ratio of likes, comments and shares per day and fan during a certain period. Some studies show that posting on company wall page increase the number of daily active users on a fan page. The number of company wall posts, and the number of daily company comments all have a significant positive impact on the number of daily active users on the fan page.

Most of the studies have focused on the effect of different media types and find that photo and app wall posts lead to higher number of daily active users than status and link wall posts. Photos touch people on an emotional level and help to take decisions quickly. Brand posts have a direct impact on customer brand engagement. Customer are more modern than past and they prefer more easier way to connect with the brands. Social media has made the way easier so that consumer can interact with brand so faster.

**CHAPTER THREE :THE DIGITALIZATION AND SOCIAL
MEDIA MARKETING IN BANGLADESH**

Chapter 3 : The Digitalization and Social Media Marketing In Bangladesh

3.1 Introduction

The ICT industry is a relatively new sector in the country's economy. Though it is yet to make tangible contributions in country's economy. The BASIS (Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services) was established in 1997 as the national trade body for software and IT service industry . Starting with only 17 member companies , by 2009 membership had grown to 326. According to a study among Asian countries in 2007-2008, Bangladesh was ranked first in software and IT services competitiveness and third in competencies, after India and China. The World Bank in study conducted in 2008, projected triple digit growth for Bangladesh in IT services and software exports. Bangladesh was also listed as one of the top 30 countries for offshore services in 2010-11. The Internet penetration has also grown to 21.27% in 2012, up from 3.2% three years prior. But still Bangladeshi people are not so expert o use ICT . So, country's government is giving much priority in it. If Bangladesh wants to become digital Bangladesh , country must make sure of giving ICT education to her children's and therefore Bangladesh can make the best use of it. From a TV source of Bangladesh, government agreed to give the light of programming knowledge to the children's from the primary level of their life.

The information and communication technology sector of the country has maintained 57.21% export growth on an average over the last nine years since 2009. In the fiscal year (FY) 2016-2017, Bangladesh ICT sector registered export earnings worth US\$ 0.8 billion from the global market and US\$ 1.54 billion from the domestic market span –thereby making around one percent contribution to the gross domestic product. The ICT sector has created around 300 thousand job opportunities so far.

The highest growth rate in internet penetration over the last 15 years, Bangladesh , the dazzling delta has embarked on a fascinating journey to become truly digital with its relatively young., tech-savvy consumer base. While the country still has miles to go to realize its vision of becoming 'Digital Bangladesh', its growth story is maintained by changing consumer attitudes, is reaching new milestones every other day.

Digital Bangladesh is an idea that includes the use of ICT for management, administration and governance to ensure transparency, accountability at all levels of society and state. In 2002, Bangladesh identified ICT as a 'thrust sector' as it represents potential for quick wins in reforms, job creation, industry growth and it has high spillover effects to other sectors. Today, in Bangladesh, the overall IT sector is valued at USD 650 million, with export claiming 40% of that value. The overall IT industry has enjoyed a high growth rate of 50% over the last five years and this trend is expected to continue.

A demographic youth bulge, proliferation of cheaper devices, reaching the next level of development in social indicators that raising per capita income of people. Amidst continuous battles against climate change, the country has experienced an average 22.6% growth in internet subscriber base after 3G services.

Though the concept of digital marketing is a new in Bangladesh, but it is grabbing people's attention day by day. So, Bangladesh in respect of digital marketing is a newcomer as the term digital came to light in 2014. Though the growth rate of internet has been significant for the last few years in Bangladesh, the real taste of digitalization was savored with the approach of 3G technology. Now, we are waiting for the 4G to have better experience. Digital advertising started its journey in the year 1990 in our country and is capable of capturing the market with this short span of time. Therefore, digital marketing is undoubtedly one of the key buzzwords in today's business world. Unlike traditional forms of marketing, it involves strategies designed to engage consumers and drive brand conversation through various digital channels.

In Bangladesh, we have some known marketing set-up tool for digital marketing. People use social media in their daily life a huge amount rather than they use before. Digital marketer uses those social media as their marketing tool like Facebook. Facebook is a place where people view, like, share and post photos and other things. They use as a medium of their connection with people around them. The numbers of Facebook user in Bangladesh is 3 core. Blogs is an independent web based journals where blog writers (bloggers) publish content such as news, pictures, product reviews and opinions.

YouTube is a medium of uploading video and viewing video. Our country has a huge number of YouTube surfers. Not only has that all over the world YouTube had 1 billion users.

When we open our e-mail account, we can see some advertising newsletter in news feed. It is the first medium of sharing information about products or websites. Display advertising is like banner ad on the websites or e-mail. It is a visible way for marketers to make the consumer aware of the brand.

Though internet penetration still stands at 31% of total population, increasing investment in 3G network by telecom operators, prospect of 4G and LTE era enabling faster internet of low cost smart phones indicate a much bigger online population by 2021.

The number of the country's total internet users is now 90.05 million, according to statistics published on the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC)'s website. On Thursday, the BTRC released its statistics updated till the end of August. Of the total users, 80.47 million are mobile phone internet users.

According to BTRC's November 2017's report, there are 143.106 million phone users. Among them, 74.736 million people are using internet. Most of them spend majority of time in social media. Among which Facebook is the most common. There are approximately 25-30 million Facebook users in Bangladesh. 72% of them are male and 28% are female. Many of these users are aged between 18-24, who are more likely to be perusing undergraduate degree or working blue collar jobs. Surprising amounts of 86% Facebook users use it only from mobile phone and 90% of them is android. The mobile phone usage scenario portrays that access to information and technology is easier than ever.

Aminul Hakim, the president of Internet Service Provider's Association of Bangladesh, said 88 GB of the country's total available 436 GB bandwidth is used for Facebook. An intriguing stat is Dhaka has the highest number of Facebook users in Bangladesh, which 65% of total users of Bangladesh. Dhaka city is even ranked number one as the most populous city of Facebook users in the whole wide world. This is a mirage of Facebook craze in Bangladesh.



Figure 3-1 :The Facebook users all over the world

Source : <https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/>

The Bangladesh capital has 22 million active Facebook users , which is 1.1% of the total monthly active users of the social networking site across the globe, according to a study conducted by WE Are Social and Hoots.

Among the countries, the US has the highest number of active users of the social networking site-around 219 million. India is ranked second with 213 million active Facebook users. The number of social media users rose by 11 million in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is a country which is densely populated and has a flat terrain, which together provide for relatively easy extendable network coverage. The demand is high and consumer base is big, but investment costs are comparatively low. The government has a receptive foreign investment policy with no restrictions. There have been substantial benefits from greater connectivity in terms of social cohesion.

Bangladesh has strong potential in WiMax, and many foreign telecom operators are exploring the possibility of offering the technology in Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh is encouraging the private sector to invest more in this industry to play a vital role to develop the country's economy.

3.2 The overview of social media in Bangladesh

In our country, conventional media holds a dominant position. Traditional media grasps a monopoly of information in many rural areas, since residents only have access to TV, radio. But recently, Indian TV channels are more popular than local TV channels according to the Television Rating Point (TRP). It is calculated by Sirius Marketing & Social Research Ltd. They published TRP list every week. Though some of Bangladeshi media do not have trust on their research project but local advertisers are mainly depending on report.

Now-a-days companies and marketers are looking for new channel of brand communication though digital media, especially social media. But now they are not fully ready to switch to digital media. This scenario however is rapidly changing because of fast changing dynamics with youth shifting to the medium as a major source of media consumption throughout the country.

Recently, people are constantly on the go, and want to grasp as much content within their busy scheduled. For instance, people in public buses listen to podcasts, read news and watch YouTube videos on their smart phones on their way to work.

Table 3.1 : Top companies who are involving in social media marketing

Telecom	Classified	FMCG
GrameenPhone Ltd.	Ekhanei.com	Unilever Bangladesh
RobiAxiata	Chakri.com	P & G
Banglalink	Bkash	Coca-Cola
Teletalk	Samsung Mobile BD	Pran RFL Group

The recent size of the advertising market in Bangladesh is about BDT 2,000 Core. This trends regarding the industry suggest that advertising in radio will remain unchanged, because of the stability in the customer base. However, advertisement in print media and electronic media is expected to decline because viewership in these forms of media is decreasing. TV shows, news are readily available on the internet, which is leading to rapid substitution of conventional media with digital with its targeted content, low costs and wide reach.

