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Digital Marketing and Wordpress

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Abstract

Digital Marketing – defined Michael Porter has said: The key question is not whether to deploy Digital Technology – companies have no choice if they want to stay competitive – but how to deploy it. Digital marketing describes the management and execution of marketing using electronic media such as the web, e-mail, interactive TV and wireless media in conjunction with digital data about customers’ characteristics and behavior. Mass customization is a necessity today and hence digital marketing is yet another channel that provides touch points for improved customer relations. Digital marketing is one effective way to address this necessity with various touchpoints/sub-channels like FaceBook, LinkedIn, Blogs, Twitter, and the website itself. In modern parlance, it has now been accepted that customers are exposed to 3 screens: 1st Screen: Television, 2nd Screen: Computer Monitor, 3rd Screen: The Mobile Handset. Does that mean that we have to create content for each of them separately? Fortunately, with the advent of strong CMS like WordPress, this duplication of work is now a thing of the past. At least, the last two screens are clearly addressed by the responsive themes of WordPress. Today there are a few smart TVs in the market that can connect to the web and there are no issues with WordPress delivered content. **Methodology:** The first study of the paper would analyze the role of WordPress and its advantages. The second study would highlight on the study of SEO plugins and its importance while using WordPress. The third study would focus on whether WordPress as a standalone system can address the CMS and how “plugins” can enhance its application and usability. The above studies would be dealt using secondary research data like research papers, journals and websites. **Conclusions:** Currently, DD India covers over 92% of the population. But the penetration of TVs has not kept in tune with this. On the flipside, TVs are viewed in groups. Given that DD India was established in 1959, it has been over 65 years before this could be achieved. The internet launched in mid 90s has 243 million internet users in the country to people who use computers and laptops.(8) What is astounding is that smart phones which came in several years later today has already achieved a penetration near to 50% both in rural and urban areas of India. Given this trend, it is only a matter of time that Mobile penetration exceeds that of Doordarshan – The 1st Screen. What is more relevant is that each Mobile is a personal product of an individual unlike the other two screens.

Keywords: Content Management System (CMS), Digital Marketing , Doordarshan , Mobile Digital Marketing, WordPress

1. Introduction and Motivation

Michael Porter has said:

The key question is not whether to deploy Digital Technology – companies have no choice if they want to stay competitive – but how to deploy it.

Digital marketing describes the management and execution of marketing using electronic media such as the web, e-mail, interactive TV and wireless media in conjunction

with digital data about customers’ characteristics and behavior. The success stories of certain companies capturing a higher market share by adopting the digital medium recognizes the fact that we need analyze the strategic importance of digital technologies and develop a planned approach to reach and target the customers to migrate to online services through e-communications to match their individual needs. Hence companies should have a robust Internet presence to prosper or possibly survive in the competitive world.

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In modern parlance, it has now been accepted that customers are exposed to 3 screens:

- 1st Screen: Television
- 2nd Screen: Computer Monitor
- 3rd Screen: The Mobile Handset

Does that mean that we have to create content for each of them separately? Fortunately, with the advent of strong CMS like WordPress, this duplication of work is now a thing of the past. At least, the last two screens are clearly addressed by the responsive themes of WordPress. Today there are a few smart TVs in the market that can connect to the web and there are no issues with WordPress delivered content.

2. Methodology

- The first study of the paper would analyze the role of WordPress and its advantages.
- The second study would highlight on the study of SEO plugins and its importance while using WordPress.
- The third study would focus on WordPress Responsive themes which supports in handling the requirements of all the 3 screens.

The above studies would be dealt using secondary research data like research papers, journals and websites.

3. Objective 1

3.1 The evolution of Digital Marketing

The future evolution of marketing is termed as 'DigiMarketing' where-in there is a shift from mass broadcast to digital, participatory, two-way and primarily viral. The Digital Darwinism will force marketers to engage the customers continuously by adopting new media and digital channels thereby re-crafting the way we approach marketing.

- From Viewers to participants – Consumers are no longer just docile viewers but are likely to be participating and watching by expressing their opinions through blogs, podcasts and web.
- From Impressions to Involvement – Involvement is necessary today and hence SOV (Share Of Voice) becomes key driving force for marketers. Creating ongoing engagement is needed which is not just by logging many times on the channel but by continuously interacting and responding and connecting emotionally to the discussions.

