

UNIT-2

Introduction to Blogging - A blog is an online journal or diary, which can be set up for

- i) personal use with access to only the owner
- ii) Well defined group of people.

A blog can also be made public, so that anyone from any corner of the world, having internet connection and same or relevant interest can reach the blog with the help of

- * Search engine results
- * Social media links
- * Website information
- * Email or e-newsletter.

"An individual piece of content (information) on a particular topic, is called a blog post."

A blog is composed of numerous blog posts arranged in such a manner that the recent posted content appear first on the home page of the blog.

- * A blog is composed of many web pages depending on how many posts have been created. If a blog hosts 50 articles, it is suppose to have 50 web pages.
- * A blog may have name of author, date of publication, link to share on different platforms.

"A person involved in blogging is known as "blogger".

Blogging Platforms -

- i) Wordpress - It is a software to create and customize a search engine friendly blogs.
- ii) Tumblr - It is a microblogging platform that allows us to make a blog and customize it in the form of image, video, stories, audio etc.
- iii) Blogpost - It is a service provided by Google.
- iv) Blogger (Service) - It is a service provided by google that allows us to compose a post, edit, update & manage it.
- v) other platforms like Wix, Medium etc.

How to write a blog post for Project

- Step-1 Plan your blog post by choosing a topic , creating an outline, conducting research and checking the facts.
- Step-2 Craft a **headline** that is both informative and will capture reader's or viewer's attention.
- Step-3 Write your **post**, either writing a draft in a single session or gradually work on parts of it .
- Step-4 Use **images** to enhance your post . The images normally improves the flow, add humour and explain the complex topics in an easy way .
- Step-5 Edit your blog post. Make sure to **avoid repetition** , read your post to check its flow , take feedback from others, keep **Sentence and paragraphs short**.

Things to do before writing a blog

- * Know your audience (personas and interests)
- * check out your competition
 - Visuals
 - copy the tone & writing style
 - Subject matter readers enjoy
- * Determine the topics to be covered (What, How and relevance of the topic)
- * Identify the unique angle
 - Keep blog name easy to spell
 - Link your blog name to your brand
- * Name of the blog
 - Link your blog name to your brand
- * Create the blog domain like GoDaddy, iPage etc
- * choosing CMS (Content Management System)*
- * Customize the look of the blog
- * Write your blog

Content Management System (CMS) is a software application that allows users to build & maintain a website without having to code it from scratch.
exp⇒ Wordpress, Joomla, Drupal, Magento, Wix, Ghost etc.

Blogs as effective digital Marketing tool

- 1) Low cost Marketing channel -:
 - *) blogs are cheap - even free.
 - *) can be easily built on existing website.
 - *) can also be maintained at dedicated hosting sites all over the web for low cost.
- 2) Excellent Avenue to build a Network -:

A Regular blog can reach thousands of targeted readers at any time in any place.
- 3) Enhanced Company Visibility -:

Blog marketing benefits a company by keeping it visible. The next time a customer or company is in need of your product or services, your business will be on their mind.
- 4) Improved customer Interaction -:

Comment feature on blogs are ideal way to get to know your customer base, their other requirements, complaints & other discussions.
- 5) Provides Website traffic -:
 - *) The more consistent the person's blog, the more often search engine spiders are drawn to that site to crawl the page.
 - *) Because of crawling, search engines then deems your site as active and more relevant than static sites.

Content Planning for a blog post

Blogging is not only a day in, day out writing for a particular subject matter. To create and maintain a successful blog, one needs to have a full and well established content plan. It should include all the details related to future blog posts, publishing schedule, audience development & growth, social media plan and much more. Without this concrete plan, it is impossible to maintain the popularity and consistent quality of the blogs.

The following steps are the crucial steps that you need to take to create an effective plan.

- 1) Establishing goals:- Setting your goals is the first step that you should take because only then you get to know what you want to accomplish with your content such as
- * Do you want to generate quality leads that you can convert into customers?
 - * Do you want to showcase your skills (like photography) and attract clients?
 - * Are you looking to raise awareness of a particular cause and help people improve their lives?

Whatever your goals are, you need always to have them in the forefront of your mind, so that you can work on achieving them. **Identify them before you begin your content planning** will help you develop the best Content strategy.

