

Report on the Summer Internship at Business Analytics Department of Outlook group

June-July 2024
Academic Year 2023-25

*Submitted towards completion of Course 3.1 titled “Summer Training and Project
in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the PGDGBO Programme*

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**POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN GLOBAL BUSINESS OPERATIONS
SHRI RAM COLLEGE OF COMMERCE
University of Delhi**

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION



CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION SIGNED BY INTERNAL SUPERVISOR AND EXTERNAL EXAMINER

This is to certify that I, **Akshat Yadav**, student of the **SRCC GBO batch (2023-2025)**, have completed the summer internship project titled "**Analysing Subscription Strategies at Outlook Group**". This project represents my original work, conducted under the supervision of **Mr. Harish Kumar**, Assistant Professor, Shri Ram College of Commerce (Internal Supervisor), in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Summer Internship Program for the SRCC GBO course. The report has been submitted to Outlook Group and Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi.

I further declare that, to the best of my knowledge, this project does not contain any content that has been submitted for any other project, either at this institution or elsewhere, without proper citation.

Place: Delhi

Signature of Internal Supervisor

Date: November 2024

Signature of External Examiner

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to sincerely thank Professor Simrit Kaur, Principal of Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University, and the respected faculty for their guidance and knowledge shared through the Global Business Operations course. I am also grateful to the Corporate Relations and Placement Cell of SRCC and to Dr. Misha Govil, Coordinator of Global Business Operations, for their commitment to bringing valuable opportunities to campus.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who supported me during my internship at Outlook Group. First and foremost, I would like to thank Shalini Jha, my manager and mentor, for providing me with valuable guidance and insightful feedback throughout the project. Your constant support and encouragement helped me stay focused and motivated.

I am also grateful to the entire team at Outlook Group for creating a welcoming and collaborative environment, and for giving me the opportunity to work on meaningful projects that contributed to both my learning and the company's goals. Special thanks to my colleagues who were always available to answer my questions and provide assistance when needed.

Lastly, I would like to thank my academic mentors and family for their continuous support throughout this internship journey. This experience has been a tremendous learning opportunity, and I am truly grateful to everyone who contributed to its success.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this experience enriching and rewarding.

Table of Contents

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	4
2. INTRODUCTION	6
3. ABOUT OUTLOOK PUBLISHING (INDIA) PVT. LTD.	7
3.1. Industry of the Organisation and its structure	7
3.2. History of OUTLOOK Publishing	8
3.3. Management of OUTLOOK Publishing	10
3.4. Organisational structure of OUTLOOK Publishing	11
3.5. Department/Role in which the internship was done	11
4. DETAILS ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP	12
4.1 Module 1: Sales Task	12
4.2 Module 2: Data Visualization & Forecasting	12
4.3 Module 3: Business Analytics	26
5. TIMELINE & KEY PEOPLE MET	30
5.1. Timeline:	30
5.2. Key people met:	32
6. KEY LEARNINGS	33
6.1. Application of some of the Conceptual Frameworks	33
6.2. Industry Practices	34
6.3. Key Insights	35
7. VALUE INCREMENT AT THE END OF PROJECT	37
7.1. Growth in Knowledge	37
7.2. Growth in Skills	37
7.3. Growth in Personality	38
8. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	39
9. CONCLUSION	41
10. REFERENCES	42
11. APPENDICES	43

2. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the work I completed during my summer internship at **Outlook Group**, where I worked as a **Business Analyst Intern**. The primary focus of my internship was to analyse the company's magazine subscription data and provide actionable insights to improve their subscription strategies. The project was divided into several modules, each addressing different aspects of business analytics, including **sales, data visualization, forecasting, and subscriber analysis**.

Throughout the internship, I applied various data-driven techniques to identify key trends, understand customer behavior, and recommend ways to enhance the company's performance. By working closely with real subscription data, I gained hands-on experience in using tools like **Microsoft Excel** and **Power BI** to create visual reports, forecast future trends, and optimize business strategies.

This report details my approach, key findings, and recommendations based on the analysis I performed during the internship. The insights gained from this experience have not only helped the company but also allowed me to grow professionally by improving my technical, analytical, and communication skills.

3. ABOUT OUTLOOK PUBLISHING (INDIA) PVT. LTD.

3.1. Industry of the Organisation and its structure

Outlook Publishing operates in the media industry, which focuses on creating and distributing content across multiple platforms. Its specific segments include **Media Production, Publishing, Magazines, Digital Content, and Events.**

3.1.1. Media Production

This segment involves the creation and dissemination of content across various platforms, including print and digital. Outlook's role here is in producing editorial content for its magazines, websites, and other digital formats. The quality of content and the relevance of topics such as current affairs, finance, business, and travel give Outlook a competitive edge.

3.1.2. Publishing

Outlook Publishing focuses on **magazine publishing**, with a range of well-known publications like Outlook, Outlook Business, Outlook Traveller, and Outlook Money. In this space, competitors include both local and international publishers that offer similar content in both print and digital formats. Key rivals in the magazine publishing industry include:

- India Today
- General Knowledge Today
- The Sportstar
- Diamond Cricket Today
- Filmfare
- Pratiyogita Darpan
- The Week
- Time

These competitors focus on similar areas like news, business, finance, and travel, often catering to overlapping audiences.

3.1.3. Digital Content

With the rise of the internet, the media industry has seen a significant shift toward digital platforms. Outlook has transformed its offerings by developing an engaging online presence

through its digital magazine platform and website. This move helps Outlook compete with new media entities like **The Print**, **The Wire**, **Scroll**, and **Quint**, which are primarily digital-first platforms. Outlook also integrates with social media and online news platforms to enhance its reach.

3.1.4. Events

In addition to traditional media, Outlook has ventured into the **events sector**, which involves organizing conferences, seminars, and gatherings that connect people with interests aligned to the topics covered by their publications (business, finance, travel, etc.). This diversification allows Outlook to compete with other media houses that have branched out into event management, such as the **Times Group** and **Hindustan Times**.

3.1.5. Trends and Competition

The publishing and media industry is evolving rapidly, especially with more consumers preferring digital content over print. There is an ongoing need for media companies like Outlook to stay competitive through innovative digital products and engagement strategies. Outlook's move toward a digital-first model, offering long-form content and insights through its website and app, allows it to retain relevance in a crowded market.

3.2. History of OUTLOOK Publishing

3.2.1 The early years

Outlook Publishing was founded in **1995** as a division of **Hathway Investments Private Limited**, entering the Indian media landscape with the launch of **Outlook magazine**, a news and current affairs publication. At the time, Outlook magazine stood out for its bold approach to journalism, with a focus on investigative reporting and in-depth analysis of political and social issues. The magazine gained popularity under the leadership of its **Founder Editor-in-Chief, Vinod Mehta**, a well-known and respected figure in Indian journalism. Mehta's editorial direction helped establish Outlook as a credible and influential magazine in the country, and he remained closely associated with the company until **2012**. During this period, Outlook magazine covered a wide range of topics, from politics and socio-economic issues to culture and sports, appealing to a large audience across India.

In **2003**, Outlook Publishing was separated from Hathway Investments and became an independent entity, forming **Outlook Publishing (India) Pvt. Ltd.** This move allowed the company to focus entirely on growing its presence in the media industry.