- From Broadcast to Addressable – Shift from thinking about mass audience to individuality and interactivity where by even if there are millions of people with the same type of device, you can still connect with them as individuals displaying their buying habits and preferences.
- From Schedule-Driven and Location-Bound content to Time-shifted and Borderless – Freedom from scheduling, freedom geographic boundaries, freedom to scale and freedom from formats.
- From Mass messaging to opt-in messaging – Messaging to consumers should be on opted – in basis which directs towards individual needs and preferences.
- From Traditional media planning to New media planning – The traditional media plan included signage, billboards by including a telephone number. But by making the billboards digital we mean that we can display a video and not a standard image which would make the billboards more interactive.
- From managed PR to Digital Influence – It is more to do with image management. It is necessary that marketers map real-time conversations of consumers by monitoring blogs, disseminating new information digitally and responding to blogs rather than only concerned of image control.
- From integrated marketing to unified marketing – Unification of individual customers experience by using individual customer data to support continuous participant dialogue.

3.2 Growth of Internet Sites and Smartphone

According to the eMarketer research firm, 4.55 billion people across the world are going to use a mobile phone in 2014 and the Smartphone users would total 1.75 billion in 2014 by surpassing the global Smartphone audience of 1 billion in 2012. (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

The trajectory of Smartphone is going to grow faster through 2017 and the penetration among mobile phone users globally would near to 50% as per the eMarketers forecast period. This has made it possible because the Smartphone is getting affordable with the adoption of 2G and 3G networks. It is also expected that more than 2.23 billion people globally or 48.9% of the mobile phone users would go online via mobile at least monthly in 2014. It is also estimated that total number of mobile phone internet users will increase to 16.5% in 2014.

These forecasts are made based on the worldwide and local trends in the economy including technology changes and population changes and changes in the companies including demographic trends and trends in consumer behavior¹.

The top countries which are fueling the internet growth in the order of importance include China followed by India although a small percentage i.e. 11% of the total population of India being online².

Smartphone Users and Penetration Worldwide, 2012-2017

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Smartphone users (billions)	1.13	1.43	1.75	2.03	2.28	2.50
—% change	68.4%	27.1%	22.5%	15.9%	12.3%	9.7%
—% of mobile phone users	27.6%	33.0%	38.5%	42.6%	46.1%	48.8%
—% of population	16.0%	20.2%	24.4%	28.0%	31.2%	33.8%

Note: individuals of any age who own at least one smartphone and use the smartphone(s) at least once per month
Source: eMarketer, Dec 2013

166980 www.eMarketer.com

Figure 1. Smartphone users and penetration worldwide 2012-2017.

Mobile Phone Internet Users and Penetration Worldwide, 2012-2017

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Mobile phone internet users (billions)	1.58	1.91	2.23	2.50	2.75	2.97
—% change	37.4%	20.7%	16.5%	12.2%	10.0%	8.0%
—% of mobile users	38.8%	44.1%	48.9%	52.4%	55.5%	57.8%
—% of internet users	66.8%	73.4%	79.1%	83.6%	87.3%	90.1%
—% of population	22.6%	27.0%	31.1%	34.5%	37.5%	40.1%

Note: mobile phone users of any age who access the internet from a mobile browser or an installed application at least once per month; use of SMS/MMS is not considered mobile internet access
Source: eMarketer, Dec 2013

166972 www.eMarketer.com

Figure 2. Mobile phone internet users and penetration worldwide, 2012-2017.

3.3 Advent of Blogging as a Social Media and Birth of CMS (Content Management System)

The term 'blog' was coined in the year 1997 and the word's creation is attributed to the process of 'logging the web' as one browsed. The early 2000s was seen by a period of rampant spurge for blogs and by 2001 'meta-blogs' (blogs about blogging) made a substantial portion of the popularity of blogs.

It was in 2003 that blogging platforms like Word Press got started which brought blogging to the mainstream by 2005 as 32 million Americans were seen reading blogs. Around this time the process of blogging increased even more with greater than 152 million blogs being online and active by the end of 20103.

Thus the future of blogging is growing rapidly as it has become an integral part of one's online culture with the advent of social media and social networking which is seen in the last 5 years.

