

**Project Dissertation Report on**

**A Customer's Perspective towards**

**Brand Engagement on Social Media**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, **Anurag Joshi**, student of MBA Batch 2016-18 of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi-42 declare that Dissertation Report on “**A Customer’s Perspective towards Brand Engagement on Social Media**” submitted in partial fulfilment of Degree of Masters of Business Administration is the original work conducted by me.

The information and data given in the report is authentic to the best of my knowledge.

This report has not been submitted to any other university for the award of any other Degree, Diploma and/or Fellowship.

**Anurag Joshi**

Place: New Delhi

Date of submission: May 21, 2018

## **CERTIFICATE FROM INSTITUTE**

This is to certify that the Project Report titled “**A Customer’s Perspective towards Brand Engagement on Social Media**” is an original and bonafide work carried out by **Mr. Anurag Joshi** of MBA 2016-18 batch and was submitted to Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, Bawana Road, Delhi-110042 in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of **Masters of Business Administration**.

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**Seal of Head (DSM)**

**Date:**

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Sincerely,

**Anurag Joshi**

## **ABSTRACT**

Which channel a company/brand should be on to support its customers? It's important to identify the channels your customers are using

Social media has gradually evolved into an integral aspect of human lives. Statistics stipulate that the way people utilize social media and interact online influences their overall purchasing decisions. 'Being innovative' is the key factor for any brand.

Over the years, social media has created a wide range of appeal and engagement for the customers. It enables a brand to interact with their customer on a personal level. It provides a platform for quicker feedback and evaluation ensuring that customer's queries are dealt with utmost importance.

To boost online traffic to your site and increase sales, its important to stay ahead of the competition while providing your customers with the best products and services. We need to understand the ways through which marketers have used social media marketing a platform to enhance the brand image and its value across the globe.

This project aims to understand the customer's prospective towards engagement with the brands on social media.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

# 1.1 Global Outlook

According to a global report from We Are Social, in the digital world, the year 2018 has been a milestone of sorts. The global internet users surpassing the 4 billion mark means that more than half of the world population uses the internet now. The interesting part is that 250 million of them became first time users of the internet in the past year itself.

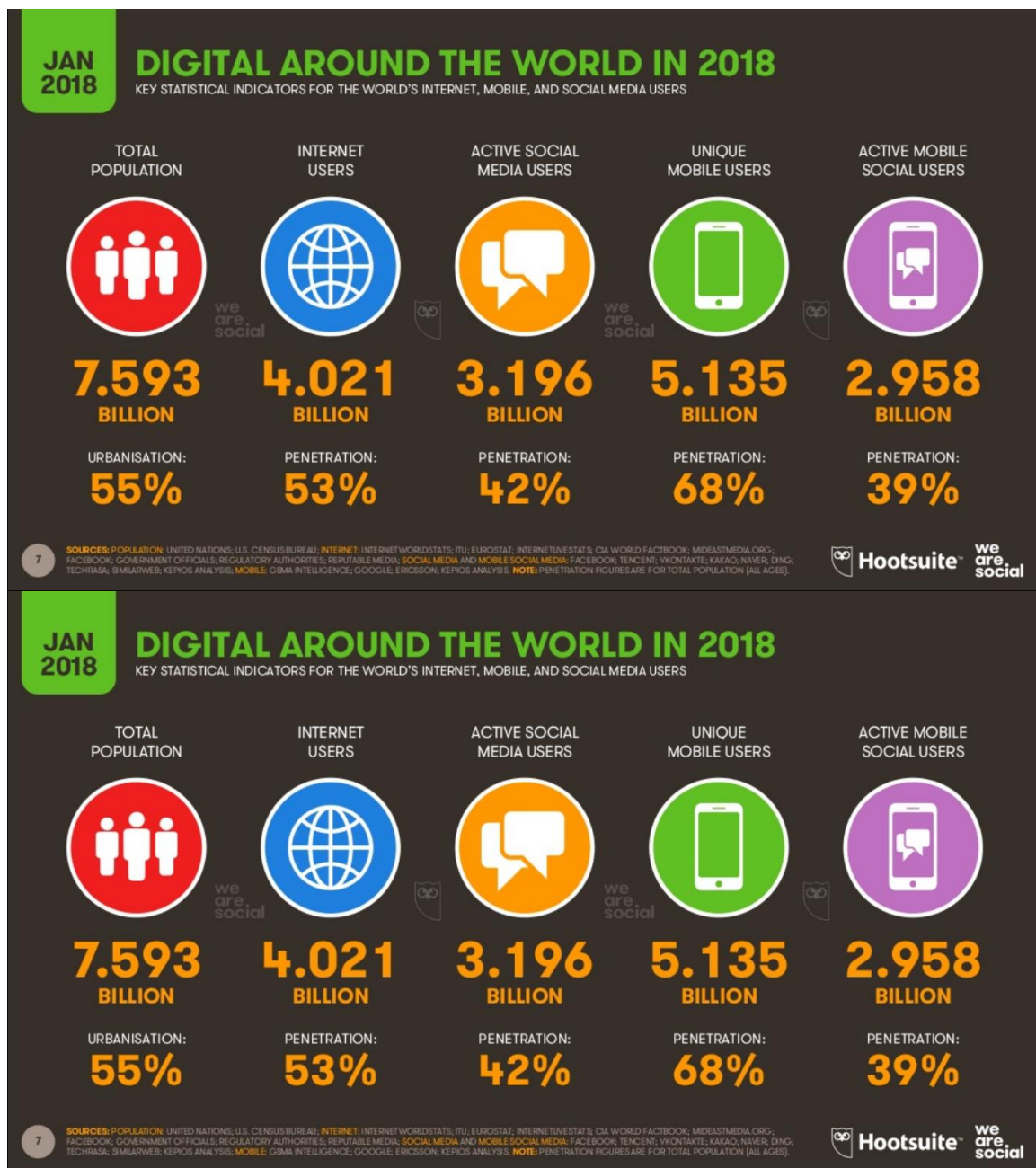


Fig. 1 Digital around the World in 2018 @Hootsuite

There has been a rise in the time spent by users online. Currently the average time being spent is around 6 hours per day. Add this for all the 4 billion users of the internet and we arrive at a jaw-dropping 1 billion years that they will spend online in the year 2018.

Two of the most important drivers for the growth in the internet users has been the availability of low cost smartphones and affordable data plans. The year 2017 saw more than 200 million people getting their first mobile handsets. Currently the number of people owning a mobile phone stands at two-third of the total population. More than half of these mobile handsets are 'smart' devices which facilitates rich internet experience for the people.