- 2) Market Research:- The content you produce has to be relevant and useful to your target audience. You need to know your target audience and their choices of the topic/product. Without market research, you may not be able to take the right approach when it comes to promoting your product or services on your blog.

Step 1- Audience Research-: The best way to learn about your target audience is to conduct online survey on social media since you don't have any blog subscribers yet. Ask them what topics they would like to know more about and what would make that content interesting.

Step 2- Competitive Review-: It is a broad term for the practice of researching, analyzing and comparing competitors in relation to yourself. It will provide you information about how other bloggers in your niche (suitable position or subject) are making their blogs popular.

3) Keyword Research -: Keyword research enables you to step up your SEO and drive more targeted visits to your blog. If you pick and target the right keywords to your content, your SEO ranking will improve. Google will recognize your blog as a relevant and credible source of information.

4) Finding Ideas and Resources :- you can collect various ideas from different sources and check to see how they are going to perform on market using BUZZSUMO. (BUZZSUMO is a cloud based platform that help you discover the best content). This tool analyzes millions of posts, searching for the patterns that appear in the most shared content.

When you come up with the best idea that you want to write about, you need to find the most relevant resources to write the content.

*) If you want to include some numbers and statistics in your content, you need to make sure that you include real facts. You need to support every claim with facts, which will come from thorough research on your content.

5) Copywriting and Editing :- Copywriting is the art of writing text for marketing purpose.

Copywriting method will help you to develop good writing habits and optimize your content creation process.

*) Writing schedule will help you write consistently but the most important take away is "efficiency" improvement.

The following are the necessary steps for an effective copy-writing and editing plan.

- i) Thorough research
- ii) Making a draft
- iii) Writing your copy
- iv) Editing —
 - *) Content must have good flow
 - *) There should not be grammar and spelling mistakes.

6) Publishing Schedule :- Having a publishing schedule in place will help you blog consistently to make sure that your blog is active.

Scheduling not only helps in consistency but it is also crucial for helping your readers know when the fresh content will appear. By publishing content on a regular basis, you will build momentum. The best tool for scheduling is Google calendar.

7) Promotion plan :- The entire process of your blog content planning can not be complete without a reliable and efficient advertising plan. You must have a good content marketing strategy for promoting every piece of information or content you publish.

There are some ways for promotion

*) Keyword search

*) Social media marketing :- you need to share every blog post on various social media platforms where your target audience is.

Instead of just dropping the links, you need to engage your audience by asking questions, discussions and reply on comments.

*) Email marketing :- Apart from adding subscription button on your newsletter, you can reachout to your audience through email.

*) Audience Survey :- You should send out audience survey via email or text message once or twice in a year together information. this information will be useful to understand better how you can improve your blog and create excellent content.

When a user logs onto Facebook, its backend recognizes the operating system, device specifications, and network and chooses one of its eight versions. The company is aware of the humongous increase in mobile adoption and is focussed on building new mobile products at a fast pace.

FACEBOOK—THE ORIGIN

Facebook is an online social networking service, which has become increasingly popular between users across the globe by virtue of its ability to allow participants to share information, photographs, like products and brands, and interact with each other in a friendly, virtual environment.

Facebook was founded in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg with his college roommates and fellow Harvard University students Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes.

What initially started as an online meeting ground for Harvard students got expanded to other colleges in the Boston area, the Ivy League, and Stanford University. The network gradually expanded across the USA, and over the years, it has become popular across the globe.

Facebook offers profound opportunities to the world of e-marketing.

THE ANATOMY OF FACEBOOK

Facebook is not only limited to marketing but can be enhanced to analysis and research as it gives insights about products and services and is able to generate immediate responses from customers. Some of Facebook's general characteristics (Fig. 15.3) that have applications in the field of marketing are as follows:

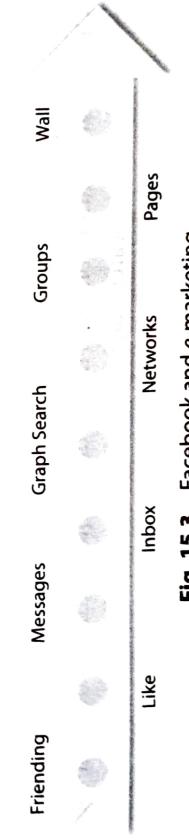


Fig. 15.3 Facebook and e-marketing

General Features

Friending

Friending is a term commonly used in the world of Facebook when one user links to the other, by sending him/her a friend request on Facebook. Acceptance of the Facebook request by the receiving party links (adds) the two users together in a virtual network. Every user has the right to accept/decline another user's friend request.