Traditional media cannot be fit for specific target groups. For instance , an advertisement on TV targeted towards teenagers is viewed by people . Advertising on digital media is far more selective , where user information such as sex, age , interests and internet behavior can be used to reach out to the right crowd. Effective and efficient allows companies to modify the modality and content to maximize the number of interactions and conversion rates.

One of the greatest features of social media is that it allows companies to reach out to more people at a lower cost. Boosting posts on facebook costs only about USD 6 for instance. The average cost for reaching 1,000 people using social media is over 8 times cheaper than that of print media , and around 17 times cheaper than that of television ads.

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are normally cannot afford a weighty advertising budget , and are forced to find cost effective tools to reach out to ultimate customer. This makes digital or social media the perfect platform for them. Restaurants, fashion stores , event management services and other SMEs are using Facebook news feed to conduct their promotional campaigns and acquiring strong fan bases in the process.

The telecom industry spends the highest amount in online advertisements. Grameenphone leading , followed by Banglalink and RobiAxiata. There are also numerous small and medium companies that invest in digital marketing because of its affordability.

SMEs have very little scope to advertise on television and radio . Print and electronic media is also often too costly for them. Digital media is the best means for SMEs to strengthen their respective brands in an affordable way. Restaurants, fashion stores and lifestyle pages are all aggressively spending on digital marketing , prompting other industries to take notice.

The digital advertising market in Bangladesh is expanding thanks to rapid growth in internet penetration which is approximately 68 million at present. We have 120 million mobile phone subscribers out of which 80 million is active . About 61 million people access internet through mobile.

Corporate and local businesses predominantly find Google and Facebook reliable for placing advertisement to reach their targeted audience. Others include local ad networks like G& R , Rits Ads.

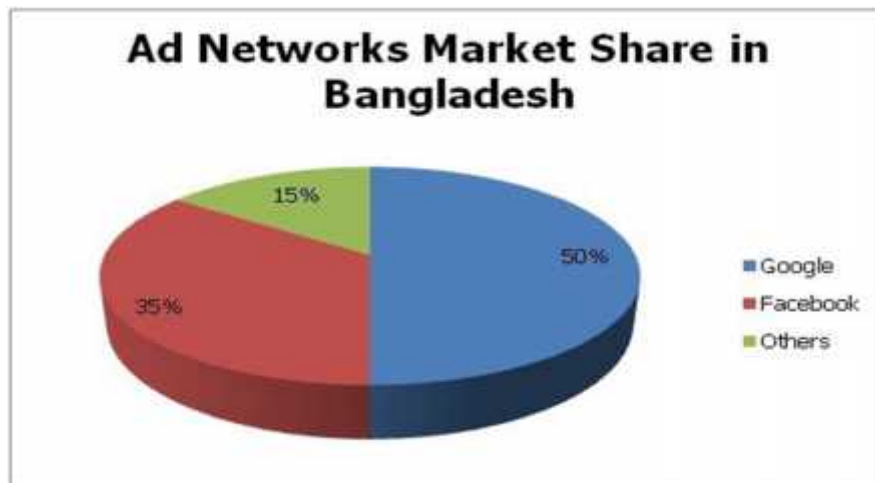


Figure 3-2 : Ad networks market share in Bangladesh

3.2.1 Digital booming and social media in Bangladesh

Social media is a constantly changing force that is dominating desktops and mobile devices across the world. No single technological advancement has changed our daily lives and culture so quickly. Generally speaking, people subscribe to brands that capture and hold their interest, and often for a more specific reason. Whether it is a clothing brand that promotes exclusive offers on social media or a news company that shares breaking stories, successful social media marketers understand that to succeed, there has to be an incentive.

Every brand should understand what their audience wants from following them on social media, and they have an obligation to follow through. From a social media perspective, it's best to test various forms of content and measure which performs best. This could range from engaging videos to graphics to polls and more. Higher clicks and engagement rates should give marketers an idea of what kind of content to share in the future. Additionally, brands now look to social media as a convenient customer service platform. Compared to the inconvenience of calling a customer service line and dealing with an automated machine, social media offers a valuable alternative. In a digital age where people look for instant solutions, social media

drivers. Social media is unique in that it acts as a personalized content aggregator for users. News feeds are meant to directly reflect the user's interests, making social media a 24/7 hub for personalized news. Brands are being reminded that 'content is king, following various algorithm updates. Users are shown content that they are likely to engage with.

Social media is becoming more about the personal journey or experience than ever before. Fans want to be involved, not just sideline spectators. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter have introduced live video features to increase individual participation and to take brand engagement to the next level. With live videos, consumers can feel closer to their favorite brands than ever before. Live videos are becoming their own genre of content-all with the intent to increase engagement and further brand loyalty. If you are looking to take advantage of live video capacities, make sure to address your audience to make them feel more involved. Projecting the message that your brand listens to its fans will surely strengthen loyalty.

Virtual reality is another emerging technology that may have a major impact on social media. Over time, as prices for this technology drop, usage will likely become more regular, and brands can align their marketing strategies to further enhance the experiences consumers are seeking. Brands may find ways to integrate VR with live video to give fans a taste of the action. This may also be the case for product announcements. Imagine how much more traction a new car will get when people can virtually experience it. Social media succeeds because it is a fluid vehicle that quickly changes and updates to enhance the user experience and facilitate the sales funnel to achieve a brand's business goals.

Digital media has the capacity to reach out to more than 163 million people in Bangladesh; highest among the various forms of media in our country. This is because digital media faces little logistical barriers, and can extend to the entire population. 2G networks already covers 99% of the country's area with the 3G network catching up. With the changing trends, even brands and organizations are spending more resources on channeling their advertising online and focused on customers. Organizations, as they continue to invest in traditional media, are further creating digital marketing strategies and learning to manage their social marketing better.

	2005	2010	2016
Power Focus	Retailers	Consumers (conformity)	Consumers (individualism and opinionated)
Enabler	Mass production with broad categorization for consumers to come and choose	Internet allowing consumers to search before-hand and then visit physical stores to purchase	Emergence of smart devices allowing on the go search at time inside shopping malls
Central Touch point	Physical stores (emergence of super stores)	Online followed by visit to malls	Mobile, mobile, mobile
Driving Experience	Shopping as experience	Convenience (online allows higher variety and accuracy)	Instant gratification and social (like check-ins in Facebook)
Life Style	Urban	Urban and Globalization	Urban , Globalization and second screen life

Figure 3-3 : How consumerism has shifted to instant gratification for digital consumers

Source : Light Castle

According to Internet World Stats report, with an internet penetration rate of 38.9% , an internet user base of 63 million, and companies are bound to invest in digital marketing sooner or later. The number of Facebook users has been growing at impressive rates with the trend set to continue on the back of strong fundamentals. While the share of the advertising industry in 2014 was 2% , it is expected to grow to 17% in 2017. Rapid urbanization, internet penetration and advent of social media has shifted consumer desire towards instant gratification which in turn is consistently giving rise to a stronger case for e-space business models.

As the trend shows over the last decade the power focus has shifted from retailers to consumers. However, the consumers have also evolved to give rise to a digital sub class who initially started using the internet while purchasing. Recently with the arrival of cheaper smart devices digital consumers have started living life with ‘the second screen’ as part of their lifestyle. Visits to shopping malls, experience shows like concerts are accompanied by ‘check-ins’ in social media. Purchase decisions starts with reviews of previous consumers. In short, the current digital consumers of Bangladesh are connected individuals with opinions as opposed to large segments, which previously defined the retail era.

3.2.2 Social media usage in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a land of opportunity for social media because this country got more than 60% adult population and with adoption capacity. According to Bangladesh Regulatory Commission

(BTRC) 80 percent internet users of Bangladesh are on social networking website facebook. It has more than 26 million users on January 2017 with 16% penetration rate. While traditional media is still strongly prevail among demographics, digital media is more popular among younger segments. Bangladesh has a lower median age than most Asian countries .Additionally , youth comprise of one third of the country's entire population of more than 163 million , while 70% of the population is under the age of 35 , making media consumption increasingly skewed towards digital.