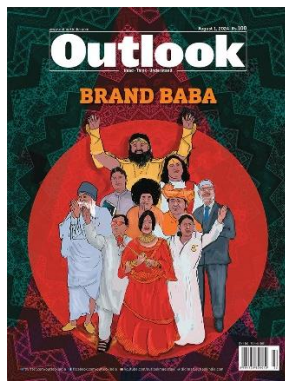
3.2.2 The later year

After becoming an independent company, Outlook Publishing expanded its portfolio beyond just the Outlook magazine. It launched other specialized publications, starting with **Outlook Business**, a magazine that provides insights and analysis on business trends, market developments, and the economy. This was followed by the launch of **Outlook Traveller** in **2001**, a magazine focused on travel and tourism, which quickly became one of India's leading travel magazines. Additionally, **Outlook Money**, a personal finance magazine, was introduced to provide readers with advice on investments, savings, and financial planning.

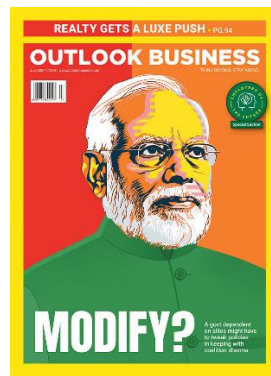
As digital media started gaining prominence, Outlook Publishing recognized the need to adapt. In recent years, it has embraced digital platforms, expanded the reach of its magazines and offering more dynamic content through its website and digital editions. The company redesigned its digital platform to include more long-form journalism and in-depth articles, moving away from just breaking news. The aim was to offer readers multiple perspectives on major issues, including politics, business, culture, and social topics.

Outlook Publishing also ventured into the **events industry**, hosting seminars, conferences, and other gatherings related to the themes of its publications. This diversification has helped the company stay relevant in an evolving media landscape, where both traditional print and digital content coexist.

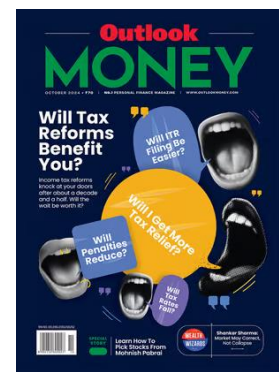
Under the leadership of the current **Editor-in-Chief, Chinki Sinha**, Outlook continues to evolve, focusing on delivering quality, in-depth reporting while embracing the opportunities offered by digital media.



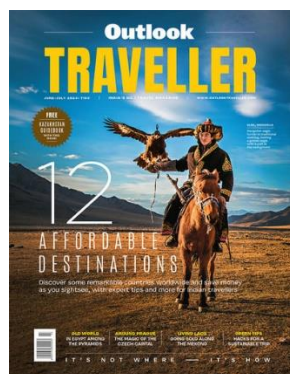
Outlook India



Outlook Business



Outlook Money

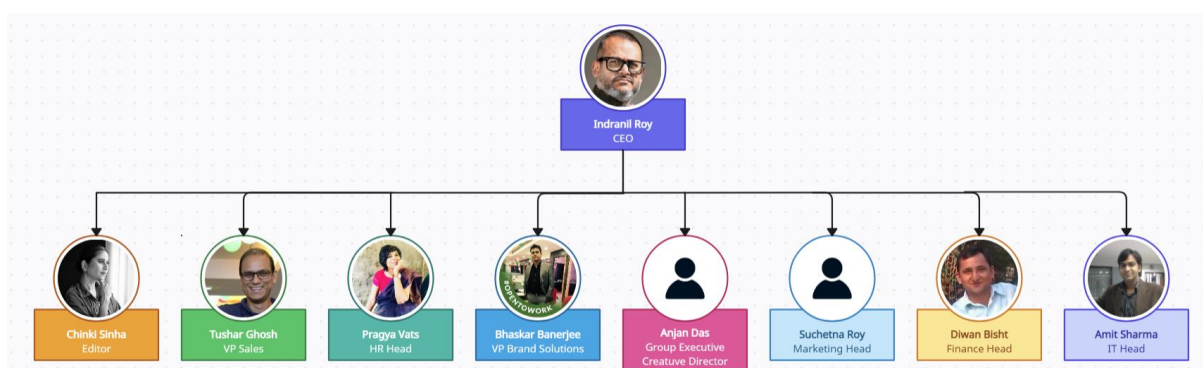


Outlook Traveller



Outlook Hindi

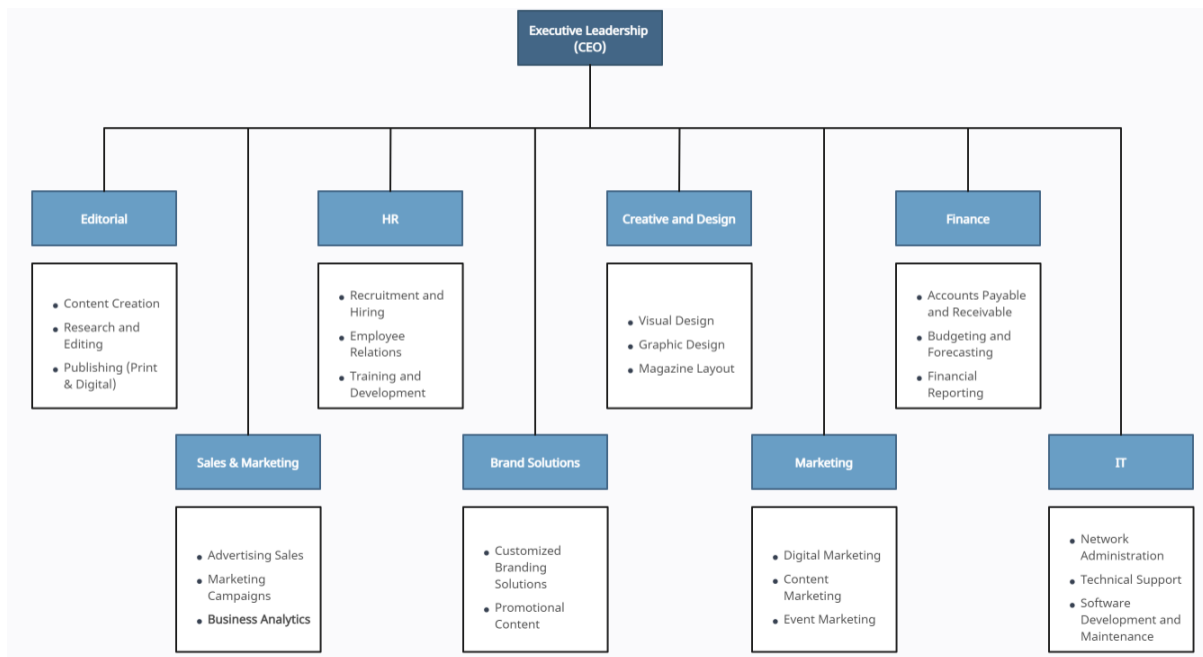
3.3. Management of OUTLOOK Publishing



Outlook Publishing (India) Pvt. Ltd. is led by a team of experienced professionals who drive the company's growth and strategic direction. At the top of the management hierarchy is **Indranil Roy**, serving as the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**. Under his leadership, Outlook continues to evolve and expand its offerings across print and digital platforms.

3.4. Organisational structure of OUTLOOK Publishing

Outlook Publishing (India) Pvt. Ltd. follows a structured hierarchy to manage its diverse operations in print and digital media. The company operates under a **functional organizational structure**, which is divided into key departments based on roles and responsibilities.