Blogs are definitely going to have a bright future to the extent that the content available through blogs bring in growth and innovation which will need a system create content, manage content, publish content and present it finally³.

This gave birth to the process of CMS which facilitates the process of creation, management, distribution, publishing and discovery of corporate information. The most common use where-in CMS is put for is to manage web content and hence in some instances these systems are called web management systems⁴.

3.4 WordPress Blogging – Leading to CMS

WordPress started in the year 2003 having a single bit code to facilitate the typography and writing skills with fewer users. Today it has grown tremendously to be the largest self-hosted blogging tool in the entire world adopted on millions of sites and used by tens of millions of users. WordPress is an open source project which is being worked on by hundreds of people and is free to use either for homepage or website without paying anybody licensing fee⁵.

The keystone element in the Marketing domain has been the word "Content". Significant changes have been brought about by Technology for numerous processes in terms of supporting the collection and publication of information on varied forms and mediums. All these set of processes collectively are known as content management. Thus the term Content Management System has been evolved through the sheer necessity of managing and maintaining the enormous data available on blogs, WebPages and websites.

The 3 most popular CMSes online are Drupal, Joomla and WordPress. All the three are open source and built on PHP + MySQL and differ significantly with respect to features, capability, flexibility and ease of use.

3.5 Advantages of WordPress as a CMS

Even traditionally less innovative organizational bodies like government owned businesses and funds (e.g. pension fund) could benefit from the developments in big data. Lev Manovich opined that humanists should use data analysis and visualization software in their daily work, so that they can combine quantitative and qualitative approaches in all their work²².

3.5.1 -Importance of Plugins While Using WordPress

WordPress Plugins allow easy modification, customization, and enhancement to a WordPress blog. Instead of changing the core programming of WordPress, you can add functionality with WordPress Plugins⁵. Plugins can extend WordPress to do almost anything you can imagine and primarily supports in enhancing WordPress as a CMS.

3.5.2 -Importance of Widgets While Using WordPress

Widgets were originally designed to provide a simple and easy-to-use way of giving design and structure control of the WordPress Theme to the user, which is now available on properly "widgetized" WordPress Themes to include the header, footer, and elsewhere in the WordPress design and structure⁵. Widgets primarily support in enhancing the look and feel of the webpages.

3.5.3 -Ease of Use While Using WordPress

- It is an easy-to-use authoring environment setting especially designed to work like Word.
- It primarily supports creating new pages and updating content without using the technical platform of HTML4.
- Plugins are tools which extend the functionality of Wordpress. The core of WordPress is designed to be lean, to maximize flexibility and minimize code bloat. Plugins offer custom functions and features so that each user can tailor their site to their specific needs⁵.
- Look & Feel - The web site can be kept fresh by easily changing the site layout and appearance by swapping themes. One can plan layouts for holidays or special events etc – all by clicking on one button.

3.5.4 -Ease of Use While Using WordPress

WordPress themes are responsive themes that automatically adjust the layout to fit into mobile screens. This eliminates the need to create a separate website to meet mobile/smart phone requirements.

3.5.5 -Ultimate in SEO Friendliness

- WordPress code is streamlined without excessive HTML code that Google finds very easy to index. Also, it is relatively simple to customize every page to give you the highest possible probability of getting your pages in high search results positions. In addition, there are plugins that help in refining the process even further which would be discussed in the later section.
- WordPress can enhance search engine rankings there by supporting in showing on the first pages of search results using Google or Yahoo⁶.

4. Objective 2

4.1 WordPress & SEO in Digital Marketing

Over 6 million websites with over 8 billion WebPages constitute what is now called the World Wide Web. In order that the desired customer makes his way into our website, it is important that our webpage appears in the Search Engine Results Page (SERP) when the customer searches for a keyword or phrase.

All search engines – Google, Bing, Yahoo, have developed algorithms which enable the visitor to zone into those links that are mostly likely to provide him additional information and content based on relevance and authority. This process in general is called SEO.

SEO helps improve the websites interaction with the users and the search engine. SEO supports onsite visibility in search engines by appropriate usage of keywords, making the content the most relevant to the users. SEO also provides offsite advantage to the website by building authority to the website via link building i.e. the more other websites offer my website by backlinks, the more the authority my website gains.