The Bangladesh capital Dhaka has been ranked second among the cities with the highest number of active facebook users, which is 1.1% of the total monthly active users of the social networking site across the globe . This study was conducted in 2016 on only facebook but in 2017 he organizations are trying to depict the use of internet in their Global Digital Snapshot . The number of social media users rose by 11 million in Bangladesh in past one year, which is the eighth fastest in terms of growth. According to CNN report on January 26, 2015 the top five most popular social networking sites in Bangladesh -----

1. **Facebook** : Facebook is planet's most prevalent interpersonal communicate site. It is ranked on 1st number in the list of top five best social networking sites in our country. There is no device that does not has an inherent Facebook application in it. Facebook was made by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 and designers continue working day and night to keep it up to the necessities of its clients.
2. **Twitter** : It is ranked on 2nd number in the list of top five best social networking websites in Bangladesh. Twitter is an extremely mainstream micro-site its clients can accompany whom they need to take after incorporating businesspeople on screen characters, models or any of their top picks stars and companions.
3. **LinkedIn**: It is ranked on 3rd number in the list of top five best social networking websites in our country. It is tremendously well known around the

business class and that is the reason the top executives of extraordinary organizations have their profiles on this site. It is the best interpersonal interaction webpage for the individuals who need to occupations as their profile as CV and individuals can offer them employment .

4. **Pinterest:** Despite the fact that it has not been quite a while that Pinterest was presented however it has made its name as a result of the prosperity of the android telephones. It is ranked on 4th number in the list of top five best social networking websites in our country. The clients can make a pinboard and stick any life occasion on their pin board.
5. **Friendcircle:** It is ranked on 5th number in the list of top five best social networking sites in Bangladesh. Friendcircle was made by MutalibRaza in April 2014. This is mostly popular in Bangladeshi college students . They use friendcircle to share their picture, stories and they can upload music or videos too.

On the other hand, a Chinese mobile internet company UCWeb, a unit of Alibaba group are planning to enter Bangladesh market. They conducted a survey on December 2015 in the Bangladesh through online survey voting. The government of Bangladesh had officially blocked the top social networking sites at that time for 22 days due to security reason which caused the number of mobile internet users to drop by around one million users. The survey found that 6269 people from 7395 respondents or about 85% said that they use facebook. About 36.2% use WhatsApp, 29% use Viber , 19.4% use Skype and 6.7% use Tango.

According to the study 70% of users spend more than an hour on social networking sites and about 23% of them spend more than five hours on this sites a day. About 75.6% of them said social networking is good for daily life while 6.8% think that it not helpful. Local experts said that facebook is gaining popularity in this market , it is also expanding its reach in commercial aspects as well .

3.3 Local brands using social media in Bangladesh

Facebook has 3,352,680 users and counting, marketing on facebook and other social networking sites are increasingly being used to reach audiences. Pages such as Grameenphone, Airtel Buzz and Robi are gaining popularity every day , as their

digital content becomes widespread. The Robi social media page has been ranked as 6th among the top 10 socially devoted worldwide brands for Q4, 2013. According to Social Bakers, Robi Axiata Ltd's facebook fan page was also placed 4th among all Telecom worldwide brands on facebook. Given that people spend a significant portion of their time on social networking sites , the interaction with content is more likely, causing people to like and share posts whenever it catches the user's attention The role of digital marketing is to convert these interactions into product demand.

As the brand building power of social media grows, it no longer makes sense to treat it as an experiment. That's why companies in Bangladesh are coming forward to have their active presence on social media. Most of the big companies are even recruiting social media managers for managing their pages on social media managers for managing their pages on social media and interacting with the page members actively. Social media guidelines have also been enacted in some companies for their executives. Keeping up the brand presence social media is a new dimension in Bangladesh. Recently, many MNC titans, telecom companies and many organizations have their brand presence in social media like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Many leading organizations have not yet united brand communication through social media for their brands, or promotion of their products through social media not because of financial matter, but for having lack of awareness of the assistances of social media for their brand communication.

3.3.1 Top brands In Bangladesh on social media(Facebook)

Facebook is an American for-profit corporation and an online social media service based in Menlo Park, California. The Facebook website was launched on February 4, 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg, along with his four fellow Harvard college students and roommates. Facebook has more than 1.79 billion monthly active users and it is the most popular social networking site in the world, based on the number of active user accounts. Among the top most visited sites in Bangladesh , Facebook is holding the number one position. The following table shows the most popular official fan pages of different brands in Bangladesh on Facebook :

Table 3.2 : Top brands in Bangladesh on Facebook

Rank	Official name	Brand	Industry	subscribers	Total video views
1	Close up Bangladesh	Close up	Personal care	51890	15544488
2	Airtel Buzz	Airtel buzz	Telecommunication	69143	14913648
3	RobiAxiata Limited	Robi	Telecommunication	27562	14762653
4	Grameenphone	grameenphone	Telecommunication	30918	9986903

Source : Socialbakers ,January 2017

3.4.2 Top brands in Bangladesh on Twitter

Millions of people around the world use Twitter to share everything from the news to brands and businesses. At present, there are 240 million active users on Twitter worldwide and those users post an average of 500 million Tweets every day. Short messages services of Twitter are called Tweets. Registered users on Twitter can read, post tweets, but unregistered users can only read them. Among the top most visited sites in our country, Twitter is holding the twenty fifth position (*Alexa , 2014*). Companies can use Twitter to connect directly with people who are interested in their brand, participate in real time events and conversations, enhance the online brand personality and delight the customers.

Table 3.3 : Popular Twitter accounts of different brands in Bangladesh

Rank	Profile name	Brand	Industry	Followers	Tweets
1	@Banglasong	Music.com bd	Online music portal	12133	257
2	@grameenphone	Grameenphone	Telecommunication	10452	638
3	@airtel_bd	Airtel	Telecommunication	4033	2485
4	@TweetRobi	Robi	Telecommunication	3781	1789
5	@themexpert	Theme Xpert	Template design	654	2072

Source: Socialbakers (2014)

3.3.3 Top brands of Bangladesh on YouTube

YouTube was founded in February 2005, and allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally created videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to

connect and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers . Over 6 billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube , that’s almost an hour for every person on earth . Among the top most visited sites in Bangladesh , YouTube is holding the 3rd position (*Alexa, 2014*). It has 1 billion monthly active users who are watching over 6 billion hours of video each month on YouTube, that’s almost an hour for every person on earth (January, 2017). Due to limited speed YouTube are still suffering to get popularity among the mass people of Bangladesh. Though it has no position on the top most visited social networking sites in our country, marketers and companies are trying to establish their own brands channel in YouTube as a substitute of most popular traditional marketing channel television.

The following table shows the different popular channels of YouTube in Bangladesh:

Table 3.4 : Top Youtube channels in Bangladesh

Rank	Official channel name	Brand	Industry	Subscriber s	Total video views
1	Close up Bangladesh	Close up	Personal care	51890	15544488
2	Airtel Buzz	Airtel buzz	Telecommunication	69143	14913648
3	RobiAxiata Limited	Robi	Telecommunication	27562	14762653
4	Banglalink digital	Banglalink	Telecommunication	12081	10590072
5	Grameenphone	Grameenphone	Telecommunication	30918	9986903

Social media has some characteristics which makes it different from traditional media like newspapers, television and billboards etc. Social media has become very popular in recent years . According to a survey, 73% of online adults now use a social networking site of some kind, 93% of marketers use social media for business. It does not matter whether the business is small or large, online or offline.

Social media touches nearly every facet of our personal and economic lives . The social media is easily accessible from everywhere of the world with only the internet . Social media is totally user friendly to use and does not require any special skills, knowledge and specialist equipment to use. It is absolutely simple to connect with others and be part of communities. Therefore, anyone with online access and basic IT

skill can use the social media to initiate the conversations. In a sense, everyone is now empowered to speak up in social media. Traditional media requires hard and long term measurement tools to measure the effectiveness of brand communication. As the customer response to brand is almost instantaneous in social media , businesses can easily gauge the effectiveness of brand messaging. If the response founds negative, businesses have the opportunity to take the immediate measures for positive response. Moreover, there are a variety of social media analytics tools to help marketing experts track the reach and effectiveness of their social media campaigns toward brands. Popular social media analytics are Google Analytics, Klout, HootSuite etc.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Research methodology

Research methodology is a systematic way to solve any research problem. It is considered as a science of studying how research is to be carried out. Essentially, the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. Selecting a proper method for analyzing the proposed topic is important for reaching the aim of a research. Its aim is to give the work plan of research (*Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi, 2006*). This chapter presents how the study will be conducted, what methods will be used . These questions were playing the role of roadmap for the entire study. The reader will be able to replicate this research by following research methodology. There are two methods of data collection method, qualitative and quantitative data collection method. According to some researchers, the word “ Quantity and Quality in Social Research”, stating that the word quantitative denotes an over-confidence in quantifiable numbers, which would imply that qualitative research is lacking in that regard. One example of this is, Evered’s and Louis’ terms inquiry from the outside for quantitative methods and inquiry from the inside for qualitative methods. Thereby a combination of qualitative and quantitative research will enable an integrated foundation for further analysis and maximize the reliability and validity of the overall findings.