3.5. Department/Role in which the internship was done

I completed my internship in the **Business Analytics division** of Sales & Marketing Department at Outlook Group. My role involved analysing the company's magazine subscription data to find trends and patterns. I worked on creating visual reports and forecasts to help the company understand how their magazines were performing and where improvements could be made. I was responsible for using data to suggest strategies for increasing subscriptions, improving customer retention, and identifying growth opportunities in different regions. My tasks included data visualization, forecasting future sales, and providing actionable recommendations based on my analysis.

4. DETAILS ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP

During my summer internship at Outlook Group, I was given the responsibility of analysing and enhancing the company's magazine subscription strategies using data-driven methods. The project was divided into three main modules: *sales*, *data visualization*, and *business analytics*.

4.1 Module 1: Sales Task

The first part of the project involved a direct sales task, where I was responsible for selling subscriptions to Outlook's various magazines. This hands-on experience was essential in understanding customer preferences, the sales process, and the challenges that come with it. I successfully sold a 2-year subscription of *Outlook India* worth ₹5199 to a public school. This not only improved my sales skills but also gave me a practical perspective on the importance of customer interaction and the strategies that work best in a sales environment.

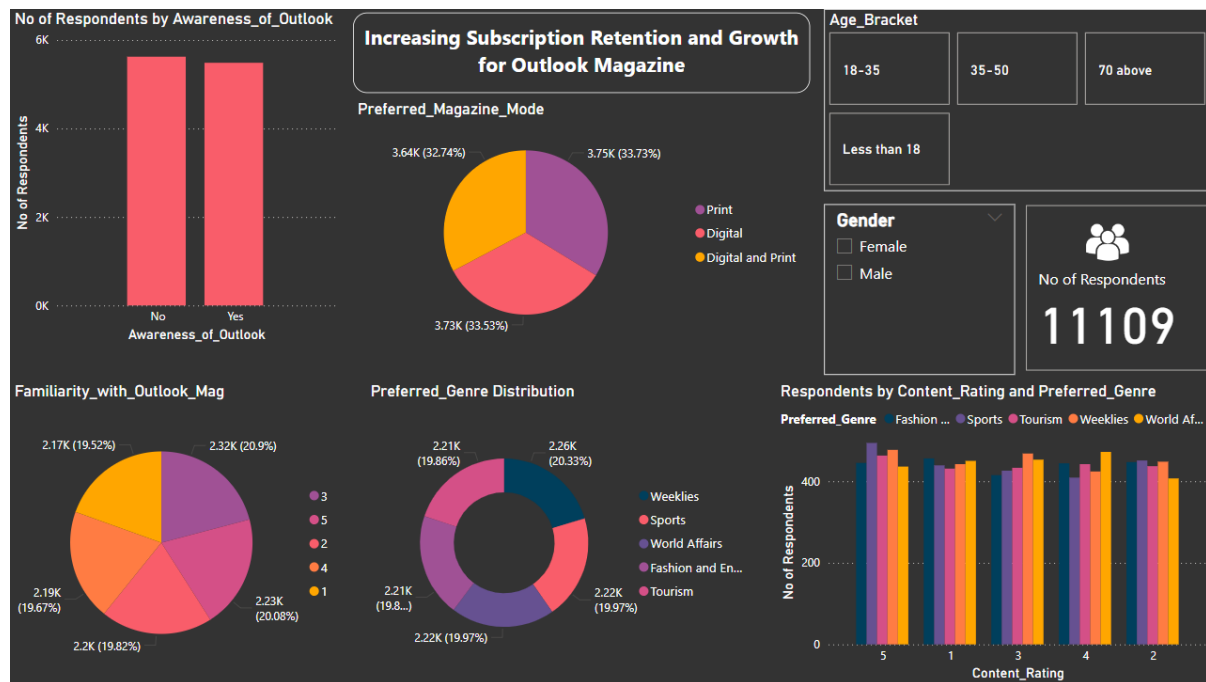
4.2 Module 2: Data Visualization & Forecasting

The second module was focused on data visualization and forecasting. I began by studying the principles of data visualization and the tools used to create impactful visual representations of data, such as Microsoft Excel. I applied this knowledge to real business cases, creating dashboards that displayed key metrics like subscription growth, customer demographics, and regional performance. These visualizations made complex data more accessible and actionable for decision-makers. Additionally, I performed data forecasting to predict future sales trends.

4.2.1 Data Visualization

For Data Visualization part, my manager provided me with datasets that represented around 12% of the total subscription base. The task was structured with a specific problem statement: **Identify at least two major problems within the data, and for each major problem, break it down into corresponding minor problems** that required analysis and solution.

Image No 1: Main Dashboard page (Power BI)



4.2.1.1. Major Problem 1: Increasing Subscription Retention and Growth for Outlook Magazine

This major problem revolves around the challenge of increasing subscription retention rates and attracting new subscribers for Outlook Magazine. The issue is multifaceted, with several contributing factors. Below are the 10 minor problems identified during the analysis:

➤ Minor Problem 1: Low Awareness of Outlook Magazine

- **Problem Statement:** A significant portion of potential readers were unaware of Outlook Magazine.
- **Analysis:**
 - Out of 11,109 survey respondents, 5623 had no awareness of the magazine, showing a major market penetration gap.
 - Familiarity ratings ranged from 1 (least aware) to 5 (most aware), with many respondents falling in the middle, indicating a lack of strong brand recognition.

➤ Minor Problem 2: Preference for Print Over Digital

- **Problem Statement:** Many readers preferred the print edition over the digital format, limiting growth in digital subscriptions.

- **Analysis:**

- The data revealed that 33.73% of readers preferred print, 33.53% favored digital, and 32.74% chose both. While preferences were balanced, print still held a slight edge.
- This trend suggested that digital subscriptions were not as appealing to certain readers who may value the tactile experience of print.

➤ **Minor Problem 3: Content Relevance and Diversity**

- **Problem Statement:** Certain content genres were not resonating well with readers, leading to dissatisfaction in specific categories.

- **Analysis:**

- While Sports received the highest satisfaction ratings, Fashion and Entertainment had the most dissatisfaction, with 456 respondents giving it a rating of 1 (the lowest).
- The diversity of content was also a concern, as some readers felt that their interests were not fully met.

➤ **Minor Problem 4: High Price Sensitivity**

- **Problem Statement:** Many readers felt that the magazine's pricing was too high, impacting subscription renewal rates.

- **Analysis:**

- Out of the total respondents, a significant number indicated dissatisfaction with the price. Only 3774 respondents were satisfied with the current pricing, leaving a large portion either partially satisfied or unsatisfied.
- Price sensitivity was a critical factor influencing subscription decisions.

➤ **Minor Problem 5: Weak Brand Perception**

- **Problem Statement:** There was confusion about the brand's identity, with some readers perceiving Outlook as something other than a magazine.

- **Analysis:**

- A substantial number of respondents (3824) associated Outlook with a "news company," while 3707 thought it was a "software company."
- Only 3578 recognized Outlook as a publishing company, indicating a disconnect between the brand's true identity and customer perceptions.

➤ **Minor Problem 6: Infrequent Magazine Purchases**

- **Problem Statement:** Readers were purchasing the magazine less frequently, indicating low engagement and customer retention.
- **Analysis:**
 - A notable portion of respondents purchased magazines on less frequent intervals such as bi-weekly, quarterly, or annually. For example, only 1272 respondents purchased weekly, while 1244 didn't purchase at all.
 - This data suggested the need for strategies to increase purchasing frequency.