As mentioned earlier Word Press code is streamlined without excessive HTML code that Google finds very easy to index. However, in order to make it more effective, there are quite a large number of plugins that can further help in improving the position of the page in search results. Built-in Features: WordPress encourages the web designer to make use of the menu and the categories so that each page can address a particular topic or subject.

The use of categories helps in further classifying the pages. This enables the website creator to use keywords precisely in each of the pages and subcategories which help the google spider to index each page accurately and thus enable a better search rank.

WordPress also allows the creator to caption and give an alternate text to multimedia that further aids the search engine spider.

Creations of tags and slugs are yet another feature that is quite simple to implement.

4.2 Role of WordPress in Digital Marketing

Digital marketing landscape has gained tremendous importance during the last decade and has played a pivotal role in creating 'relationship marketing'. Technology advances have punctuated the evolution of communication of businesses with their customers. What is important to note is that none of these later advances in communication has actually depreciated the ones that came before. Infact, they have actually supplemented them. Even today, the earliest forms of communication are still around and thriving. The advent of newer technologies has been exploited by marketers to use Digital marketing as a new tool to woo their customers. Digital marketing has also been bolstered with the proliferation & penetration of mobile phones. Over 250 million Indians are currently using phones to browse the internet. Digital Marketing has been built around the emerging technologies – be it internet expansion or the mobile revolution. The website has become the centre of this universe with various technologies deployed to lure the customers to it.

4.3 Therefore, the Key Requirements for a Comprehensive Digital Marketing Solution is that it should Enable

- Search Engine Optimization
- Search Engine Marketing
- Social Media Marketing.

Having attracted the prospect, it then becomes important that the customer is engaged on the website that could result in some pre-determined call to action like download, purchase etc. With "content" being the core creative activity of increasing customer engagement, it is imperative that an easy yet comprehensive solution be available that simultaneously performs the two tasks of creating the

required content and enabling users at all levels – experts to novices - in propagating the content to the customers at large. Figure shown below: It is in this context that we have examined the various CMSes. WordPress "the darling of google" is fundamentally a CMS package that provides the fundamental benefits to both a novice and an expert in web designing. (Figure 3)



Figure 3. WordPress "the darling of google"

5. Plugins

5.1 Value of Plugins and its Importance While Using WordPress for SEO, SEM & SMM

A few Plugins that aid SEO plugins in WordPress are:

5.1.1 - WordPress SEO Plugin by Yoast

This plugin is written from the ground up by Joost de Valk and his team at Yoast to improve your site's SEO on all needed aspects. While this WordPress SEO plugin goes the extra mile to take care of all the technical optimization, it first and foremost helps you write better content. WordPress SEO forces you to choose a focus keyword when you're writing your articles, and then makes sure you use that focus keyword everywhere. Using the snippet preview you can see a rendering of what your post or page will look like in the search results, whether your title

is too long or too short and your Meta description makes sense in the context of a search result. This way the plugin will help you not only increase rankings but also increase the click through for organic search results. In addition to the above plugins which actively help in SEO, there are a lot of plugins that enhance the functionality of WordPress without affecting SEO. We have listed 10 such plugins that make using WordPress a great experience. Some of the plugins also help in search engine marketing and social media marketing.

5.1.2 -NextGen Gallery and Lightbox Plus

NextGen is a plugin for image gallery management. You can define lots of things such as the image's title and alt tags, which solves any SEO image problems. The two plugins have been combined into one entry because they work hand-in-hand. Lightbox Plus uses Colorbox – a lightweight jQuery image gallery script that is the friendliest for performance and doesn't hinder on-page SEO. Lightbox Plus offers a lot more options for the appearance and behavior of Lightbox's execution.

5.1.3 -Meta Slider

Meta Slider is the most popular slideshow plugin for WordPress. Creating slideshows with Meta Slider is fast and easy. Meta Slider enables creation of SEO optimized responsive slideshows with Nivo Slider, Flex Slider, Coin Slider and Responsive Slides.

5.1.4 -Simple Page Sidebars

This plugin gives WordPress users, designers, and developers the ability to assign custom sidebars to individual pages--without making any template changes. Existing sidebars can also be assigned in quick edit and bulk edit modes, saving time. Simple Page Sidebars aims for basic, core-like functionality and integration that is easy to use - it utilizes built-in WordPress caching, so your site won't be bogged down with additional queries. Simple Page Sidebars also ships with a "Widget Area" widget for pulling all the widgets from one sidebar into another.