The use of qualitative methods in management research has increased in response to the failure of quantitative techniques to address new theory development (*Fillis, 2006*). According to *Cassell (2006)*, qualitative methods have a long history and tradition within business and research and have a well established pedigree. Qualitative methods have been used in various types of management research field. According to *Boje(2001)*, *Crompton and Jones (1988)*, who have highlighted the considerable contribution that qualitative research can make to the field, suggesting that utilizing qualitative techniques can provide rich insights in to the issues that interest researchers.

In the subsequent stage, the findings of the qualitative data have been utilized to create a quantitative online survey to collect primary data. The online survey enables more evaluation of this social communication platform with regards to the relative

status during a consumer's brand choice and decision making process in the new environment.

Researcher's aim at collecting different insights of a large number of consumers regarding their brand affection in social media platform. At the same time, to explore how companies are communicating their brand with potential consumers through social media. Apart from that, the selected mixed method research entails systematic processes in order to provide a collection of quantitative respectively quantifiable data (*Bryman & Bell, 2011*).

4.2 Research approach and strategy

It is a basic and important question, which research approach is to be followed to generate the outcome of the study. There are two approaches for deriving the findings of a study: inductive research and deductive research approach.

4.2.1 Inductive research approach

Godfrey and Hudson (2010) said that, Inductive approach begins with specific observations and the conclusions are generalized. In inductive research approach, after selecting a number of observations correctly, one can generalize the conclusion to all or groups of similar conditions and situations. These generalizations need to be tested, some of which might be verified and some of them are rejected. Accordingly, all of the principles which are derived based on inductive reasoning are theoretically falsifiable. In this process, the researcher as an observer, should honestly, without any prejudgments and biases, and with an impartial mind, register what they observe. Then these observations form a basis on which theories and laws are constructed which make up the scientific knowledge. Inductive researchers also believe that one can logically generalize the observations into general and inclusive rules and the scientific assumptions get verified and ratified (*Zalaghi and Khazaei, 2016*).

4.2.2 Deductive research approach

The deductive approach constitutes developing of an assumption based on the existing theories and forming a research plan to test the assumption (*Wilson, 2010*). The deductive approach can be explained using the assumption driven from theory. In other words, the deductive approach includes deducing the results from the premises.

When a deductive method is applied for a research project, the author formulates a set of hypothesis that need to be tested , using a methodology. Deductive reasoning has specific characteristics that need to be understood. If the premises of deductive reasoning are accepted, then, the conclusion must necessarily be accepted. In a deductive reasoning, the contents of the results are implicitly stated in the premises , making such argument a non-implicative one.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of brand posts and customer brand engagement through social media in Bangladesh. Social media is relatively new concept for the researchers and the interaction between brand and social media has not been explored well enough. A research that focuses on gaining new insights about recently merged phenomenon is exploratory in nature (*Saunders et. Al, 2009*). This study aims to get a deeper understanding of both problems and prospects in using social media for brand communication in Bangladesh. The real-life context is distinct from laboratory experiments, which isolate the phenomena from their context (*Eisenhardt and Grabner, 2007*).

4.2.3 Data sourcing and collection

This study is based on different sources of data. The current work experience and personal involvement of the researcher in the brand marketing offers a source of information. There are two types of data for research, primary data and secondary data.

The primary data are those which are collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happen to be original. There are several methods of collecting primary data , particularly in surveys and descriptive researches. Important ones are; a) observation method, b) interview method, c) through questionnaire , d) through schedules, and e) other methods which include warranty cards, distributor audits, consumer panels, through projective techniques, depth interviews and content analysis (*Kothari, 2004*).

Secondary data, in other words secondary analysis , is known as a methodology for doing research using pre-existing statistical data (*Heaton, 2004*). It is a research strategy using quantitative or qualitative research data for the reasons of investigating new questions or verifying previous studies. Social media is quite new and emerging

technology in Bangladesh. Content analysis, desk research for literature was based on books, journals, articles, newspapers and magazines. In addition, web based information was thoroughly extracted and analyzed for statistical presentation. Data collection was also conducted through relevant documents concerning the research's overall goal.

This data was further complemented with interviews of internal and external marketing professionals and company representatives, who are involved with social media marketing. In this research paper, primary data were being collected from stakeholders like service providers and consumers through a questionnaire. And primary data were being collected from different parts of Dhaka city from 01 March to 30 March.

The secondary data, on the other hand, are those which have already been collected by someone else and which have already been passed through the statistical process. Usually such data is collected from : 1) various publications of the central, state or local governments; 2) various publications of foreign governments and their subsidiary organizations; 3) technical and trade journals; 4) books, magazines and newspapers; 5) reports prepared by research scholars, universities etc. in different fields; and 6) public records and statistics, historical documents, and other sources of published information (*Kothari, 2004*). For this research secondary data were being collected from almost all the sources mentioned earlier.

4.3 Questionnaire

Considering the advantages and disadvantages of both primary and secondary data sources, the researcher has decided to conduct the study based on data collected from primary data sources. The researcher has decided to consider the reliance of data. Data has been collected from primary data through a questionnaire. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaire is mailed to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. The respondents have to answer the questions on their own choice. Questionnaire is two types; structured and unstructured. Structured questionnaire includes both questions and some potential answers whereas unstructured questionnaire consist only questions (*Creswell, 2012*). This study has

been conducted with the structured questionnaire which consist of 30 questions, 18 questions for customers and 12 for service providers.

4.3.1 Sample size and sampling technique

Sampling theory is a study of relationships existing between a population and samples drawn from the population. For this purpose the population or a universe may be defined as an aggregate of items possessing a common trait or traits. On the other hand, the term sample refers to that part of the universe which is selected for the purpose of investigation (*Kothari, 2004*). The small group of students, families or electors from whom you collect the necessary information to estimate the average age of the class, average income or election outcome is called the sample. On the other hand the number of students, families from whom you obtain the required information is called the sample size and is usually denoted by the letter N (*Kumar, 2011*).

The number of customers and service providers in social media marketing is huge. Everyone can have a different opinion regarding effect of brand posts and customer engagement through social media marketing. But taking everyone's opinion is not possible in a single study. In qualitative research the researcher do not has a predetermined sample size but during the data collection phase waits to reach a point of data saturation. When the researcher is not getting new information or it is negligible (*Kumar, 2011*).

As the nature of the research is qualitative , so the researcher has used judgmental sampling or purposive sampling technique for selecting sample size under non-random/ non- probability sampling design without having a predetermined sample size . Because non- probability sampling design are used when number of elements in a population is either unknown or cannot be individually identified. However the researcher has taken 200 responses as sample considering it as a point of data saturation. The researcher strongly believed that the collected information can provide the best information to achieve the objectives. Likert scale has been used to measure the data collected through the questionnaire. The respondents consist of two most important groups, one was service providers and other group was customers. So, the researcher has surveyed 100 service providers and 100 customers.

4.3.2 Data processing

According to *Weber (1990)* the content/ text analysis can code words, word sense, sentences or themes. In this context, the content is understood as any practice or text that can be read, analyzing the content in a qualitative manner (*Fursich, 2009*). The method of content analysis is also referred as textual analysis, since this method is also used for studying communication with methodological approach of constructivism. For this study, the data was analyzed includes written text, images and info-graphs. The qualitative approach is taken which allows identifying the patterns of the content, however the nature of the social media urges for an approach that looks into the size of communities and subscribers, their engagement, comments and share, number of likes on the chosen platform.