Social media platforms have witnessed phenomenal growth in the last 12 months. Top social media platforms in each country have seen 1 million new users signing up every day which amounts to 11 new users signing up every second.

Each month more than 3 billion people around the world use some or the other social media platform. The medium of access for most of them is a mobile device which clearly shows the extent of penetration of the mobile devices.

The result of internet being used by more than 4 billion people for more than 6 hours every day is that now digital has become a way life for most of them. Digital has become an essential part of our day to day activities and we depend on it for several tasks. Connecting with friends using instant messaging, playing online games, ordering food, booking cabs, researching about products and services, online dating etc., are some of the benefits of digital technologies we enjoy in our lives almost every day. This indicates the ease with which we have let digital make way into our lives. This makes it imperative for the brands to treat digital as an essential component of their strategy and not have a siloed approach towards it. Some of the ways in which brands can do this are:

- Getting deeper insights about what the customers really want instead of what technology is capable of doing
- Having a win-win approach to benefit both brands and the customers instead of just focusing on achieving the sales targets and conversions
- Making the experience of purchasing online as easy as possible for the customers
- Leveraging digital tools and technologies to keep the customers engaged with the brand and establish long-term relations with them

## 1.2 Social Trends in 2018

**New platforms, new metrics** - Use of vanity metrics will cease to exist. More and more organizations will quantify the benefits which social media offers such as cost-effectiveness, rise in revenue, risk reduction, and higher engagement.

**Growing popularity of social TV** - With video and social-TV content seeing rising popularity, there will be an opportunity for the brands to broadcast such content on social media platforms. This will help them grab more eyeballs and drive more engagement.

**Rise of peer influence** - There has been a rise in the number of close-knitted communities shaping the opinion of the people who are part of them. Peer influence has become an important factor in shaping our world view. Our trust on traditional institutions is declining day by day. In light of this, it will be important for the brands to keep the employees engaged and also focus on customer communities.

**AI and marketing** - With advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), we are witnessing the emergence of new ways of marketing. Use of chatbots is on the rise while AI-generated content is also being used by some companies. However, the response of customers to these human-less interfaces it is yet to be seen.

**Understanding social data** - The complexity of social data initiatives was underestimated by the marketers as they integrated CRM and analytics together. Social data can be a source of deeper customer insights and it is important for the organizations to realize this so that they adjust their efforts accordingly.

## 1.3 Indian Outlook

With ever increasing internet users in the country, there is a huge opportunity for the marketers to tap the digital footprints of this audience. No longer can they rely on old, conventional marketing practices to tap them. The marketers need to define a digital marketing strategy which should be based on the customer data gathered from their online presence. Today it is possible for the marketers to keep a track of when and where their target audience has the largest presence. They can use this data to connect and establish engagement with their target customers.

The country is witnessing a rise in the adoption of the digital. The initiatives by the government such Digital India campaign have further given a boost to the popularity of the digital. The country is poised to see a digitally-empowered society in the coming times. A study by BCG estimated the contribution of internet to be about USD 200 billion to India's GDP by 2020. This clearly indicates that the marketing landscape too will see a sea change in the coming times.

Though the opportunity created by the digital technologies are huge as the number of touchpoints between marketers and customers have increased drastically, there remains a key challenge for the marketers. It will be interesting to see how the marketers will devise personalized marketing strategies for the ever growing digital customer base.

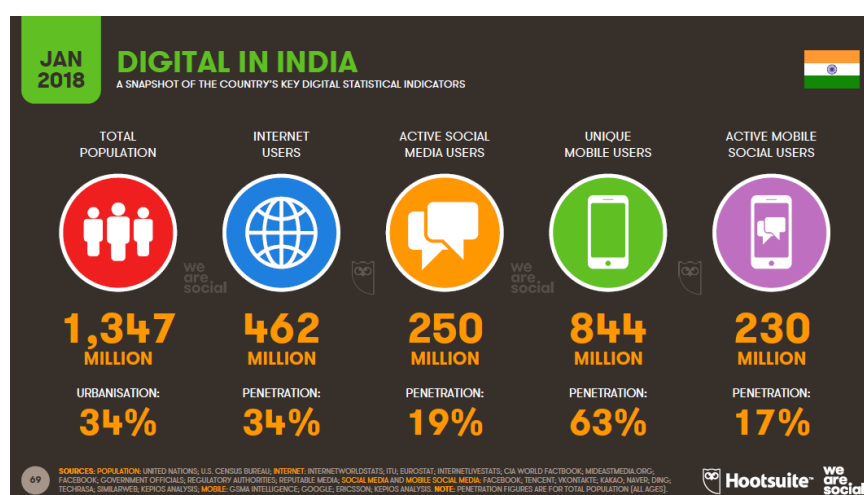


Fig. 2 Digital In India 2018 @Hootsuite

## 1.4 Social Media Marketing in India - Overview

According to a SMM trend study conducted by Ernst and Young, India is embracing social media to attract, engage and transact with their customers as far as the landscape of digital and social media is concerned.

The objective of this report is to understand

- What has changed over the past few years?
- How brands are leveraging social media to gain advantage across the customer lifecycle?

This report gives an insight into

- How Indian brands are developing their digital and social media strategies, in terms of objectives, channels, spends, success metrics?
- How these strategies have evolved over the last few years?

### 1.4.1 Key Insights

1. According to the brands, website is the most effective means to engage with customers, despite of the brand focusing on channels such as social media and mobile.
2. Mobile is growing and it is an important channel for the brands as well as consumers. As a marketer, one shouldn't ignore the rising influence and adoption of mobile.
3. In India, digital ad spending is expected to grow faster than other marketing channels. More brands are spending on digital advertising than ever before. Approximately 80% of brands advertise on web, social and mobile, can be a testament to the fact.

4. Digital and social media marketing is being seen as way more than a mere extension of traditional marketing. Brands are now taking a more holistic approach, a 360 degree, Omni-channel approach to marketing.
5. Allocation of budgets to digital and social media marketing is on the rise — brands spending 20%+ of their marketing budget on digital marketing and 16%+ of their marketing budget on social media.
6. Top 3 challenges faced by brands for marketing on social media being:
  - a. Sustaining or increasing engagement rates
  - b. Content creation
  - c. Measuring effectiveness
7. Brands are not doing very well in having sustainable quality engagement with their communities. They should focus on engagement initiatives that they can sustain for the long-term instead of focusing disproportionately on the launch phases.
8. With recent issues faced by some leading brands in India, it is surprising to see that brands still do not have formal social media policy and governance structure on how the brand will respond in case of an incident. This, is a significant brand risk exposure.
9. Regular engagement and customer service on social media are the best ways to promote engagement and conversion with brands paying more attention to personalization.
10. Instagram is set to see a significant uptake. This channel has become popular and preferred by brands and consumers alike. Most brands have included Instagram as one of their official social media channels, offering brands with the ability to advertise on the platform.