➤ **Minor Problem 7: Suboptimal Reader Engagement Channels**

- **Problem Statement:** Engagement channels like social media, emails, and word-of-mouth were not fully optimized to reach potential subscribers effectively.
- **Analysis:**
 - Digital readership awareness was highest through social media (622 respondents), but there was still a need to enhance digital engagement and leverage online platforms for more effective outreach.
 - Word-of-mouth referrals were underutilized, indicating the need for stronger campaigns to promote reader interaction and engagement.

➤ **Minor Problem 8: Influence of Price in Subscription Decisions**

- **Problem Statement:** Price played a major role in subscription decisions, but other factors like value for money and content quality were also crucial.
- **Analysis:**
 - "Value for Money" was the most critical deciding factor for 1713 respondents, followed by "Reliability" and "Reputation."

- Price satisfaction was distributed evenly, with 501 respondents dissatisfied and 511 satisfied, highlighting a need to balance pricing with perceived value.

➤ **Minor Problem 9: Unattractive Subscription Plans**

- **Problem Statement:** Current subscription plans did not appeal enough to convert free readers to paying subscribers.
- **Analysis:**
 - The most popular plan was the "Digital Version Free" plan, favored by 963 respondents. Other plans, like the "Extended Subscription" option, had more balanced interest but were not compelling enough to increase paid subscriptions.
 - Promotional offers, such as duffle bags and other tangible incentives, seemed to attract more interest from retail and corporate partnerships.

➤ **Minor Problem 10: Low Customer Support Satisfaction**

- **Problem Statement:** Poor customer support was negatively impacting subscription retention.
- **Analysis:**
 - Customer support satisfaction was divided, with 2241 respondents rating support as 5 (high), but a considerable portion rated it poorly (2193 gave it a rating of 1).
 - Inconsistent customer support experiences led to dissatisfaction, which could contribute to lower subscription renewals.

4.2.1.2. Major Problem 2: Enhancing Visual Appeal and Packaging

Outlook Magazine's visual appeal and packaging were outdated, impacting customer attraction and retention. Enhancing these aspects could boost engagement and subscriptions.

➤ **Minor Problem 1: Weak First Impressions of Packaging**

- **Problem Statement:** The current packaging failed to make a strong first impression, affecting brand recall and attraction.

- **Analysis:**

- 3778 respondents recalled the "O of Outlook," but the overall brand identity was not being effectively communicated through packaging.
- The initial perception was mixed, with some associating Outlook with a software company.

➤ **Minor Problem 2: Lack of Understanding of Packaging Preferences**

- **Problem Statement:** Outlook didn't fully understand its customers' preferences for packaging design.

- **Analysis:**

- Respondents showed flexibility regarding packaging changes, but 2283 preferred a "Strikingly odd name," highlighting a need for distinctive designs.
- Preferences for slogan language were balanced between Hindi and English, providing design flexibility.

➤ **Minor Problem 3: Packaging's Limited Impact on Purchase Decisions**

- **Problem Statement:** Packaging elements like color palette and logo weren't strongly influencing purchase decisions.

- **Analysis:**

- The color palette was a significant factor in purchase decisions, especially for buyers focused on low price (752 respondents).
- The front cover design was also important, but wasn't leveraged enough to enhance attraction.

➤ **Minor Problem 4: Misalignment of Packaging with Brand Perception**

- **Problem Statement:** The packaging didn't align with the brand's perception as both a traditional and modern magazine.

- **Analysis:**

- 3728 respondents saw Outlook as a publishing company, but packaging didn't clearly reflect this identity.

- Many perceived it as a new, fast-growing magazine, yet the packaging failed to capture this dynamic image.

➤ **Minor Problem 5: Packaging's Competitiveness Against Rivals**

- **Problem Statement:** Outlook's packaging wasn't as competitive as rivals like Vogue and GQ, leading to customer switches.
- **Analysis:**
 - Price value was the top reason for brand switching (2280 respondents), suggesting Outlook's packaging did not communicate enough value.
 - Competitors used packaging more effectively to emphasize quality and attract peer influence.

4.2.1.3. Major Problem 3: Optimizing Distribution Channels

Outlook Magazine's distribution channels were inefficient, leading to delays, inconsistent availability, and poor customer satisfaction, which impacted subscription retention and sales.

➤ **Minor Problem 1: Inefficient Delivery Methods**

- **Problem Statement:** Delivery methods were unreliable, leading to delays and dissatisfaction.
- **Analysis:**
 - The majority of respondents (3723) received the magazine via courier, yet many rated delivery poorly, with most ratings around 2 and 3 (moderate dissatisfaction).

➤ **Minor Problem 2: Low Store Visit Frequency**

- **Problem Statement:** Readers visited physical stores infrequently, affecting magazine sales.
- **Analysis:**

- Only 2269 respondents visited stores daily, while a significant number visited weekly (2245) or less frequently, showing reduced engagement with retail outlets.

➤ **Minor Problem 3: Inadequate Retailer Partnerships**

- **Problem Statement:** Current partnerships with retailers were not maximizing distribution potential.
- **Analysis:**
 - Most purchases were made offline (3790 respondents), but retailer partnerships weren't fully leveraged, limiting availability and visibility in stores.

➤ **Minor Problem 4: Poor Accessibility in Remote Areas**

- **Problem Statement:** Readers in remote regions faced difficulty accessing the magazine.
- **Analysis:**
 - Distribution gaps were evident in rural and less connected areas, limiting readership and impacting regional engagement with the magazine.

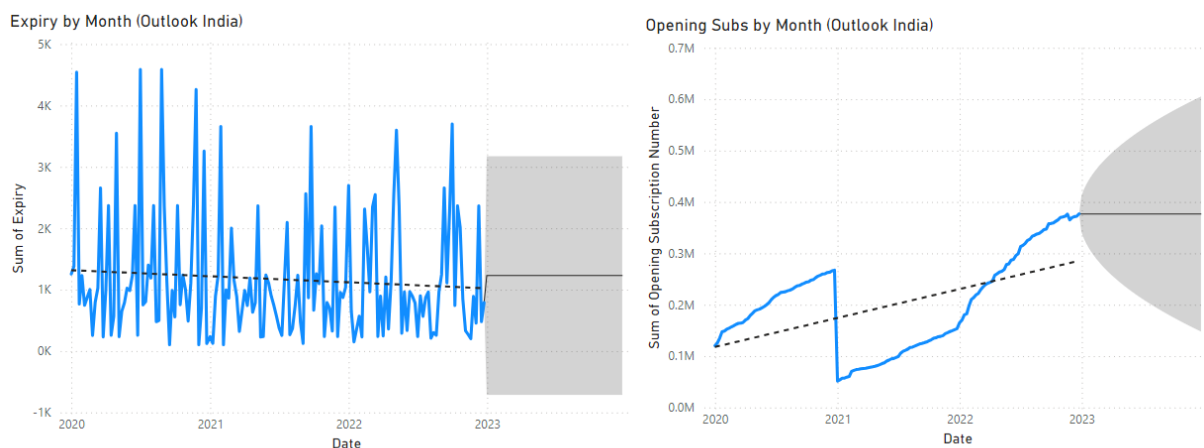
➤ **Minor Problem 5: Lack of Omnichannel Integration**

- **Problem Statement:** Distribution channels lacked integration between online and offline purchasing.
- **Analysis:**
 - 3694 respondents preferred online purchases, yet the magazine's distribution strategy didn't fully support a seamless experience between digital and physical channels.