Social media has characteristics as the technological aspects of Web 2.0, like its ability to incorporate different medium of communication and interaction within extremely changing environment (*Kautsky, R. et al, 2008*).

Researcher has received 200 responses by questionnaire survey and converted all the answers and Likert scale into numerical value. After that, converted numerical data was entered and analyzed by using the IBM SPSS statistics version 20. It is a software package used for logical batched and non batched statistical analysis produced by SPSS Inc. in 1968, it was acquired by IBM Corporation in 2009. SPSS is a widely used program for statistical analysis in social science.

4.3.3 Data analyzing and interpretation

After collection of data from the customers and the service providers, data have been arranged for each option and each question basis. Then arranged data have been formed or grouped together in tables. Based on those tables different types of graphs, charts, bars etc. have been generated. All these graphs, charts and tables have been presented in the following sections. Along with these graphs and charts firstly the researcher mentioned the findings of the study and secondly the researcher critically analyzed with different factors with the participants' response. Researcher has analyzed the data separately for customers and service providers. Firstly, the customer's data was analyzed.

4.3.4 Social media change the views of customers about a brand

In the last decade, a revolutionary development has been made in the use of social media like Facebook, Twitter and others. People use social media more efficiently and regularly, they can be able to search anything and try to differentiate the brands. Many fan pages are created and those fans are mostly judgmental. Around 74% customers agreed that social media or Facebook can change their views about a brand, about 15% think that they strongly influenced by social media to change their views or knowing a brand through social media.

Table 4.1 : Social media change the views of customers about a brand

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
Agree	74	74.0	74.0	89.0
Neutral	9	9.0	9.0	98.0
Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source : Field survey, 2019

So, most of the customers have a positive opinion that, social media can influence a brand than traditional media.

4.3.5 Social media allows two way communications between a customer and a brand through brand posts

Brand post on brand pages are important factor in social media marketing. Any customer who has no idea about a brand can easily influence through an attractive brand post. A brand post can create a two way communication between brand and a customer.

Table 4.2 : The perception of customers about “ two way communication”

Customer’s opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly agree	6	6.0	6.0	6.0
Agree	68	68.0	68.0	74.0
Neutral	22	22.0	22.0	96.0
Disagree	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Source : Field survey, 2019

The table shows that, around 68% customers agreed on that social media allows two way communications between a customer and brand. Social media makes a bridge between a customer and a brand. Around 6% people are strongly agreed on that, 22% people are neutral who are not associated with social media and rest of the people disagreed . So , from the percentage , it can be said that customers take social media and customer brand engagement positively.

4.3.6 Brand posts can help to differentiate the quality of different brands

There are various kinds of brands are available .Social media create the opportunity to differentiate the best quality brand among lots of brands. Brand posts can make this through interactive and informative posts through which customers can easily make a difference between brands. Brand posts play a vital role in customer brand engagements.

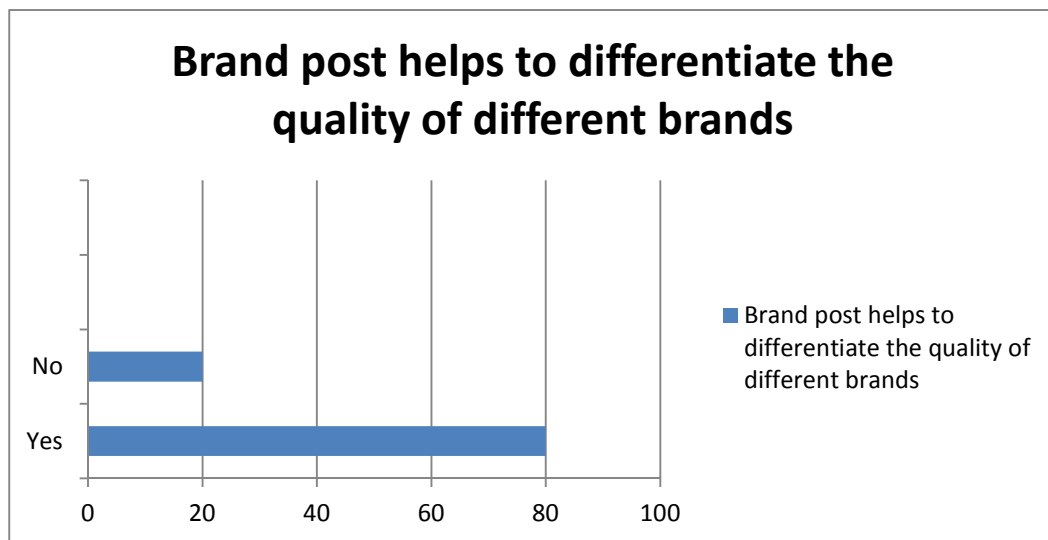


Figure 4.1 : Perception about brand posts

Source : Field survey, 2019

From above graph, it is clear that 80% customers give positive comment about the brand posts , whereas 20% feels negative. People who are associated with social media and brand , they know the importance of brand posts. Without an attractive brand post, no brand can make a position in the mind of customers.

4.3.7 Most of the brand pages are trustworthy to customers

Brand pages are the representative of any particular brand. So any manipulation can affect the reputation of main brand. In this research, it is try to find out that, whether customer trust brand pages or not.

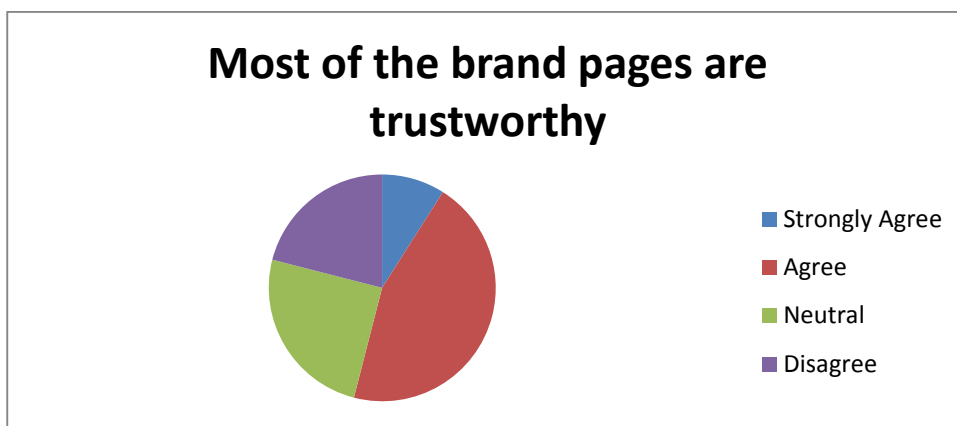


Figure 4.2: Perception of consumers about brand's trustworthiness

Source : Field survey, 2019

The above pie chart clearly shows that, in our country customers who use social media have a strong faith in brand pages , because around 80% of them believe that brand pages are trustworthy .

4.3.8 Like , comment and share can affect the purchasing decision of a customer

Like, comment , share are the way how consumers express their feelings about a brand on Facebook. People can like a post only when they just like it, they can comment to express their feelings in words and they can share it if it touches his or her mind and share it with others so that they can see this.

Table 4.3 : Like can affect the purchasing decision

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	63	63.0	63.0	63.0
No	37	37.0	37.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4 : Comment can affect the purchasing decision

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	87	87.0	87.0	87.0
No	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5 : Share can affect the purchasing decision

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	96	96.0	96.0	96.0
No	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

From these three tables, it is clear that in comparison with others, share is the most important which can affect the purchasing decision of a customer. Around 96% customers strongly agreed that share can affect their purchasing decision.

4.3.9 User friendly and attractive brand page can draw the attention of new customers

An attractive brand page can attract new customers. Brand page profile is like a representative. The more attractive any brand page, the more ability to draw the attention of customers.