11. Periscope and Snapchat will be the next two platforms to explore.
12. Brands are changing gears toward programmatic media buying which offers marketing teams with multiple options for targeting in real time, at the right moment across screens and devices.
13. There is a significant focus shift from app downloads to engagement and fulfilments. Metrics that measure transactions, engagement on app, as well as positive reviews on app stores will be core measurement success metrics for apps.
14. Chat bots using regular chat interfaces might compliment or substitute company apps in the future.

## 1.4.2 Digital and Social Media Strategy



### Digital platforms

- Facebook and Twitter are the two most popular social media platforms followed by YouTube and LinkedIn.
- 4 key objectives for brand's social media presence
  - Building Brand Awareness/Highlight Brand News
  - Build Community
  - Thought Leadership and Building Credibility
  - Customer Engagement



## Customer acquisition through digital

- Advertise on web, social and mobile as well drive traffic across channels by cross-linking various platforms to attract users to their digital touch points.
- Create compelling content to drive users to digital and social media channels by the method of storytelling and contests. Usually brands also publish content that includes industry trends and other points of interest to their users, as opposed to only product/service related information.

## Integration across channels

- Digital and social media marketing is being integrated with traditional marketing strategies to engage with customers through multiple touch points.

## Budgets

- Approximately half of the brands still do not measure their ROI from social media. However, among those that do, ROI from social media still tends to be measured in relation to customer acquisition rates or campaign-specific metrics.

## Key challenges

- Top two challenges faced by brands to attract users to digital touch points are:
  - effectively defining the target group/audience,
  - lack of dedicated budgets for these channels/advertising



## Lead generation and sales

- Brands use Social PR and Influencer Management to generate leads and convert users to customers. Social CRM is gaining momentum across verticals and brands.

- Use of social media to drive adoption of the apps, brands focus on sponsored posts and pushing discount codes/deals in order to entice users to download their apps.
- Surprisingly, almost half of the brands are not pushing a mobile-first agenda, or seem to focus on their mobile-friendly website instead of pushing users to adopt their apps.

### **E-Commerce and social media/social sharing**

- Brands are leveraging the benefits by integration of their social media to their web or mobile commerce initiatives through cross-linkages between platforms. They allow users to share content or product details onto their own social media feeds given the fact that referrals from peers being considered trustworthy



### **Customer feedback and insights**

- To gain customer feedback, brands conduct social listening; however using a listening tool (e.g. Radian6, Meltwater and Sysomos).
- Although majority of the brands still rely on traditional channels for providing customer service such as call centers and email, many brands are also moving on to social media for CRM.
- Brands use data gathered from digital and social touch points
  - to gain better customer insights and
  - to improve customer experience
  - for new product development
  - to improve their customer service

### **Measurement and metrics**

- Engagement, social reach and brand mentions are top priorities for majority of the brands.

### **Customer retention**

- Brands believe in regularly engaging with users on social media, and running exclusive campaigns for their fans and followers in order to build a community of loyal users and to help with repeat purchases.
- Many brands service or plan to use social CRM to engage with and service customers through the customer lifecycle.

## **1.5 Objectives**

### **Primary Objective**

- To understand a customer's perspective towards engagement with the brands on social media

### **Secondary Objectives**

- To study the recent trends in digital and social media landscape in India
- To understand customer's digital lifestyle, preference connect with a brand and understand his/her expectations across the lifecycle of the relationship.
- To understand the nuances of how to develop a social media strategy

# **CHAPTER 2**

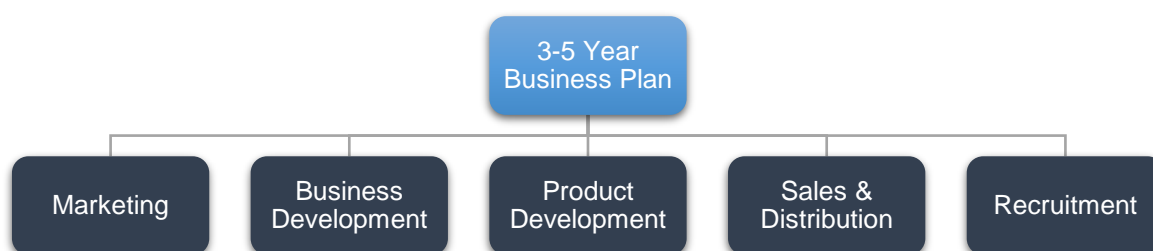
## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

## 2.1 Why have a Social Media Strategy?

Many companies do start using social media without any kind of strategy at all. It's very easy to set up a Twitter or Facebook account and get started. So it's tempting to just jump in at the deep end and see what happens. But you'll get much more out of your social media work if you understand what you're doing and why before you start.

### 2.1.1 Social Media is just one of many strategies

Of course your social media strategy should be just one of a number of strategies and plans that you develop for your business. If you have a 3-5 year business plan you've probably already included plan for marketing, business development, product development, sales and recruitment. These are all the areas where social media can have an impact.



Social media isn't a standalone project, so it has to fit in with the work of your various different departments. Many people already associate social media with marketing so it's clear that the marketing and communications teams need to be involved in the development of your strategy.

But if you have a customer service team then they too are going to be affected by your use of social media. Customers increasingly expect to use social media as a way to communicate with the companies whose products and services they buy. So it's essential to seamlessly integrate social media with your existing customer service infrastructure.

IT is another important department affected by social media. You would certainly need to install new software in order to get the best out of most social tools. So you'll want your IT department to understand and support your strategy.

**A Strategy ensures everyone understands and agrees ‘What’ will be done and ‘Why’**

The process of creating a strategy is a great chance to get people involved and excited about using social media. Strategies that are created collaboratively and which focus on getting everyone on the same page will stand a better chance of success than those that are imposed from top-down.

### **2.1.2 Strategy informs Tactics**

- Provides a roadmap
- Prioritises actions
- Defines audiences
- Determines correct tools
- Assesses and manage available resources
- Promotes consistency and focus

Under all these circumstances you need a robust and comprehensive social media strategy to make sure that you’re using the right tools, that you will avoid common problems, that you know how to best expand your social media use and that you feel confident that you’re in the right social media space.