4.2.2 Sales Forecasting & Trendline Analysis

In the **Sales Forecasting** section of the report, I conducted a comprehensive analysis of sales data for five different magazines published by Outlook: **Outlook India, Outlook Business, Outlook Money, Outlook Traveller, and Outlook Hindi**. The analysis spans from January 2020 to December 2022, utilizing Power BI for both trendline analysis and sales forecasting.

Image No 2: Main Dashboard page (Power BI)



Step-by-step guide to the work I completed in the **Sales Forecasting** section:

4.2.2.1. Data Collection and Overview:

- **Objective:** The first step was to gather relevant historical data to build the foundation for sales forecasting. The dataset I worked with includes monthly figures for **opening subscriptions** and **expiries** across five magazines: **Outlook India, Outlook Business, Outlook Money, Outlook Traveller, and Outlook Hindi**.
- **Time Period:** The data covers a period from **January 2020 to December 2022**, which provided a sufficient historical range to observe subscription patterns, seasonal trends, and anomalies.
- **Metrics Tracked:**
 - **Opening Subscriptions:** The number of new or renewed subscriptions each month.

- **Expiries:** The number of subscriptions that ended or were not renewed each month.
- **Purpose:** This dataset served as the foundation for both identifying existing trends and making future subscription forecasts for 2023. By observing how subscriptions and expiries behaved in the past, I could make predictions on future performance and plan for any challenges or opportunities.

4.2.2.2. Methodology:

- The methodology involved two primary tools: **Power BI for trendline analysis** and **Power BI's forecasting models** to project future sales.
- **Trendline Analysis:** This analysis helped in identifying historical patterns, fluctuations, and the overall direction of subscription behaviour for each magazine.
 - **Visualization:** I used Power BI's trendline features to graph the monthly subscription data, highlighting peaks, declines, and any anomalies that deviated from normal behaviour.
 - **Purpose:** Trendlines enabled me to understand whether subscriptions were increasing, decreasing, or stabilizing over time. It also allowed for the identification of seasonal trends and key events that may have impacted sales.
- **Sales Forecasting:** I employed Power BI's forecasting tools to project future trends for subscriptions and expiries in 2023.
 - **Forecast Model:** I used models like **Exponential Smoothing** and **ARIMA**, depending on the trendline characteristics. These models take historical data and use mathematical algorithms to predict future behaviour.
 - **Confidence Interval:** Forecasts were accompanied by a confidence interval (shaded area) that indicated the range of possible values, accounting for uncertainty in future predictions. This helped anticipate potential fluctuations in subscriptions and expiries.

4.2.2.3. Trendline Analysis:

- **Purpose:** The trendline analysis aimed to visually interpret how the subscription and expiry figures changed over time. This involved observing general patterns, such as upward or downward trends, and identifying any anomalies or fluctuations.
- **Key Findings:**
 - **Outlook Business:** The trendline showed significant fluctuations in the number of opening subscriptions from 2020 to 2022. Notably, there was a peak in May 2022 that exceeded expected values, possibly due to a successful marketing campaign or external influence.
 - **Outlook Traveller:** The trendline revealed an overall upward trend, with a sharp decline between December 2020 and June 2021. This was followed by a strong recovery, which was particularly notable in May 2022.
 - **Outlook Hindi:** This magazine exhibited clear seasonality in its subscription patterns, with peaks and troughs that repeated annually. The general trend, however, was upward, indicating growing subscriptions over the three-year period.
- **Anomalies and Variability:** Trendline analysis also highlighted several periods where the data exhibited unusual behavior, such as sudden peaks or steep declines. These anomalies were flagged for further investigation to understand whether they were the result of specific campaigns, external events, or data issues.

4.2.2.4. Sales Forecasting:

- **Objective:** The goal of sales forecasting was to predict the future performance of subscriptions and expiries for each magazine in 2023 based on historical data. I utilized Power BI's advanced forecasting models to make these projections.
- **Forecasting Models:**
 - I applied **Exponential Smoothing** and **ARIMA (AutoRegressive Integrated Moving Average)**, both of which are commonly used for time series data like this.
 - **Exponential Smoothing** gives more weight to recent data points, which is ideal for identifying trends that reflect the latest subscription behavior. This

model is particularly useful when dealing with data that shows consistent patterns over time.

- **ARIMA** was applied when the data exhibited more complex patterns, such as trends combined with seasonal effects. It captures both the long-term trend and the fluctuations around that trend.
- **Forecasting Process:**
 - For each magazine, I ran a forecast for both opening subscriptions and expiries. Power BI's models generated a **forecast range**, showing possible future values based on historical trends, allowing for a visual understanding of potential fluctuations.
 - **Confidence Intervals:** The forecasts came with shaded confidence intervals, which indicated the degree of uncertainty in the predictions. Wider intervals suggested more variability in future outcomes, while narrower intervals indicated more certainty.
- **Example:** For **Outlook Business**, the forecast predicted that the sum of opening subscriptions would remain around the current level but with possible fluctuations, as suggested by the wide confidence interval.

4.2.2.5. Magazine-Specific Analysis:

Each magazine had its own unique subscription patterns and challenges. Here's how I tailored the analysis for each:

- **Outlook Business:**
 - **Key Trends:** Opening subscriptions exhibited large fluctuations, with a peak in May 2022 and a prolonged decline from March to December 2021.
 - **Forecast:** Predicted steady subscription levels with potential volatility, highlighting the need to address variability.
 - **Expiries:** There was a general downward trend in expiries, suggesting an improvement in retention. The forecast indicated this trend would stabilize, but retention strategies would be critical.
- **Outlook Money:**

- **Key Trends:** Opening subscriptions showed a clear upward trend, while expiries fluctuated with seasonal patterns.
- **Forecast:** Predicted growth in subscriptions, but with some uncertainty in the exact rate. The expiry forecast indicated fluctuations would continue but remain within a stable range.
- **Outlook Traveller:**
 - **Key Trends:** After a sharp decline between December 2020 and mid-2021, subscriptions rebounded strongly, particularly from May 2022.
 - **Forecast:** The projection suggested continued growth, with potential for more peaks in subscriptions throughout 2023. Expiries, however, showed high volatility, requiring closer attention to retention efforts.
- **Outlook Hindi:**
 - **Key Trends:** Strong, consistent upward growth in opening subscriptions with noticeable seasonal patterns. Expiries exhibited more erratic behavior, with significant peaks.
 - **Forecast:** Subscriptions were expected to grow, but expiries were projected to remain volatile, underlining the need for effective retention strategies during peak periods.
- **Outlook India:**
 - **Key Trends:** There was a steep increase in subscriptions, particularly from February 2022. Expiry data showed high variability with frequent anomalies.
 - **Forecast:** Subscriptions were expected to rise, though at a slower pace, while expiries were projected to stabilize, albeit with some fluctuations.