Marketing implication Companies can identify groups of homogeneous customers having the same preferences, likes, and dislikes by studying the networks on Facebook. Friends on a network also represent the *peers* of consumers who will be influential in a network.

Facebook like

The word *like* represents a positive sentiment. An individual displaying a positive sentiment about a picture, product, or another individual *likes* the same on Facebook. *Liking* implies giving positive feedback and connecting with things people care about. Users *like* updates, comments, pictures, and links posted by their friends and other people on the network. This makes the content appear in their friends' news feeds.

Marketing implication Companies need to formulate strategies to promote their products and brands on Facebook by getting individuals to *like* the content hosted by them on their company pages. This will stimulate a positive word-of-mouth about a company.

Messages and inbox

Facebook allows users to interact with their friends separately using messages and inboxes. The system is available to all the website users, combining text messaging, instant messaging, e-mails, and regular messages, and includes privacy settings similar to those of other Facebook services.

Marketing implication Marketers can personalize their marketing message and send customized communication to potential customers in a one-to-one interaction, where they do not want others to see the content of the interaction openly.

Facebook Graph Search

Facebook Graph Search allows individual Facebook users to understand the people in their network. For instance, a user can post a query differentiating between his friends by gender, location, and other demographic factors. Similarly, users can find out what type of music their friends like, the restaurants they visit, the movies they watch. The Graph Search feature combines the big data acquired from its over one billion users and external data into a search engine providing user-specific search results.

Marketing implication Marketers can use tools like Graph Search for consumer segmentation, profiling, and targeting to identify the type of marketing message that will yield better results for specific target groups.

Networks, groups, and pages

Facebook allows organizations to set up different networks and groups. These can be joined by different users and are used for activities such as discussions and events. These groups enable homogeneous groups of people to come together to share information and discuss specific subjects. These groups are increasingly used by clubs, companies, and public sector organizations to engage with stakeholders, be they members of the public, employees, members, service users, shareholders, or customers.

Marketing implication Product brands can use these groups to share product-related news, photos, promotional messages, videos, etc., and invite consumers to participate in discussions pertaining to these issues.

Timeline

The timeline represents the entire journey of an individual on Facebook, ranging from the day he/she joined to his/her current set of activities represented through the posting of messages, often short or temporal notes, for the user to see while displaying the time and date the message was written.

Marketing implication As users share information on their profiles, their timelines are visible to their friends. If marketing makes an effort to get more and more information about their product brand shared on the walls of other users, the results will be a greater visibility for the product brand.

News Feed

Users can get a continuous feed of the Facebook activity of their friends on an alternative homepage created by Facebook. This includes information such as profile changes, upcoming events, and birthdays, among other updates.

Marketing implication When a user likes the page of a product or brand on Facebook, the corresponding information is visible to all his/her friends in their News Feed. This is what marketing wants: A continuous stream of product evangelists or people who unwittingly, by showing their affinity towards a particular brand, recommend the same to their friends.

Facebook Applications

Events

If a user is organizing an event, they can inform their friends about the same and invite them to attend the event using Facebook events. By posting information regarding the event name, network, host name, event type, start time, location, and a guest list of friends invited, invitations can be sent.

Marketing implication Companies can host brand-related events and invite all the people who like their Facebook pages or are friends of their brands.

Marketplace

Facebook Marketplace allows users to post free classified ads.

Notes

Facebook Notes is used as a blogging feature that allows tags and embeddable images; and users are able to import blogs from Xanga, LiveJournal, Blogger, and other blogging services.

Marketing implication Companies can promote the import and sharing of their posts on their corporate blogs on Facebook. This will aid propagation of marketing messages.

Deals

Facebook Deals allows users to check in from restaurants, supermarkets, bars, and coffee shops using an App on a mobile device. The users can be subsequently rewarded through discounts, coupons, and free merchandise.