## **2.2 Strategy vs. Campaign**

### **2.2.1 Social Media Strategy**

- Takes a holistic view of your business
  - Business goals
  - Market & Audience
  - Resources & Responsibilities
- Long term in scope, 1-3 years
  - Can’t be too long term as risk of strategy lock-in
  - Social media changes frequently
  - Frequent reviews, at least six-monthly
  - Long term ROI, targets

- Plan for implementation
  - Identify tools
  - Identify key messages
  - Assessment of content assets
  - Allocation of resources
- Metrics
  - Which metrics relate to business goals?
  - How will they be measured?
  - How will lessons be folded back into future strategy?
- Integration of social media with other strategies, e.g.
  - Marketing
  - Customer service
  - IT

## **2.2.2 Media Campaign**

- Focused project to launch/re-launch a specific product, event or service.
- Relies on decisions made in the strategy
  - It should not redefine audience, change tool choice
- Short term in scope
  - Covers next 1-6 months
  - Short term ROI targets
  - Review at end of campaign, not in middle
- Marketing & promotional content about
  - The product, event or service
  - The campaign itself
  - Encourages sharing specific content
- Narrower targets
  - Targets specific to the product, event or service like book sales, newsletter sign-ups, website traffic
- Strategies and campaigns run side-by-side

Table 1 Strategy vs. Campaign

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>CAMPAIGN</b>
Long-term	Short-term
Business goals	Product goals
General messaging	Specific messaging
Review regularly	Review at end
Identify tools	Use tools
Identify market	Serve market

## **2.3 Business Overview**

Writing a short business overview will help focus your mind on how your customers are your audience view your company. Your social media work will bring you into contact with people who've never heard of you before. So you need to make sure that you understand how your company appears from the outside.

### **2.3.1 Your business overview should:**

- Explain your business to people unfamiliar with it
- Resonate with your customers
- Be a source for profile page content

### **2.3.2 What has been written about your company before?**

- Website 'About' page
- Mission statement
- Value proposition
- Business plan overview



### 2.3.3 Questions to answer in your overview:

- What does your company do?
- What problems do you solve?
- What are your key products and/or services?
- What markets do you serve?
- What makes you stand out?
- Interesting company history?

### 2.3.4 Using your company's usual brand voice:

- What tone should you use?
- What language do you use or avoid?
- Avoid jargon and acronyms

## 2.4 Business Goals

Social media is an increasingly complicated landscape and as you develop your social media strategy you are going to have to make the following choices:

- **Social networks** important to you
- **Online communities** relevant to you
- **Software & Tools** you want to use to manage
- **Audience groups** most important to you
- **Key messages**
- **Metrics** most accurately reflect you progress and how to measure them

### 2.4.1 Listing out your business goals

- What are your business goals?
- Which goals are most important?
- Which goals are short-term or long-term?
- How do they relate to different social media activities?

## 2.4.2 Key areas to explore

### Communications

- Brand awareness
- Supplier relationships
- Product information

### Customers

- Customer satisfaction and retention
- Customer service

### Sales

- New customer acquisition
- Effectiveness of sales channels
- Average sales value and volume

### Capacity

- Attracting new talent
- Improving efficiency
- Employee retention

## 2.4.3 Characteristics of Goals

### Specific

“Increase sales of ebooks through our own website” not “Increase sales”

### Realistic

“Increase newsletter sign-ups by 5% each month” not “Get 10000 sign-ups to our newsletter in the next month”

### Actionable

“Improve metadata on Amazon” not “Conquer Amazon”

## 2.5 Understand your Audience

Social networks have different audience.

### 2.5.1 Define your target audience

- Market research
- Market segmentation
- Marketing or buyer personas

### 2.5.2 Segment your audience

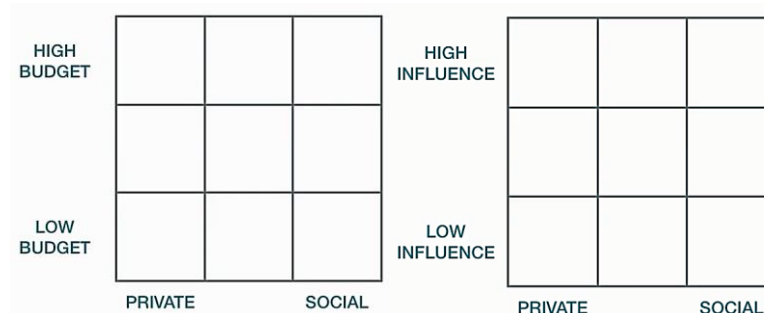
Audience segments are groups of similar people in some way like having similar jobs, habits, interests, backgrounds and needs. There may be other qualities that group your customers together.

- What do they have in common?
- Where do they diverge?
- Which groups are homogenous?
- Which groups are varied?

A good segment is well defined, homogenous and members would relate to it.

### 2.5.3 Audience Matrix

To work out which target audience groups are the most important to you, we will use a 3X3 matrix. The horizontal axis always represents- How active on social media each group tends to be? The vertical axis can represent any key attribute of your groups related to your business goals. Place the audience segments within this matrix in the appropriate cells.



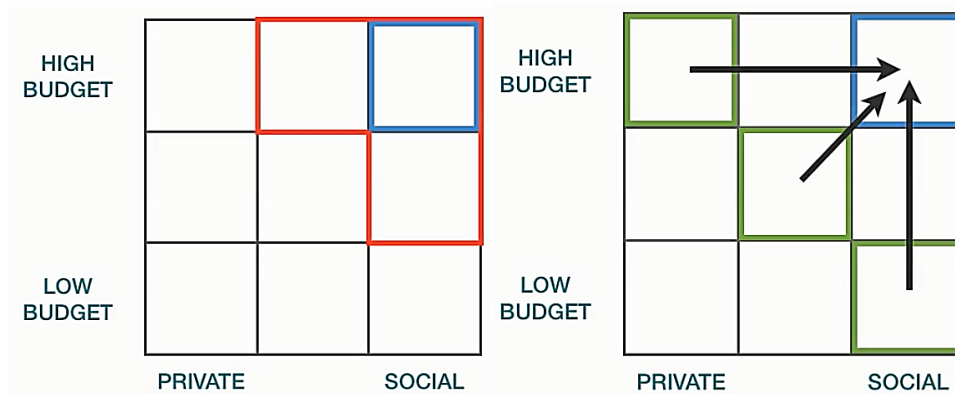


Fig. 3 Audience Matrix

One can see at a glance which audience groups (blue & red cells) are the most important with regard to how you'll meet your business goals. However sometimes it's possible to shift audience groups (green cells) in the matrix with some market development work.