4.2.2.6. Conclusion and Recommendations:

Based on the forecasting and trendline analysis, I provided actionable recommendations for each magazine to improve retention, reduce expiries, and sustain subscription growth:

- **Subscription Retention Strategies:**

- For magazines like **Outlook Business**, where opening subscriptions showed high variability, I recommended investigating the factors that led to the May 2022 peak. Replicating successful campaigns or strategies from this period could help stabilize growth.
- **Retention programs** were advised for most magazines, particularly **Outlook Traveller** and **Outlook Hindi**, where high expiries were an ongoing challenge. Suggestions included offering **renewal discounts**, **loyalty programs**, and more personalized content to keep readers engaged.
- **Expiry Management:**
 - For magazines experiencing frequent anomalies in expiries, like **Outlook India**, I recommended further analysis to understand the causes of subscriber churn during peak periods. Tailored retention strategies, such as providing personalized customer service during high expiry months, could mitigate future drops.
 - **Outlook Money** showed relatively stable expiry trends, but I suggested continued focus on **subscriber retention programs** to ensure the downward trend persisted.
- **Adapting to Forecast Uncertainty:**
 - Due to the variability in future subscription predictions, I emphasized the importance of preparing for uncertainty. For example, **Outlook Business** had a wide confidence interval, meaning that subscription levels could vary significantly. Adapting marketing and customer engagement strategies in response to fluctuations would be key.

4.3 Module 3: Business Analytics

In this module, I conducted a detailed analysis of subscription data for several Outlook magazine brands. The goal was to extract insights that could help in improving marketing strategies, identifying growth opportunities, and understanding the demographics of our subscribers. The dataset contained critical fields such as magazine codes, subscriber details, subscription periods, and geographic distribution. By transforming the data into a structured format, I was able to perform a range of analyses that provided actionable insights into subscriber behaviour.

4.3.1. Dataset Description

The dataset I worked with contained several important columns:

- **MAG:** Denotes the type of magazine or publication (e.g., OL for Outlook India, OLB for Outlook Business).
- **SUBCODE:** A unique subscriber code or identifier for the person or entity receiving the magazine.
- **MASTER_KEY:** A unique identifier for each record.
- **DESIGNATION:** Lists the designation or job title of the subscriber (e.g., OWNER, IPS, CONSULTANT).
- **CITY:** The city where the subscriber is located.
- **STATE:** The state where the subscriber is located, represented by a short code (e.g., GUJ for Gujarat, KER for Kerala).
- **REGION_CODE:** Represents a code for the region within the state.
- **NO_OF_COPIES:** Number of copies of the magazine that the subscriber receives.
- **SDATE:** The start date of the subscription, formatted as DD-MMM-YY.
- **EXPDATE:** The expiration date of the subscription, formatted as DD-MMM-YY.
- **LASTEXPDATE:** The last expiration date of the subscription, possibly indicating when the subscription was last renewed or updated.

These columns allowed for various analyses regarding how different factors (such as geography or job title) influenced subscriptions.

4.3.2. Objective

The key objectives of the analysis were:

1. Convert unstructured data into a structured format to facilitate detailed analysis.
2. Analyse the subscription data to extract insights on:
 - Tenure-wise and brand-wise subscription distribution.
 - Brand-wise and month-wise subscription expirations.
 - Top cities contributing to subscriptions for each brand.
 - Gender ratio for each brand.
 - Subscriber designations in a brand-wise manner.
 - Contribution of each city to the total number of subscribers for a brand.
 - Contribution of each state to the total number of subscribers for each brand.

2.3.3. Data Cleaning and Structuring

To prepare the dataset for analysis, I took several steps in Excel:

1. Deleted Empty Columns

- Removed columns that contained no data to streamline the dataset and focus on relevant information.

2. Filled 'No Response' in Empty DESIGNATION Field

- For records with missing DESIGNATION values, populated these fields with "No Response" to ensure consistency and completeness.

3. Addressed Invalid Values in DESIGNATION Field

- Replaced invalid values such as "/" and "(" with "N/A" to standardize the DESIGNATION field entries.

4. Filled Missing Values in MASTER_KEY Field

- Assumption: The increments between MASTER_KEY values are mostly by 1, with occasional larger jumps.
 - Identified the most frequent increment pattern as +1.
 - Filled the last two missing values as follows:
 - After 920684:
 - Next value: 920685 (increment by 1)

- Following value: 920686 (increment by 1)
- This assumption was based on the predominance of smaller, consistent increments.

5. Corrected DESIGNATION Value Format

- Reformatted improper entries in the DESIGNATION field:
 - Changed "(LIBRARIAN)" to "LIBRARIAN" to maintain uniformity.

6. Grouped and Corrected City Names

- Standardized city names by removing unnecessary expressions such as "DT", "CANTT", "CITY", etc.
 - Examples:
 - "Delhi CANTT", "Delhi", and "New Delhi" were all grouped under "New Delhi".
 - Corrected spelling errors to ensure accuracy in city names.

7. Corrected Invalid Date Values

- Adjusted three invalid date entries, all of which incorrectly listed "31st November":
- Corrected these dates based on context or the most likely accurate date within the dataset.

This data cleaning ensured consistency and allowed me to proceed with accurate and structured analyses.

4.3.4. Analysis and Insights

1. Tenure-wise and Brand-wise Subscription Distribution:
 - Short-Term Subscriptions (0-5 years): Outlook Money (OLM) led with 4349 subscriptions, followed by Outlook Traveller (OLT) and Outlook India (OL). Outlook Hindi (OLH) had the lowest subscription count.
 - Medium-Term Subscriptions (6-10 years): Outlook India and Outlook Money showed consistent performance, while Outlook Hindi and Outlook Business remained underperformers.

- Long-Term Subscriptions (10+ years): Outlook Money was the clear leader, with 263 long-term subscriptions, while other brands struggled in this category.

Key Insights:

- Outlook Money has strong long-term appeal, while Outlook Hindi has minimal growth across all subscription periods. Recommendations included offering tiered pricing for longer subscriptions and enhancing content to maintain long-term value.

2. Brand-wise and Month-wise Subscription Expirations (May 2024 – March 2025):

- June and July had the highest expiration rates, particularly for Outlook Traveller and Outlook India.
- Low Expiration Months: November, January, and February showed lower expiration rates, suggesting an opportunity to boost engagement during these periods.
- Targeted Renewal Campaigns: Plan renewal strategies ahead of high expiration months (June and July) by offering discounts or incentives.

3. Top 40 Cities Contributing to Subscriptions for Each Brand:

- Outlook India: Major metro areas like New Delhi, Bangalore, and Mumbai dominate subscriptions.
- Outlook Business: Business hubs such as New Delhi, Bangalore, and Hyderabad are strong markets.
- Outlook Money: Cities like Bangalore, Mumbai, and New Delhi lead, highlighting interest in financial content.

Key Insights:

- There's a clear urban dominance in subscriptions across all brands, with cities like New Delhi, Bangalore, and Mumbai consistently leading.
- I recommended focusing marketing efforts on metros while expanding outreach to tier-2 cities like Jaipur & Lucknow, with growth potential.

5. TIMELINE & KEY PEOPLE MET

5.1. Timeline:

My summer internship at Outlook Group lasted from 1st June 2024 to 31st July 2024, a total of 8 weeks.