Marketing implication Companies can use Facebook Deals as the digital version of a loyalty card or coupon where a customer gets rewarded for loyal buying behaviour.

Developers

The Facebook Developers platform provides a set of APIs and tools which enable third-party developers to integrate with the ‘open graph’, whether through applications on Facebook.com or external websites and devices. The Facebook platform has evolved from enabling development just on Facebook.com to one also supporting integration across the Web and devices.

Marketing implication Facebook is being embedded in the social fabric of people’s lives and marketing will benefit as more and more Apps and tools are developed to aid marketers in enabling online product proliferation.

Insights

Facebook Insights is a new tool which helps organizations manage and track their campaigns, helps provide meaningful quantitative information regarding a Facebook page with attributes such as likes, shares, followers, comments, and their activity regarding trends (increase/decrease), the sources of followers, the number of fans, virality of a post as well as information on which posts and which customers are interacting the most. It helps in monitoring the dynamic response from an audience. One can determine the reaction of their audience and act accordingly to boost or promote the page increasing its significance.

Marketing implication Facebook Insights can be leveraged by marketers to promote their business and can be a significantly beneficial tool to manage online promotion.

Questions

Facebook Questions facilitates short, poll-like answers in addition to long-form responses, allows people to get recommendations, and also links directly to relevant items in Facebook’s directory of fan pages.

Marketing implication Companies can use Facebook Questions to run polls regarding products and brands, collect consumer feedback and recommendations for products.

Photos

Facebook allows users to upload their photographs and lately, uploading pictures of their abroad trips, their achievements, and time spent with the family are becoming very popular. Users can upload albums of photos, tag friends helped by face recognition technology, and comment on photos. The photo feature is being used by more and more users to build a personal identity—Facebook profiles are gradually

EXHIBIT 15.1 Brands in the era of Facebook's Graph Search

Ever since Facebook introduced Graph Search, brands are under pressure to invest in genuine relationships and generate love for them. Facebook Graph Search clearly leverages the consumer evangelists, opinion leaders, and people who genuinely recommend a brand. The ideology is clear. When an individual in Delhi, in India wants to visit a restaurant, rather than going in for a Google search for famous restaurants, the individual now logs onto Facebook to identify the restaurants visited by his/her friends. In one such search query on Facebook, all the people who

have posted details about a restaurant visit on their timelines, inadvertently serve as consumer evangelists. They are acting as influencers for the friend who made the Facebook Graph Search. Graph Search allows users to search for information relevant to their lives—on people, places, products, and services—using data of their friends on the social networking site. Marketing of movies, books, and music can greatly benefit from this feature, considering that users really love to show off their experiences to their friends and acquaintances.

becoming reflections of the persona of individuals by showcasing what they do, their value systems, beliefs, and what they like.

Marketing implication A picture speaks much more than words. People are using their Facebook profiles to intimate their friends about what they do, places they visit, restaurants they eat at, products they use, social occasions they celebrate, movies they watch, vehicles they drive, clothes they wear, the latest gadgets they have acquired, and the foreign locations they have visited. All this is of massive interest to marketing. Brands have to create campaigns and photo-tagging contests to encourage consumers to indulge in the above practices. This generation of positive word-of-mouth, results in a lot of publicity for brands. Monitoring, managing and seeding *peer-to-peer influence* will benefit marketers significantly.

Videos

Facebook allows users to share videos—these can be their own creations, recorded using the webcam recording feature, as well as those that belong to others. This can be done by uploading the content online through user laptops, desktops, tablets, and mobiles. Additionally, users can ‘tag’ their friends in the videos they add.

Marketing implication Companies can create contests and campaigns where consumers can be encouraged to shoot product- and brand-related videos and upload them online. Encouraging consumers to upload videos demonstrating their product usage, such as driving a particular car and tagging their friends, will garner substantial visibility for the products.

All the above features and applications of Facebook make it an ideal platform to be used by organizations for user engagement and customer relationship management.

Companies can use Facebook as an effective marketing tool for product propagation and sharing new campaigns with customers.