## 2.5.4 Demographics & Psychographics

Now that you know which groups are most important to you, you need to find out a bit more about them. To do this use a combination of demographics and psychographics.

Demographics are attributes of a person or group which are

- Observed
- Objective
- Describes a person's outer life
- Answers the question "Who buys your product?"

Demographics attributes

- Age
- Gender
- Income, or disposable income
- Education
- Occupation
- Geographic location
- Household size

Psychographics are attributes that are

- Felt
- Subjective
- Describes a person's inner life
- Answers the question "Why do they buy?"

Psychographics include

- Beliefs and opinions
- Attitudes
- Values
- Needs and wants
- Habits and hobbies
- Likes and dislikes
- Identity, lifestyle, culture

## **2.6 Choose Social Media Tools**

Choose the social networks which will be most relevant to you and your business.

You can't maintain an account on every social network. The amount of work that it would take to properly support accounts on even the top 4 tools is likely to be beyond the resources of most small or medium sized businesses. Therefore, choose 1-2 key tools so that you can more easily focus your time and resources.

Limiting the number of accounts means that you can manage audience expectations. If you have a presence on a social network that does not get the attention that it deserves, that sends a very negative message to your audience. It says that you don't care.

Indeed, a poorly maintained account looks worse than no account at all. It's best to go all in on one account than to manage two badly.

The trick to choosing your key social network is to compare the demographics and psychographics of your audience with those of the available networks and pick the one that has the closest match.

**Which social networks are your target audience using?**

Women, 35-44, university educated = Facebook/Pinterest

Professional men, university educated = LinkedIn/Twitter

**What are they using those social networks for?**

Highly engaged, brand loyal, curious = Twitter

Focused on visual content, crafting, learning = Pinterest/Instagram

**How do your products/services relate to what your audience is doing on social media?**

**How can you use chosen social network to serve your audience?**

Use the tools in a way that fits with your audience's expectations

So if someone is on Facebook and having a conversation with their friends, then they don't want to be marketed to. Instead, they would want something fun or interesting to share.

If your answers conflict with demographics, follow the psychographics.

## **2.7 Crafting your Messages**

Now that you know which tools you want to use, you need to know what you want to say.

First thing to do is to revisit your business goals. Use your business goals to shape your content plans.

**Know/Do Matrix**

- What do you want people to know about your business?
- What do you want them to do?

Table 2 Know/Do Matrix

<b>KNOW</b>	<b>DO</b>
About our products	Buy our products
Where they can buy	Review our products
That we're on social media	Follow us on social media
Offers	Share offers with their friends
Competitions	Enter competitions
That we have a newsletter	Sign-up to our newsletter

- What you want people to know = Your social media messages
- What you want people to do = Your Calls To Action (CTA)

## 2.8 Measure, Test, Review

### 2.8.1 Metrics and Measurement

- Is our social media work successful?
- Which social media channel is most successful?

#### Directly measurable goals

- Increase sales
  - Sales figures
- Improve customer retention
  - Track repeat sales
  - Length of relationship
- Improve recruitment
  - Higher number of qualifying candidates

#### Indirectly measurable goals

- Increase brand awareness
  - Track mentions, number of followers/likes
  - Search traffic
- Improve sentiment
  - Positive vs. Negative vs. Neutral mentions/interactions

## **Baseline your metrics**

Baselining is an important part of the measurement process. Baselines are the starting values for your metrics against which you compare your new values as you progress with implementing your social media strategy. Without baseline measurements, you cannot know if you are meeting your business goals or not.

## **2.8.2 Testing**

It helps you understand:

- Which social media channels are most effective?
- Whether a social media campaign is working?
- How social media compares with traditional marketing?

2 ways to test

- Using discount coupons
- Using customized URLs and Google Analytics

## **2.8.3 Review**

Why review?

- Social media changes
  - Platforms, audiences, tools
- You'll change
  - Understanding, knowledge, experience
- Markets change
  - Demographic & psychographic changes, new devices
- Your strategy must evolve

When to review?

- Takes time to establish new social media accounts
- Wait at least 6 months before a formal review
- Have patience!



Answer the questions

- Are you implementing strategy as planned?
- Is social media helping meet business goals?
- Which channels are (currently) most effective?
- Is there anything you need to change? – tools, strategy
- Other lessons learnt?

## **2.9 Complete your strategy**

### **2.9.1 Compile & Refine strategy**

- Edit strategy to include results of your discussion
- Refine any unclear sections
- Expand any sections that are too thin
- Look for ambiguities and contradictions
- Can the document be understood by anyone in your company?

### **2.9.2 Create a roadmap**

- Identify actions, dependencies, milestones and deadlines from your strategy
- Organize them using Gantt chart, timelines and calendar
- Troubleshoot and Review the roadmap

### **2.9.3 Write To-Do List**

- Relevant to the list owner
- Single, unambiguous, actionable tasks
- Indicate dependencies
- Indicate deadlines
- Indicate repeating tasks
- Who is responsible
- Prioritised

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

## 3.1 Research Methodology

This is a preliminary survey study which seeks to understand customers' aspirations, preference to connect with a brand on social media and know their expectations across the life cycle of the relationship.

## 3.2 Research Design

Research design is the arrangement, structure, and methodology of examination imagined in order to get answers to research questions. This research study is descriptive research as it studies why a consumer connects and engages as well as what he/she expects from a brand on social media.

## 3.3 Research Method

A questionnaire was used to assess the aspirations, preferences and expectations of the customer from brands on social media. The questionnaire for the survey comprises of four sections, out of which Section 1-3 are based on the three stages in the customers' engagement journey (i.e. Find, Engagement & Purchase and Loyalty) and Section 4 includes question based on respondent's demographics.

- Section 1** contains question related to consumers' social media and digital usage.
- Section 2** contains questions to gauge how consumers engage with brands, their preference for online shopping and app usage.
- Section 3** contains question to understand the loyalty factors like customer feedback, repeat usage and purchases
- Section 4** is for collecting the demographic details of the individuals filling the questionnaire which includes information related to their age and gender.

Responses to each question have been quantified and represented in charts. Additional analysis and insights from secondary sources have also been represented in this report.

## **3.4 Source of Data**

### **3.4.1 Secondary Data**

Secondary data acts as a very powerful tool for any researcher as the entire research work is completed on the basis of secondary data. Secondary data is the one which has already been gathered and analysed by some other researcher. Secondary data has been gathered from the different research papers, white papers, and different websites.