5.1.5 -Contact Form 7

This plugin can manage multiple contact forms. One can easily customize the form and the mail contents flexibly with simple markup. The form supports Ajax-powered submitting, CAPTCHA, Akismet spam filtering and so on. Moreover this plugin has add-ons like

Contact 7 Skins plugin which makes it easy for the WP user to customize the look & feel of the contact form. By using Flamingo – another plugin, the user can track the user's details when they comment on a page.

5.2 Plugins for SEM in Digital Marketing

The process of SEO to be really effective takes considerable time and effort. In the meanwhile, the website publisher has an option of projecting his website by incurring some expenses in promoting his site by advertising on various sites including search results page on a Cost Per Mille (CPM) or Cost Per Click (CPC) basis. It then necessitates creation of landing page. While WP has the capability, there are several plugins that can make the task easier and 'professional. One such is the

5.2.1 -WordPress Landing Pages/WordPress Calls to Action/WordPress Leads

While Landing pages plugin is a stand alone, combined with the other two enhances the capabilities and effectiveness of the landing page and thus conversion.

5.3 SMM in Digital Marketing

With the explosion of Social media with over 3000 registered social media sites, peer group interaction has started dominating the decision making process of the individual customer. The move from WOM to "Word of Keyboard" is pretty apparent. There are quite a number of social media plugins and also plugins that can display your twitter feed, facebooklikebox, google+referenceand social media icons.

5.3.1 -WordPress Social Media Feather

This plugin is a super lightweight free social media WordPress plugin that allows WP user to quickly add social sharing and following features to all pages. The differentiating feature of this plugin is its focus on simplicity, performance and unobtrusive impact.

5.3.2 -Facebook Like Box Widget

This plugin enables Facebook Page owners to attract and gain Likes & Recommendation Comments from their own website. The Like Box enables users to: see how many users already like this page, and which of their friends like it too, read recent posts from the page and like the page with one click, without needing to visit the page.

5.3.3 -Google+ Plugin

This plugin allows WP user to post directly from G+ to your WordPress website. The Google+ plugin supports post formats so a hash tag system can be used to decide on the post format.

6. Objective 3

WordPress Responsive themes are made in a way to handle the requirements of all the 3 screens. Example: Most smart TVs today have built-in browsers which handle websites just like the standard internet browsers. Mobile phones, given the screen size would show distortion in earlier web-designs and hence there was a need for creating sites exclusively for mobile web browsing. However responsive themes from Word Press have surmounted this shortcoming and the webpage automatically arranges itself within the screen. This is true even for different screen resolutions in desktops and PCs. The advent of Responsive themes in website has truly extended the reach to customers irrespective of the devices they use thus enabling uniformity and consistency. Responsive Theme is a flexible foundation with fluid grid system that adapts a website to mobile devices and the desktop or any other viewing environment. (Figure 4)



Figure 4. WordPress responsive themes

7. Conclusion

WordPress is responsible for 14.7 percent of the top million websites worldwide representing small, medium and big business. If you are using WordPress, you are in

company along side. The New York Times, Wall Street Journal's Speakeasy, Ford, New York University Library, CNN, Harvard Law School, Ben & Jerry, People Magazine, NASA⁷. Some of the other leading organizations like Bata, CNN, and Huffington Post also use WordPress to develop their website or blogs. What is even more surprising is that there are quite a few celebrities who use WordPress like Usain Bolt, The Rolling Stones, Snoop Dogg, Bill Cosby⁵. This is clearly an indication of the versatility of WordPress that it can cater to such varied segments of users. As of March 2012, WordPress is on 72.4 million sites in the world. WordPress.com hosts about half of them. As of a moment today, WordPress 3.3, the latest version, has been downloaded 12,179,538 times – which is phenomenal by itself if you look at the number of versions released to date⁷. Our study clearly brings out the simplicity, the versatility and the value of the various plugins that go a long way in enhancing the basic CMS software – a definite advantage with respect to the other CMSes and Digital Marketing as a whole.

8. Scope for Future Research

With newer versions of WordPress coming out almost every month, the numbers of developers are increasing every day. This would culminate in higher and more sophisticated versions of plugins. We look forward to study this evolution during the coming years.

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