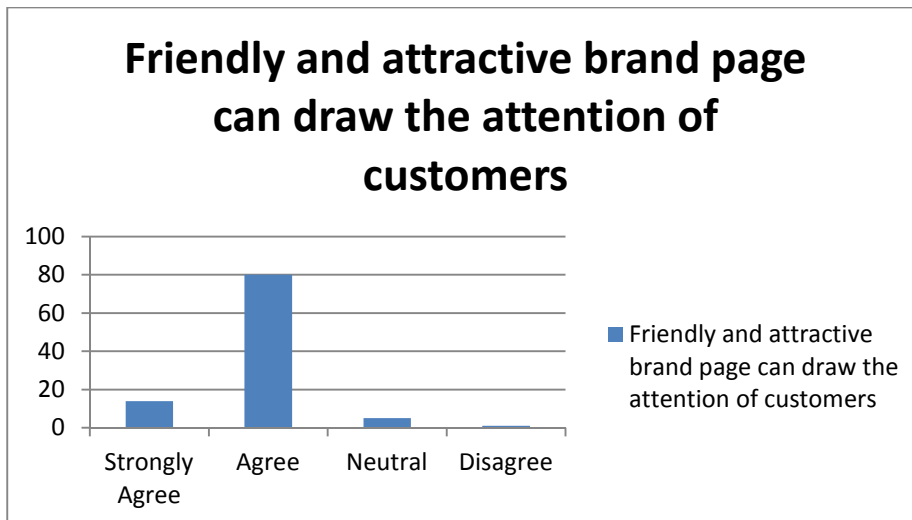


Figure 4.3 : Results of Likert scale for “attention of customers”

Above graph clearly shows that, customers think that an attractive brand page is necessary for new customers to get idea about that brand. About 80% agreed that , an attractive and user friendly brand page can draw the attention of new customers.

Table 4.6 : Multiple logistic regression analysis : Perception of customers ; effectiveness of brand posts and customer brand engagement assuming brand post as dependent variable.

Characteristics	B	Odds Ratio	95 % CI
Age (years)			
13-17	-	-	-
18-24	-.554	1.205	6.791-.41
25-34	-1.706	.182	1.206-.003
35-50	-	-	-
Social media			
Strongly agree	.752	2.121	229.36-0.020
Agree	1.119	3.061	684.53-.014
Neutral	19.320	245747715.6	-

Social media effective			
Strongly agree	-14.969	.451	-
Agree	-16.674	.203	-
Neutral	8.243	3802.74	-
Brand pages			
Strongly agree	-.287	.750	38.77-.015
Agree	-1.880	.153	9.002-.003
Neutral	.473	1.604	366.009-.007
Disagree	-23.963	0.000	--
Fan pages			
Strongly agree	-15.770	0.04	---
Agree	-14.577	0.003	--
Neutral	-21.081	0.561	---
Disagree	23.077	105263	---
Like purchasing decision			
Yes	3.182	24.088	9077-.064
No	--	--	--
Comment purchasing decision			
Yes	-5.617	0.004	.512-0.000
No	---	-----	--
Share purchasing decision			
Yes	13.086	482151.6	0.000
No	--	---	---
Marketing tools			
Strongly agree	-11.381	2.56	0.000
Agree	-15.879	0.09	0.000
Neutral	-10.407	14578	0.000

User friendly attractive			
Strongly agree	-.747	.474	----
Agree	21.221	164418702	
Neutral	24.100	29265307	-----

Discussion of the Empirical Findings from the Multiple Binary Logistic Regression models:

Binary logistic regression model is described from the Table 5 , to clearly analyzing the brand post and customer brand engagement through social media.

From the table, firstly we can see that the age between 18-24 years is 2.17 times more likely used Facebook than other ages . Social media helps a customer to make purchase decision , the estimate of odds ratio indicate that the risk of strongly agree is 2121 times higher than disagree. I case of agree and neutral the value is 3.061 and 245747715.6 respectively.

Social media allows two way communication between a customer and brand, the estimate of odds ratio indicate that the risk of strongly agree is .451 higher than disagree. In case of agree and neutral the value is .203 and 3802.74 times respectively.

The trustworthiness of brand pages , the estimate of odds ratio indicate that the risk of strongly agree is .750 times higher than disagree.

Fan pages are responsive to customers , the odds ratio indicates that the risk of strongly agree is 0.04 times higher than disagree.

Like, comment and share influence purchasing decision of customers, the odds ratio of these three are respectively. 24.088, 0.04 and 482151.6. Marketing tools like text message, videos etc is enough for customers, the estimate of odds ratio indicate that the risk of strongly agree is 2.56 times higher than disagree.

Use friendly and attractive brand pages can attract new customers, the estimate of odds ratio indicate that the risk of strongly agree is .474 times higher than agree and neutral.

The service provider’s opinion about brand posts and customer brand engagement through social media; a detail analysis is shown about the perception.

4.3.10 Social media marketing can boost the sales of company

Recently, marketers want to get a high profit at a low cost and at a convenience way. Social media has made this path so much easier for them. Otherwise, customers are also find an easier way to get service.

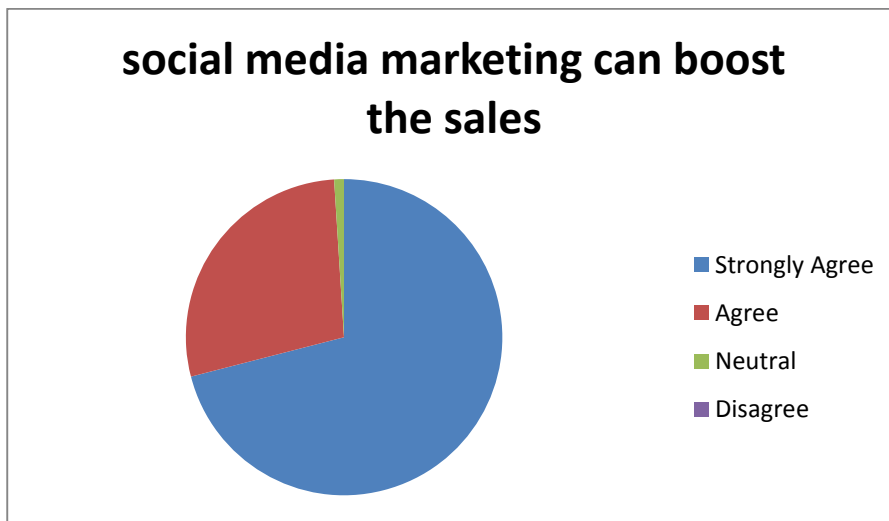


Figure 4.4 : Perception about ‘boosting the sales’

From above figure, it can be said that, most of the service providers strongly agreed on that, social media can boost the sales, it means that there is a strong bond between customer with brand through social media in our country.

4.3.11 Like, comment and share can affect the purchasing decision of customers according to service provider

Table 4.7 : Like can affect the purchasing decision

Customer’s opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	86	86.0	86.0	86.0
no	14	14.0	14.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.8 : Comment can affect the purchasing decision of customers

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	57	57.0	57.0	57.0
no	43	43.0	43.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.9 : Share can affect the purchasing decision of customers

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	88	88.0	88.0	88.0
no	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

From above three tables, it is clear that most of the service provider think, social media can influence customer's purchasing decision. Around 86% thinks that, like can positively affect the purchasing decision, about 57% thinks that, comment can affect the purchasing decision of customers and 88% service provider give their opinion that, share can mostly affect the customer's purchasing decision.

4.3.12 Understanding of customer's engagement through giving rating after purchase

Most of the service provider who are directly associated with social media marketing, have a positive insight that customers are giving recommendation or rating after purchase and they mark them as loyal customer.

Table 4.10: Customers give rating after purchase

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	91	91.0	91.0	91.0
no	9	9.0	9.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

From the table, it can be said that, according to service provider, around 91% customers give their rating after their particular purchase.

4.3.13 Brand posts increase purchase intention

Brand posts are the most valuable criteria for social media marketing. Brand posts on brand pages are the representative of social media marketing of any brand. Most of the service provider believes that brand post play an important role in making purchase decision.

Table 4.11: Brand posts can increase purchase decision

Customer's opinion	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	89	89.0	89.0	89.0
no	11	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

From the above table, it is clear that around 89% think that brand posts have a positive effect in making purchasing decision of customers.

CHAPTER FIVE : FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Key findings

Social media has some characteristics which make it different from traditional media like magazines, newspapers etc. Social media has become very popular recently . Pew research survey found that, 75% of online adults now use a social networking site and 71% of online adults use Facebook. Otherwise, 93% of marketers use social media for business purpose. According to McKinsey Global Institute, 90% of companies using social technologies are getting some business benefits. It does not matter whether the business is small or large, online or offline. Social media has a great advantage for every business. It is a quite fast growing medium in Bangladesh which is playing a dynamic role in current market. In order to provide the answers of the research questions following findings are presented based on aforementioned data.