### **3.4.2 Primary Data**

Primary data are those which are newly gathered and which could be unique in character. There are many ways of collecting data, specifically for descriptive research. It includes methods such as observing method, interviewing method and collecting of data through questionnaires. For this research the data has been collected from a wide spectrum of respondents i.e., school students, graduate, post graduate, corporates through questionnaire.

A questionnaire is an arrangement of questions concentrated on a particular subject or specific field. The questionnaire can be parted into different subsets depending on the subtopics of specialized field. This technique is usually opted by researchers, private and public organizations, as well as government organizations also. In this technique, generally a questionnaire is sent to a respondent with a request to take the survey and then return back the questionnaire. The respondents are supposed to fill the questions by themselves. Presently, as we are in an age of IT, the method of gathering the data by sending the questionnaires via emails or instant messaging is most commonly utilized in various business surveys.

## **3.5 Participants**

Participants were selected using convenience sampling. A short 10 question survey was sent to respondents using email, instant messaging (e.g. WhatsApp) and social media platforms (e.g. Facebook) via computer and mobile phone. A total of 120 responses were received.

# **CHAPTER 4**

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

Customers are very hard to define, to target, to reach out and to serve. For this we will explore the consumer side of the story, their digital lifestyle and their online behaviour when it comes to engagement with the brand.

Digital marketers are obsessed with the millennials (Generation Y) and their online behaviour and their engagement with brands across life cycle at various touch points.

This age group (18–34 years) uses social media to seek information, purchase and interact with the brand. Demographic characteristics of the respondents reveal the following insights:

- More than 60% of them are up to 25 years of age
- Spanning across cities such as Delhi-NCR, Pune, Bengaluru, Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, and few others.
- 55% of our respondents are males and 45% are females
- Wide spectrum - from school students to corporates

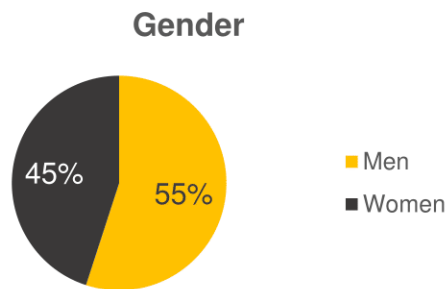


Fig. 4 Demographic - Gender

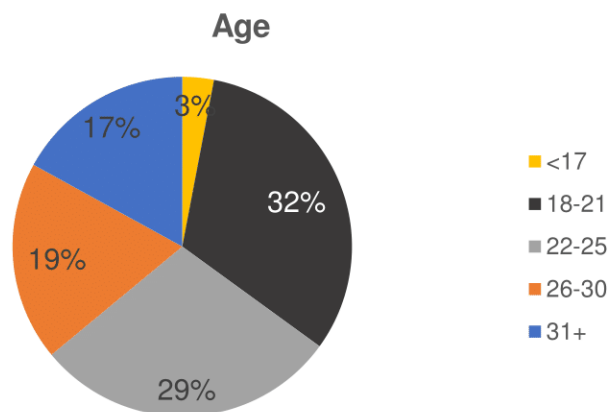
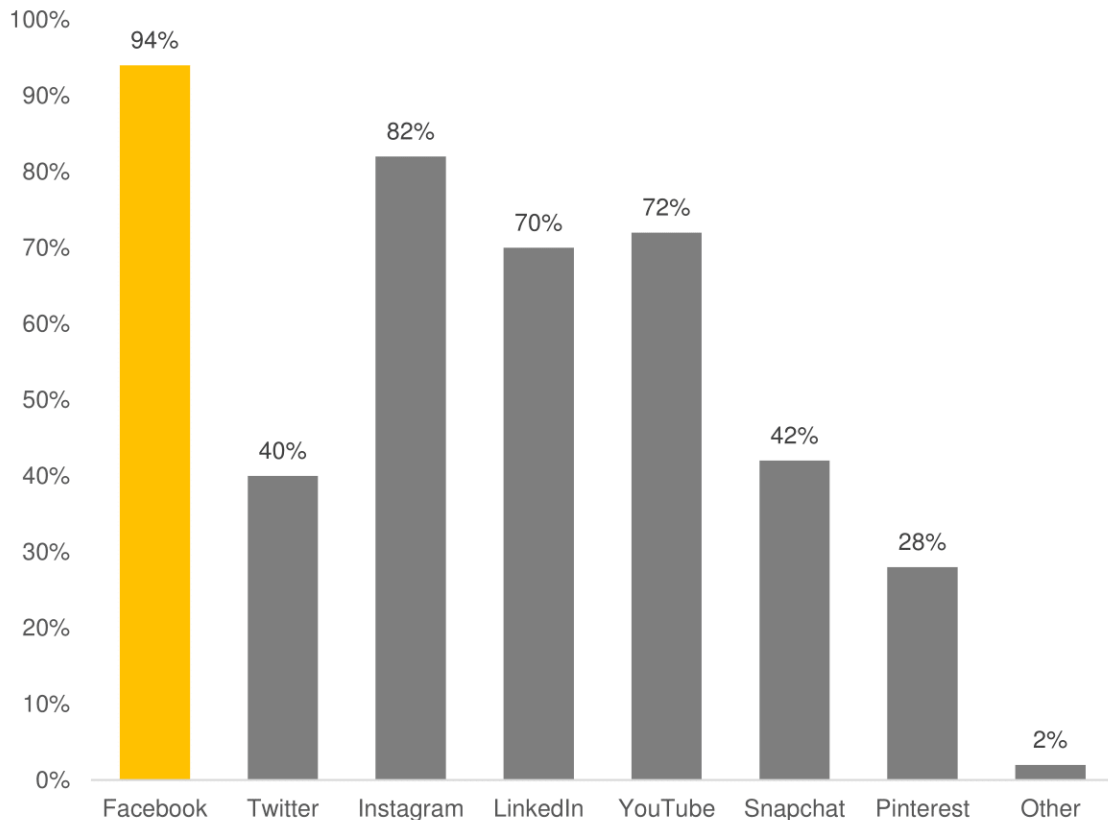


Fig. 5 Demographic - Age

## 4.1 Discovery - Preferred Social Media Platforms

Fig. 6 What platforms are you active on?



Undoubtedly, the most popular social media platform is Facebook with 94% of respondents present there. Instagram is second in popularity with an 82% usage quoted among respondents, while YouTube is used by 72% of respondents making it the third-most popular social media platform.