Table No. 1: Timeline along with their corresponding details

Timeline	Details
Weeks 1 & 2 (1st June – 14th June): Sales Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I began my internship with a sales task aimed at selling magazine subscriptions. During these two weeks, I familiarized myself with the five main magazine offerings of Outlook Group: <i>Outlook India</i>, <i>Outlook Business</i>, <i>Outlook Money</i>, <i>Outlook Hindi</i>, and <i>Outlook Traveler</i>. My focus was on understanding the features, pricing, and target audience of each magazine. I also developed communication strategies to pitch these subscriptions to potential customers. I applied the sales techniques I learned to real-world interactions. By the end of this period, I successfully sold a 2-year subscription of Outlook India worth ₹5199 to a public school. This phase helped me gain a solid understanding of customer preferences and how to handle the challenges that come with direct sales.
Weeks 3 & 4 (15th June – 28th June): Data Visualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the third week, I transitioned to the data visualization aspect of the internship. I started by studying the core concepts of data visualization and familiarizing myself with the

	<p>tools, primarily Microsoft Excel and Power BI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My task was to create visual reports based on subscription data. I focused on metrics like subscription growth, renewal rates, and customer demographics. I learned how to use charts, graphs, and dashboards to make complex data easy to understand. • In week 4, I applied these techniques to actual business cases, working with real subscription data. I built dashboards that showcased key performance indicators (KPIs) such as regional growth and subscription patterns over time. • The goal of these visualizations was to help the company's management easily interpret the data for strategic decision-making.
Weeks 5 & 6 (29th June – 12th July): Data Forecasting and Trendline Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After completing the data visualization tasks, I moved on to data forecasting. My goal was to predict future magazine sales and subscription trends based on historical data. • I performed a trendline analysis using the subscription data from January 2020 to December 2022. • During these two weeks, I worked on building sales forecasts for each magazine using tools in Excel and Power BI. I also identified potential seasonal trends and spikes in subscription expirations. • Additionally, I focused on analysing data related to regional performance.
Weeks 7 & 8 (13th July – 31st July): Business Analytics and Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the final weeks, my work centred on business analytics. I analysed a detailed dataset representing 12% of the company's total subscription

	<p>base, with the objective of understanding key subscriber trends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I conducted a thorough analysis of subscription patterns.• I also performed demographic analysis, including the gender ratio and subscriber designation analysis.• Based on my findings, I developed and presented strategic recommendations to the company.• During this period, I consolidated all the insights, findings, and forecasts from my analyses to create a final report, summarizing my recommendations for optimizing subscription strategies.
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5.2. Key people met:

My internship was **work from home**, so I didn't get the chance to meet anyone in person.

However, I regularly had **online meetings** with my reporting manager, who guided me throughout the internship. These virtual meetings were important for discussing my progress, getting feedback on my work, and clarifying any doubts I had about the tasks. Even though it was a remote internship, I was able to stay in touch with my manager through these meetings and emails, which helped me stay on track and complete my tasks on time.

6. KEY LEARNINGS

6.1. Application of some of the Conceptual Frameworks

During my internship at Outlook Group in the Business Analytics domain, I was able to apply several conceptual frameworks that I learned in the classroom. These frameworks helped me navigate and solve real-world challenges in subscription management, sales forecasting, and customer retention. Below are the key conceptual frameworks that played a critical role in my work:

6.1.1. Data Analysis and Decision Making:

- In the classroom, I was introduced to concepts like **data-driven decision making** and **quantitative analysis**, which are essential in today's business environment. During the internship, I applied these concepts through detailed data analysis using tools like Power BI. The task of analysing subscription patterns and sales trends involved:
 - **Cleaning raw data** to ensure accuracy.
 - Using **data visualization techniques** to spot trends in subscriptions, expiries, and geographical distribution.
 - Making **data-backed recommendations** for customer retention strategies and market expansion.
- The concept of using data to guide decisions, rather than relying on intuition alone, was reinforced during this internship. It showed me how powerful data can be when making strategic business decisions.

6.1.2. RFM (Recency, Frequency, Monetary) Analysis:

- During our **Cross-cultural Buying Behaviour** course, we studied **RFM Analysis**, which helps categorize customers based on how recently they purchased, how frequently they make purchases, and how much they spend. Although this framework is traditionally used for retail, I adapted it during my internship for analysing subscriber behaviour.
- **Application:**
 - For **Outlook Money**, I analysed the **recency** of subscriptions and **frequency** of renewals to identify subscribers who were most likely to renew. This was particularly useful when recommending **targeted renewal campaigns** ahead of high-expiry months like June and July.

- I also looked at **monetary value** in terms of the number of subscriptions ordered per customer (for institutional subscribers like libraries), which helped in formulating loyalty programs for large-volume subscribers.

6.1.3. Data Cleaning and Data Integrity:

- In Havish sir's class, we learned about the importance of **data integrity** and **cleaning datasets** before analysis. This became an essential part of my internship work, where I had to ensure the data was accurate and consistent.
 - I applied techniques like **removing empty fields**, correcting city names, and handling missing values to ensure the dataset was reliable for analysis.
 - The practical experience of cleaning large datasets helped reinforce how crucial it is to start with clean, accurate data to make meaningful insights and forecasts.

6.2. Industry Practices

During my internship at Outlook Publishing, I gained valuable insights into some common practices in the Indian print media industry. These practices have a significant impact on how news is reported and presented. Two key areas I observed are:

6.2.1. Political Influence and Ownership

Many print media companies in India are family-owned and have connections to political parties or figures. This ownership structure often leads to self-censorship, where newspapers avoid covering certain topics that go against the interests of their owners or political allies. As a result, the objectivity of news coverage is compromised, with editorial decisions often being influenced by the political leanings or business interests of the owners. This means that some stories are underreported or presented in a biased manner to avoid conflicts.

6.2.2. Advertising Revenue Dependency

Another key aspect I learned is the heavy dependence on advertising revenue. Since print media outlets generate a significant portion of their income from advertisers, the content of the publications is often shaped to attract and retain advertisers. For instance, advertisers

prefer to place their ads in magazines and newspapers that cater to their target audience. This situation leads to changes in editorial content to better align with the interests of potential advertisers. Consequently, there is a risk that the need to maintain strong advertising relationships compromises journalistic integrity, as reporting might be skewed or softened to avoid displeasing advertisers. Many journalists and editors may have personal or financial ties to the subjects they cover, leading to conflicts of interest. For instance, a journalist might report favourably on a company that is a major advertiser for their publication.

6.2.3. Paid News

One of the most pervasive issues in Indian print media is the phenomenon of "paid news." This occurs when media outlets publish articles that promote a particular product, service, or political agenda without disclosing that the content has been paid for. This practice misleads readers into believing they are consuming unbiased journalism when, in fact, they are being subjected to disguised advertisements. The lack of transparency in such arrangements erodes public trust in media outlets.

6.3. Key Insights

6.3.1. Self-Regulation and Ethical Standards

The Indian print media largely operates under self-regulation, with the Press Council of India (PCI) setting the standards for newspapers and news agencies. The PCI was established in 1978 with the goal of maintaining high standards of journalism and promoting ethical practices. However, it does not have the power to impose penalties for any violations. As a result, while ethical guidelines are in place, there is no strict enforcement, leading to varying levels of adherence across different publications. This means some newspapers may follow the guidelines closely, while others may not, resulting in inconsistencies in journalistic practices.

6.3.2. Cost Structure of Newspapers

Another key insight is the cost structure in the print media business. The most significant expense for a newspaper is the cost of printing, which includes paper, ink, and distribution. The second-largest expense is related to people, such as journalists, editors, and other staff. Lastly, there are other costs, including technology, marketing, and overheads. Managing these

costs efficiently is crucial for a newspaper's profitability, especially in a competitive market where price sensitivity is high.

6.3.3. Challenges in Attracting Readers

I also learned about some of the key challenges faced by the print media industry. One major issue is getting younger people interested in reading newspapers, as they often prefer consuming news through digital platforms and videos rather than text-based formats. Another challenge is reaching the "new literates" – people who have recently gained literacy skills. Their preferred way of consuming content is through video rather than reading, which requires newspapers to adapt and find new ways to engage these readers.