RQ 1 : Why and How companies are using social media as a new marketing channel in Bangladesh?

5.1.1 Social media as a new marketing channel

There are different parts in the first research question. Mainly why and how these two words are important in this question. The answer of why are as follows:

1. **Social media is different from traditional media** : The open air policy in the print media of Bangladesh allows many foreign satellite TV channels to enter the local market. Different types of entertaining programs are catching the attention of local viewers. On the other hand, people are annoying over local TV channels for excessive advertisement and program quality. This ultimately turns advertisers to focus on social media as a new marketing channel.

2. **Cost effective**: Traditional media is normally can be expensive for marketers, especially for SMEs. Whereas almost all social networking sites are free to use when compared to other traditional brand marketing tools. Communicating with the customers, companies are need to spend their time in updating profiles, posting messages, and interacting with customers in the social media . It is so much possible to follow up the customer responses of every promotional activity attempted in social media.

3. **Speed of Internet** : Social media is so much faster than any other traditional media to convey the messages to the target audiences. Once the messages are posted in Facebook brand pages, people can see and participate in conversation regardless of

time or geographic location. Thus, real time communication has been possible with the blessing of social media.

4. Accessibility: Social media touches almost every facet of our personal and without personal lives (*Qualman, 2013*). The social media is easily accessible from everywhere of all over the world with the only internet access. Social media is totally user friendly and does not require any special skills, training and special equipment to use. It is so much easier to connect with others and be a part of communities. Therefore, anyone having online access and with IT skill can use the social media to initiate the conversations. In a word, everyone is now empowered to speak up in social media.

5. Interaction Ability : The unique advantage of social media is that it allows two way and real time communication. Conversation is an important part of social media. Consumers can share their views and interact regarding a brand directly and instantly. This participatory nature of social media has given businesses the opportunity to create brand loyalty among customers.

6. Target Ability : Mostly communities on social media platforms are formed on the basis of common interests, such as politics, hobbies, travelling etc. Through social media marketing , companies can easily enter into those communities and target their customers who are eager to talk about specific product.

7. Global Reach :The world is now becoming a global marketplace and almost all countries are part of a global economy (*Hill,2010*). With the increasing globalization, time and distance have reduced virtually between customers and producers around the globe. Since social media is global and accessible 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, businesses are now using social media to reach this global market. Social media enables its users to stay connected with anyone who are geographically separated.

8. Gaining Tariff on company websites: Social media also works as a leading traffic generator. When any blog posts, videos are shares from the website of a business, this gives the stakeholders a reason to click through and visit the site. The business has

now the opportunity to inspire those visitors to take action by inviting them to sign up for mailing list, make a purchase , or call to schedule a free consultation.

The answers of how are as follows:

1. **Integration of social media:**Traditional marketing is the main tool for brand communication now-a-days. Marketers are trying to integrate social media with traditional media . Social media is a great way to clarify the messages send through traditional channel. Social media creates a dialogue of business with customers to ensure the right messages are relayed.

Companies integrate social media with existing traditional marketing by followingways :

1. Incorporate social icons/ links to the brand website/ blog
2. Incorporate social icons/ links to all email marketing
3. Offer the ability to share/ like via share buttons/ widgets
4. Utilize social media for a virtual event
5. Utilize social media at live events
6. Promote Marketing events (trade shows, seminars) via social media
7. Create video content/ infographics
8. Use social media engagement for market research
9. Incorporate brand image/ personality in all social media
10. Utilize social media for employee recruitment
11. Utilize social media for sales team communication/ prospecting
12. Open up customer service channels through social media
13. Build customer relationship management via social media
14. Use social media to promote inbound marketing

Integrating social media with traditional marketing is challenging. The right mix of social and traditional ensures maximum positive results. If multiple people are representing the brand on social media , the power of voice should be uniform across all marketing communication that represent the brand image. To uniformity of big companies, online marketing team play an important role.

RQ2 : What kinds of social media are using in Bangladesh and what are the challenges and opportunities could company meet when they utilizing them?

5.1.2The opportunities and challenges of social media marketing

From several reports, it has been cleared that facebook is the mostly used social networking platform in Bangladesh. So, this is the ultimate choice of all business for their social media brand marketing. The use of facebook is increasing day by day all over the country.

The opportunities of social media marketing is high in Bangladesh due to following reasons:

1. The people of Bangladesh are very much interested to interact in social media. Among the top ten most visited websites in Bangladesh , 4 social media sites; facebook.com, youtube.com, blogspot.com and ask.com (*Alexa, 2014*). A lot of community pages are also seen in facebook. From political movement to fund raising for a sick child, people are creating social media contents. It is a big opportunity for companies to have the customers as their brand advocates.
2. The government is trying to make internet available among people by reducing bandwidth price. With the reduced internet cost , internet users number in Bangladesh is increasing day by day. It has also been observed that a major portion of the internet users of our country using facebook in any way which led marketers to introduce their brands on social media.
3. Government of Bangladesh is recently implementing the state of the art technology and access to internet connections . Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) has changed the definition of broadband. According to new definition, at least 1.0 mbps speed internet will be ‘ broadband’ and below 1.0 mbps speed will be called as ‘ narrowband’.
4. The computing power and internet connectivity of handheld devices have increased the number of facebook users. Internet enabled handheld devices are available at competitive price in country markets. People can use internet and join the social media community from anytime they want.

5. Digital Bangladesh is a buzz word in the contemporary Bangladesh. The recent ruling party Bangladesh Awami League used the concept in its 2008 election manifesto. The term ‘ Digital Bangladesh’ means the effective use of computers and modern information and communication technology for building a better Bangladesh in terms of education , health , human rights and poverty reduction. By providing high capacity fiber optic submarine cable bandwidth , the people of our country will be connected to the ‘ Information Super Highway’.

6. With the wave of globalization , the structure of society of the country is changing. The mobility of rural people to urban area, increased highly educated group, and people’s interests toward online shopping are marked in this social structure. As the urban people lack infrastructural opportunities to pass their leisure time, they are motivated to pass their time interacting with friends and family members in social media.

The challenges toward using social media in Bangladesh are as follows :

1. The country’s internet largely depends on SEA-MEWE-. Six companies operate international terrestrial cable that provide backup connectivity through India . Bangladesh has experienced internet disruption several times after the cable cut. Otherwise, Internet’s speed in Bangladesh is amongst the slowest in the world . Slow internet speed makes the buffering to watch and share the posts in social media. It becomes awkward to get the customers engaged in conversation.

2. Social media also offers the paid ads platform. Due to unavailability of popular online payment gateways like paypal, it is difficult for Bangladeshi companies to use this paid ad platform for promoting their products. According to the report of The Financial Express (2012), Bangladesh is being deprived of BDT 2.5 billion foreign currency due to various online service sectors caused by a lack of convenient online money transfer channels.

3. According to Population and Housing Census 2016 of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the country’s literacy rate of the population aged above 7 reached 81.8 % , where most of them are below 18 years . As the communication in social media requires basic literacy of reading contents, the marketers could not get the attraction of almost half of the population of the country.

4. The attitude of parents toward social media reflects the negative pattern in our country. This is because of their fear that teenagers are becoming highly addicted into social media. The intensity of using this site among teenagers is so aggravating that young students can't help staying connected to facebook in every 30 minutes(*Ahmmady, 2012*). It is observed that the use of social media is sometimes being restricted by employers in Bangladesh. Every technology has both good and bad side . Social media has changed the world in many ways. For some , the change has been positive , for others the change has been detrimental.

5. The cost of miscommunication is very high in this regard when people can start from anywhere with any background. The ethical part of communication can be ignored once social media is being used by unethical people sometime. Recently, mass media broadcasting companies are trying to get peoples feedback using social media without any censor that may cause cultural shock in the country.

6. In social media people usually come to talk, play games or share everything, starting from their opinions about a particular event to photos of their pet. In our country, companies sometime expose less professionalism to keep in mind that in a social media, they should portray their brand as a friend who talks to the people in their language and realize them. Creative innovation is necessary for grabbing consumers' empathy finally.

RQ 3: What strategies and tactics are companies using in social media marketing now-a-days?

5.1.3. Different strategies and tactics used by different marketers

Marketers are following different strategies and tactics for marketing through social media. Some of them take long term strategy, some other take short term strategy. Before taking any type of social media initiative, an organization begin with identifying objectives.