LinkedIn comes fourth and is gaining wide acceptance at 70%. With fast-growing Snapchat now rolling ads on its platform, it will be interesting to observe how Snapchat's monetizing works out, how brands tell their story in less than a minute and how users react to spots on their timeline, for the first time. Surprisingly, Twitter and Pinterest both have minimal usage among respondents, at 40% and 28%, respectively.

Fig. 7 Age-wise break up view for presence on social media

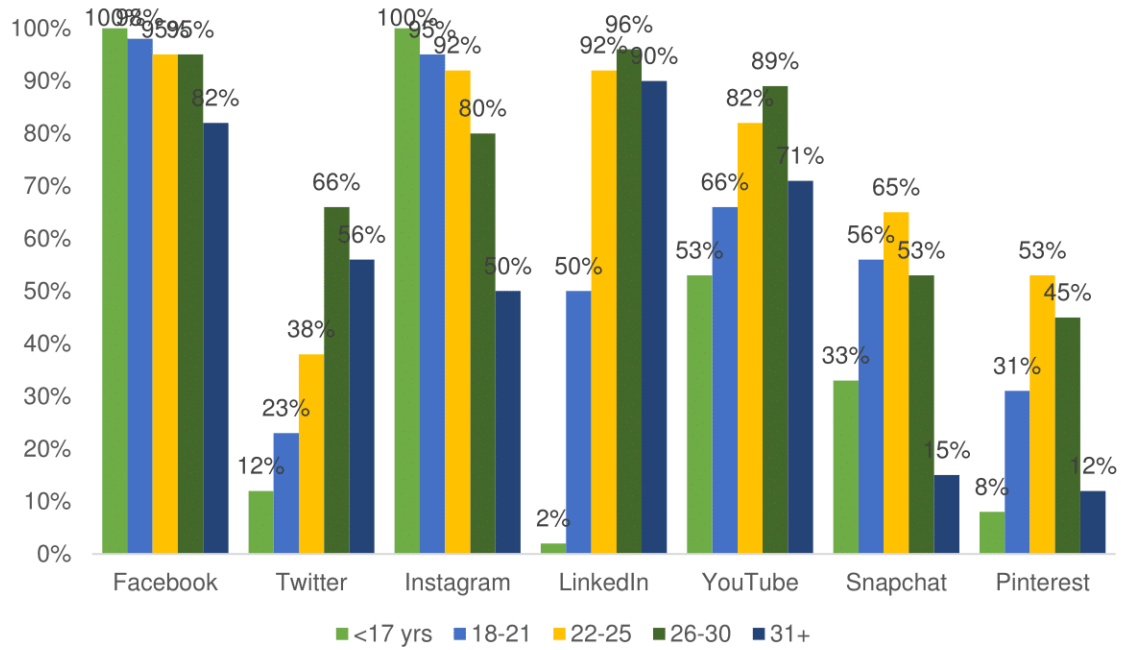
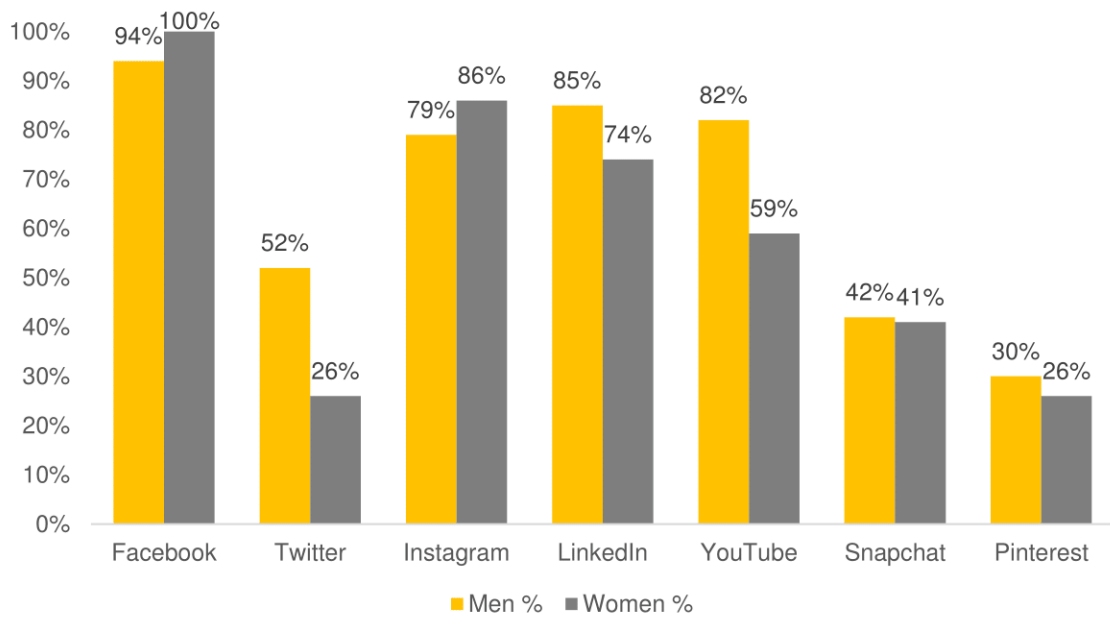


Fig. 8 Gender-wise break up view for presence on social media

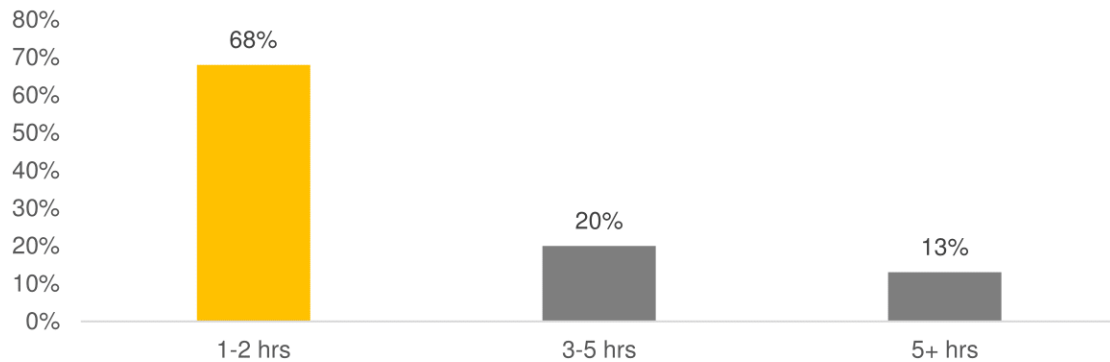


The differentiating factor between LinkedIn and Instagram is that younger respondents are more attracted to Instagram, while older respondents have the highest presence on LinkedIn. Moreover, the gender wise break up shows Instagram and Facebook has marginally higher adoption among females.