7. VALUE INCREMENT AT THE END OF PROJECT

By the end of my internship, I experienced significant growth in knowledge, skills, and personality, which has prepared me for future challenges in the field of business analytics and beyond.

7.1. Growth in Knowledge

Throughout the internship, I deepened my understanding of several key concepts and techniques in business analytics. Working on subscription data for multiple brands taught me how to apply advanced forecasting models, analyse customer behaviour, and develop strategies for customer retention and growth.

- **Customer Segmentation:** Analysing subscriber data allowed me to apply knowledge of **customer segmentation** to identify different customer groups based on their subscription behaviour, geographic location, and job profiles. This taught me how to tailor business strategies for different customer segments.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** I gained hands-on experience in using data to guide business decisions. By analysing patterns in subscription renewals, expiries, and growth opportunities, I provided recommendations that were rooted in solid data, enhancing my ability to make informed business recommendations.

7.2. Growth in Skills

One of the most significant outcomes of this internship was the growth in my technical and analytical skills. In addition to applying the concepts I had learned in the classroom, I took it a step further by learning new programming languages to enhance my data analysis capabilities.

- **Python, R, and SAS Programming:** I invested time in learning **Python, R, and SAS**, which helped me complement my data analysis skills. These programming languages allowed me to clean, organize, and analyse large datasets more efficiently, perform advanced statistical analysis, and automate some of the processes I was handling manually.
 - Python was particularly useful for data cleaning and performing advanced statistical analysis.

- R helped me visualize complex datasets, enabling me to communicate insights more effectively to my team.
 - SAS enhanced my ability to handle larger datasets and run detailed reports quickly and efficiently.
- **Data Visualization:** Through tools like **Power BI**, I improved my ability to visualize data, creating clear and interactive dashboards that made it easier for the team to see trends and make strategic decisions. This was especially valuable when presenting my findings on subscription growth and renewal trends.
- **Forecasting and Predictive Analytics:** Applying forecasting models in Power BI strengthened my skills in predictive analytics, which helped me deliver accurate subscription forecasts and contribute to strategic planning for Outlook's various brands.

7.3. Growth in Personality

This internship was also a significant growth experience in terms of my personal and professional development. It gave me the opportunity to work in a dynamic business environment, which sharpened several aspects of my personality.

- **Confidence and Problem-Solving:** Working on complex datasets and being responsible for making recommendations to improve subscription growth boosted my confidence. I learned how to tackle problems head-on, break them into manageable pieces, and find solutions using data-driven approaches.
- **Adaptability and Learning Mindset:** I had to quickly adapt to new tools, programming languages, and business challenges. This experience strengthened my ability to learn quickly and stay adaptable in a fast-paced environment. By picking up Python, R, and SAS, I realized how important continuous learning is, especially in a field as dynamic as business analytics.
- **Attention to Detail:** Analysing large datasets required me to focus on even the smallest details to ensure the accuracy of my insights and recommendations. This experience helped me sharpen my attention to detail and apply it not only in data analysis but in my overall approach to problem-solving.

8. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Improving Content in Fashion and Entertainment

- **Issue:** Content in the **Sports genre** received the highest satisfaction ratings, while **Fashion and Entertainment** content had the lowest ratings, signalling areas for improvement.
- **Recommendation:** I suggested either **upskilling the current content writers** in the Fashion and Entertainment categories or **replacing them** with writers who possess stronger writing skills to improve the overall content quality in these areas.

8.2. Enhancing Digital Sales and Website Experience

- **Issue:** There was a slight preference for **print magazines** over digital formats (33.73% vs. 33.53%), which meant both formats needed to be maintained effectively.
- **Recommendation:** I recommended leveraging **social media** to increase digital sales, as younger audiences prefer reading online. Additionally, I advised enhancing the **website experience** to make purchasing digital subscriptions seamless and ensuring timely delivery of digital issues (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly based on their subscription).

8.3. Strengthening Brand Recognition

- **Issue:** The most recognized brand elements were the "**O of Outlook**" and the **red colour**, which are strong brand identifiers.
- **Recommendation:** I suggested emphasizing these elements more prominently in the magazine's **packaging** to strengthen brand recognition and appeal.

8.4. Improving Delivery and Customer Engagement

- **Issue:** The **courier service** was the most common delivery method, but customer satisfaction was not consistently high. In addition, there was **low store visit frequency**, with many readers purchasing infrequently.
- **Recommendation:** I advised the company to consider switching to a more reliable delivery partner to enhance the overall customer experience. Specifically, I recommended **Delhivery** for the **Delhi-NCR region** due to their strong service record. Additionally, I suggested introducing **loyalty programs** and offering

exclusive in-store promotions to encourage more frequent store visits and customer engagement.

8.5. Focusing Marketing on the Popular 1-Year Subscription Plan

- **Issue:** The **1-year subscription plan** was the most popular across all brands, especially for *Outlook Money*, where it accounted for **45% of all subscriptions**. Longer-term plans showed higher retention rates but had fewer subscribers.
- **Recommendation:** I recommended focusing marketing efforts on promoting the **1-year plan** to attract new subscribers. I also suggested implementing **renewal campaigns** specifically targeting 1-year subscribers to encourage them to upgrade to longer-term plans for better retention.

8.6. Targeting Subscription Renewals for December 2024

- **Issue:** A large portion of subscription expirations was forecasted for **December 2024**, particularly for *Outlook Hindi* and *Outlook India*.
- **Recommendation:** I recommended targeting these customers with **lucrative offers** starting in **November**, especially around the **Diwali festival**, to encourage renewals before their subscriptions expire.

8.7. Expanding Regional Marketing and Tailoring Content

- **Issue:** **Mumbai** and **Delhi** were the top-performing cities for *Outlook India*, contributing significantly to the subscriber base. The gender ratio for *Outlook Business* was skewed towards males (70:30), while *Outlook Traveler* had a more balanced ratio.
- **Recommendation:** I suggested expanding **regional marketing efforts** in high-performing cities like Mumbai and Delhi to further increase subscriptions. For **Outlook Business**, I recommended tailoring content and marketing campaigns to cater to its predominantly male readership, while for **Outlook Traveler**, maintaining a **balanced approach** to appeal to both male and female readers.

9. CONCLUSION

My summer internship at **Outlook Group** was a highly rewarding experience, where I had the opportunity to apply my skills in **business analytics**, **data visualization**, and **forecasting** to real-world business challenges. Over the course of the project, I gained valuable insights into how data can be used to understand customer behaviour, improve subscription strategies, and drive business growth.

Working on tasks like analysing subscription patterns, forecasting future sales, and identifying areas for improvement allowed me to develop both my technical and problem-solving skills. I was also able to provide actionable recommendations that could help the company enhance its content, marketing, and distribution strategies.

This internship has not only strengthened my analytical abilities but also improved my communication and teamwork skills as I worked closely with the team to present my findings and suggestions. Overall, it was a great learning experience that gave me a better understanding of how data-driven decisions are made in a business setting, and I feel more confident about applying these skills in the future.

10. REFERENCES

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11. APPENDICES

Data Visualization & Forecasting (Module 2):

- Data Visualization Report-

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BbhXpKSb0VL-dTDrdnQMov4lZie4MxFS/view?usp=sharing>

- Sales Forecasting & Trendline Analysis Report-

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pLOXpUWLA6L6jikWX_dqVLLG7tqVcbJG/view?usp=sharing

Business Analytics (Module 3):

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IhI7TB-k0N98yZCg7t_cmKvxLrTVmxN/view?usp=sharing