Traditional marketing platforms distributed marketing message to the audience, where social media is a tool for two way social engagement. Fans and Followers are important to a social media strategy. To create connections and maintain long term relationship with potential consumers, marketers are following tactics :

- a. Choose catchy content that will resonate fans and followers.
- b. Be sure the content is easy to consume and respond to via mobile devices. Mobile is becoming a mainstream way for consumers to view and engage.

c. Post static or motion graphics , photos and videos. Photos are shown to increase engagement tremendously. Not all posts or content should be products, services or offers, customers using a product.

d. Timing digital content is the equivalent of shelving in department stores. The audience will only see what is conveniently presented to them. Posts are most effective when posted between 6 pm to 12 pm , midnight.

RQ 4 : How social media marketing influenced consumers mind and purchase behavior ?

5.1.4 The influence of social media on purchase behavior

Social media does impact consumer purchase decision. Today's buyers are self directed , they want to know a brand, research a brand , product service online or through their network before making their purchase decisions.

This study explores consumer's relationships with social media and their purchase decisions. Most of the users agreed that recommendations from other people online are valuable, credible and could influence their perceptions of a brand. If someone else talks about a brand instead of brand talking about itself is definitely impacts consumer buying decision.

Creative and informative posts used by companies on social networking profiles gives chance to someone to react, and every reaction lead potential customer to site visit. This increases the conversion rate. Effective use of social media can optimize the lead conversion efforts by impacting a brand's consumers buying decisions.

5.2 Recommendations

Social media is one of the major important Medias in the world for marketing and promotion to the companies, products and brands. It is well used online marketing tools in the first word. Bangladesh is not far beyond from that opportunity and start walking on that way. It is the right time for our country's companies and brands to make sure their presence in the online social media and virtual environment.

If a company would like to have successful online presence today, social media marketing is crucial. It is one of the most popular and powerful means of brand communication, which every company in Bangladesh must embrace. In this study, an

attempt was undertaken to portray the present status, problems and prospects of using social media in brand communication.

Firstly, Education opportunity is increasing with the help of social media in Bangladesh. The level of education facility is increasing in our country. Therefore, educated people are increasing with the rapidly modern technology and opportunities.

Secondly, Access to technology in Bangladesh is increasing significantly due to the government Information and communication Technology (ICT) policy.

Thirdly, If we consider rural and urban context, people's lifestyle in Bangladesh has been changing due to technology adaption and increasing technology purchasing power regardless rural or urban. Rural citizen get less opportunity than urban citizen, due to strong competition in the telecommunication sectors , service provider are able to understood rural citizen about the importance of technology and internet. In modern time, Bangladeshi people are more aware about product and brand more than before. Therefore, the presence in online platform for Bangladeshi companies and brands are important to connect with potential customers so that company can increase brand loyal customers and alongside sought for brand awareness.

More importantly, **Bangladesh internet speed experience is improving rapidly** than past. The adaption of 3G and more latest technology in Bangladesh telecommunication sectors. If we look the different statistics from different sources, we can find the same result that facebook is the most browsing site in our country . Similarly, user of Google search engine and YouTube are increasing day by day. Google find Bangladesh as a potential market in near future, so without delay it can open office so that it can grab the market.

The content of the brand pages and brand posts should be updated day by day. The page admin should be aware about the customers queries, interest etc. Motion video is more effective and 24 hours automated service should be available.

Customer engagement factors should be considered by marketers. Brand posts are main attraction of the customers. The richness of the post, interaction time etc should be considered so that every customer can see the posts.

Companies doing business in Bangladesh can grab the tempting **economic benefits of social media** identified throughout the research. Social media is not totally a risk-free platform. Random social media contents would not ensure the target benefits for the companies. Since fans, followers are free to post their comments on these platforms businesses are susceptible to the possibility of negative publicity. Companies need to be consistent with their social participation to minimize the risks associated with any adverse publicity. Companies are suggested to appoint executives who will be responsible for developing and maintaining contents in social media. Businesses should also align other resources with their social media marketing strategies so that they can ensure the attention communication needed to embrace social media effectively.

5.3 Limitations of the study

Though I have finished my research compiling several types of data and analysis, but there were a lot of limitations behind it. Firstly, the social media marketing and customer engagement is quite new as a study object, there are a limited amount of research available. Otherwise, there are not enough research regarding social media marketing mainly through facebook and customer brand engagement .

5.4 Conclusions

This is the last segment of the study. It is time to wrap up the research findings and check all the research objectives are achieved or not. First objective was the opportunity of social media marketing in our country. This study provided a detail overview about the sectors of social media marketing in Bangladesh. This study found that social media marketing creates employment opportunities in ICT sector and reduces the marketing cost of marketers.

The second objective focuses on the content of social media brand posts on brand pages. Like, comment and share play a major role in expressing feelings about a brand post. From the survey, it was found that most of the customers and service providers agreed that like, comment and share influence the customers purchasing decision.

The third and fourth objective focused on the customer brand engagement through social media marketing. Research found that, social media brand posts have a positive relationship in building customer's relationship with brand.

Security in social media means the measurement of risk that user's feel in job processes with social media, and it is one of the most important factors in social media. Social media websites need to enhance security mechanisms in order to increase confidence in the user's mind and encourage them to buy or order products through social media. Any negative word of mouth should encourage firms to devise effective mechanisms to solve them and maintain an amicable presence that increase the sales.

5.5 Scope of further research

This thesis is based on how social media utilized in business to consumer marketing. It would be more interesting to study how social media can be used in business to business marketing.

One of the key words in the discussions in this study was engagement. Therefore, how deeply customers feel engaged in the product of the company or brand. In addition, investigating more thoroughly the customer journey of a company and defining all the points where customer engagement and interaction can be improved would also be a possible topic for further research.

Finally, the further research could find answers to the question if there are cultural differences that should be considered when engaging or interacting with customers through social media, as it has global presence.

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Appendix

Title : Measuring The Effectiveness Of Brand Posts On Brand Pages And Customer Brand Engagement Through Social Media In Bangladesh

Questionnaire

(I solicit your valuable co-operation in filling up this questionnaire. Information collected from you will make a meaningful contribution in the field of Social media marketing, as well as development of this sector. All information collected from you through this questionnaire will be kept in strict confidence. Please put tick mark to your answer).

A. Survey Questionnaire for Customers

Name :

Organization :

Contact No :

1. Select your gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Select your age—
 - a. 13-17years
 - b.18-24 years
 - c. 25-34 years
 - d. 35-50 years

3. In comparison with television / print media , facebook/ socialmedia is----
 - a. More effective
 - b. Effective
 - c. Less effective

4. Facebook (newsfeed/ comments) has the ability to change the view about a brand / product---
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

5. Social media has made me more informed about brands when making purchasing decisions-----
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

6. Social media allows effective two way communication between myself and the brand that I preferred---
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

7. Do you click like/ comment/ share of any brand communication materials on Facebook?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. Brand posts can help to differentiate the quality of different brands—
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
9. Most of the brand pages are trustworthy—
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
10. The fanpages are so much responsive to customers----
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
11. Did you give recommendation as rating for any brand ?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
12. Like can affect the purchasing decision of customers—
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
13. Comment can affect the purchasing decision of customers---
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
14. Share can affect the purchasing decision of customers---
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
15. The brand posts are easily understandable----
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
16. The marketing tools (text messages / video) that social media has used is enough for customers-
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
17. User-friendly and attractive brand page can draw attention of new customers—
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
18. Mobile apps would make it easier for customers to get services from service providers—
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

B. Survey Questionnaire for Service Providers

Name :

Organization :

Contact No :

1. Facebook is the most used tools for social media marketing of your company----
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Social media marketing can boost the sale----
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
3. Social media marketing is cost effective-
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
4. Like can affect the purchasing decision of customers---
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. Comment can affect the purchasing decision of customers---
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. Share can affect the purchasing decision of customers –
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
7. Most customers give rating after purchase ---
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. Brand posts an increase customers purchasing decision---
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
9. Search Engine Marketing (SEM) would help to get new customers----
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
10. Evaluation site can play important role to generate new customers ---
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
11. Do you think , social media marketing is profitable for your company-
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
12. Do you think social media marketing is challenging –
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