The growth of social media and the rise of the era of Facebook are making marketing focus on increasing the engaging and collaborative aspects of advertising. Creating advertising that does not appear to be advertising is the latest challenge confronting marketing people, and online social networks represent an important resource for experimenting with this new type of endeavour (Fig. 15.4).

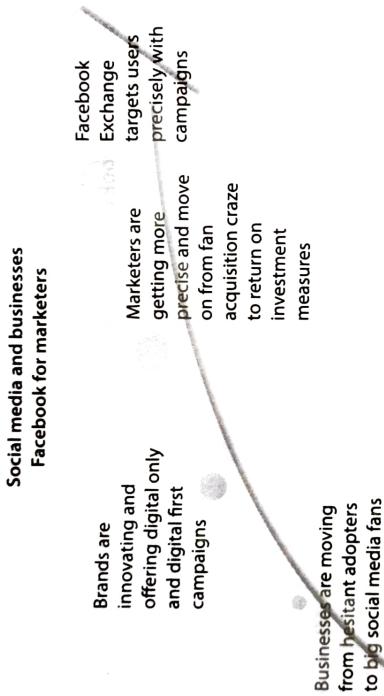


Fig. 15.4 Facebook and the world of Apps

NETIQUETTE—THE FACEBOOK ETIQUETTE FOR BRANDS

The world of Facebook provides a different environment where brands can proliferate by following a distinctive set of rules. The objective for brands is clearly propagation in a virtual environment. The idea is to understand the dynamics of this environment, and to identify best practices which when adopted in the right contextual environment will yield the best possible results. This section discusses netiquette (Fig. 15.5)—the Facebook etiquette for brands and marketers which will enable them to obtain a higher return on investment (ROI) for their virtual endeavours.

- *Conversation is the new advertising*

The role of one-way media was to clearly create brand awareness, enable brand positioning, and keep the brand in the top-of-mind of the consumers.

Interactive media offered a new dimension to this by serving to generate repeat purchases, communicate with prospects that have expressed interest, enable companies and customers to trust each other. It is in this context that companies can make use of Facebook. They can present users with the opportunity of creating a group of friends, of remaining in contact with them, and exchanging information. Users (potential brand consumers) can engage in dialogue, which will eventually benefit the companies, who in a

A lot has been said about the need to build large social networks online. While studies have been directed towards identifying the individual network value or the contribution of one individual to the value of the entire network, equally important is to attempt to quantify the impact of one individual in the network.

Forrester research attempted to calculate what they termed as the Facebook factor—

Marketers have always felt the need to understand the impact of one Facebook fan. It makes sense to study the likelihood of Facebook fans to purchase, consider, and recommend brands and the greater probability of their positive behaviour, as compared to non-fans.

Forrester studied four major brands as case studies to assess the Facebook factor for Coca Cola, Walmart, Best Buy, and BlackBerry [Research In Motion (RIM)]. The research company studied the increased likelihood of product adoption by the fans, as also the positive impact of Facebook vis-à-vis other brand engagement-driving factors such as convenience of shopping.

- The outcomes of the study were as follows:
- Facebook fans are much more likely to purchase, consider, and recommend the brands that they engage with, on Facebook than non-fans.
 - Forrester did not examine the impact of Facebook fans in a silo. The company compared the impact of engaging with these brands on Facebook with the impact of other driving factors of brand engagement on these metrics. For example, being a Facebook fan has almost double the impact on purchasing from Walmart as having a Walmart near a consumer's home.

EXHIBIT 15.7 Pockets by ICICI Bank

ICICI Bank, India's second largest bank, launched

- a Facebook App called *Pockets* by ICICI Bank to promote a safe, simple, and social way of banking through Facebook. The features of the App included *Pay a Friend* (for sending money to friends anonymously), *Split and Share* (for splitting up group expenses and sharing them amongst friends), *Recharge Mobile* (for chatting with family and friends), *Book Movie Tickets*, *Transact and Track*.
- Positioning of the service has been done in the following way:
 - Showcasing Banking with ICICI as a new experience
 - Using Facebook as a one-stop shop for performing all the activities
 - Offering convenience and user-friendliness to consumers
 - Safety equivalent to the ICICI net banking platform

Implications for Organizations The fact that Facebook fans are more likely to buy (and spend more on), consider, and recommend the brands they engage with, on Facebook