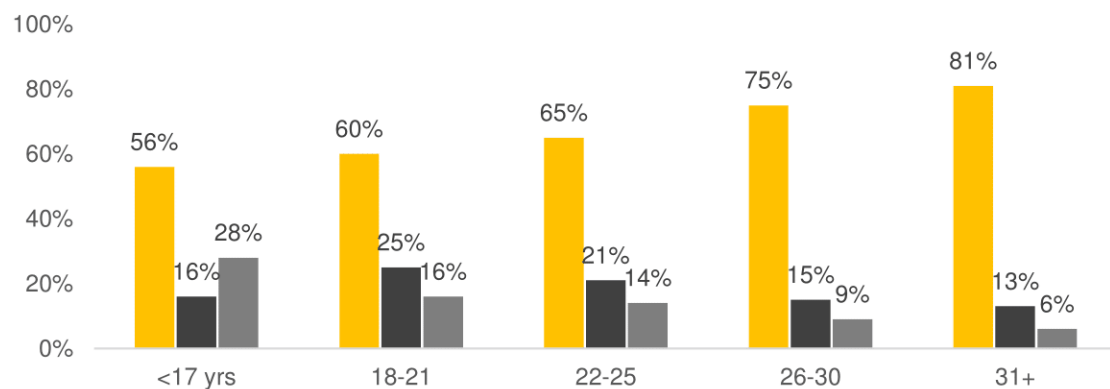
## 4.2 Social Media & Digital Usage - Time spent on Social Media

Fig. 9 How much time do you spend on social media?



The majority of respondents (68%) spend one to two hours on social media platforms per day, while only 13% spend more than five hours per day. This has been observed across several surveys globally. With increased adoption of smartphones, increasing internet penetration and emergence of new platforms, the time spent on social media seems likely to keep on increasing by few minutes every year.

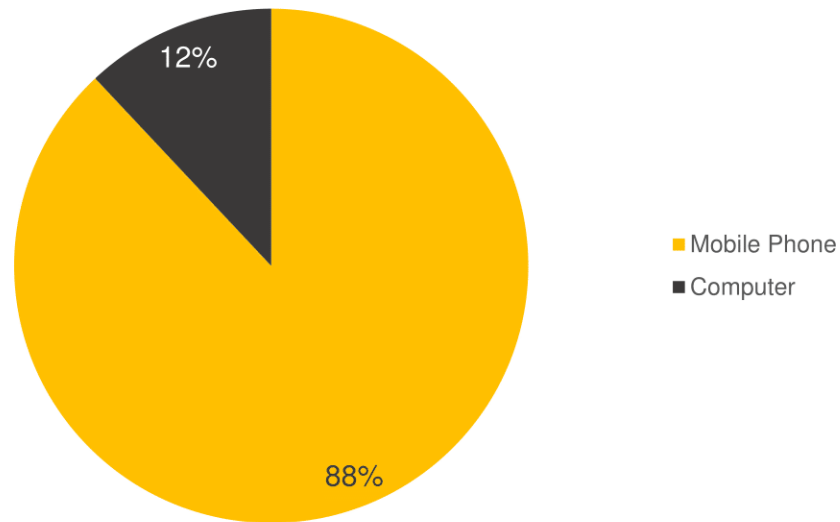
Fig. 10 Age-wise break up of time spent on social media



In general, as the age of the respondent groups tend to increases, the amount of time spent on social media seems to be decreasing.

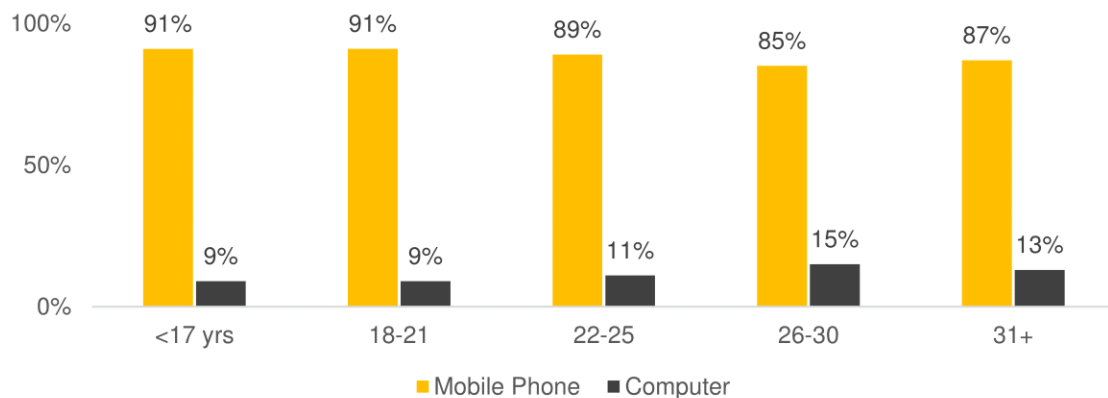
## 4.3 Social Media & Digital Usage - Accessing Social Media

Fig. 11 How do you typically access your social media accounts?



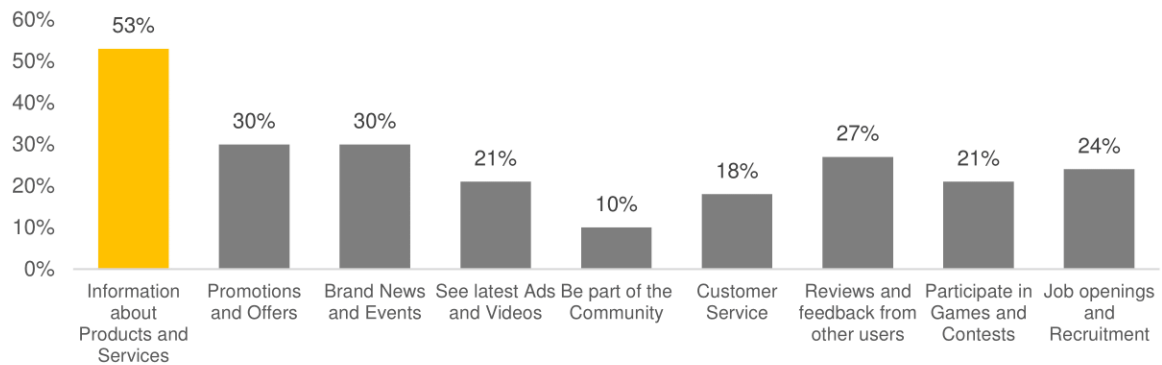
Mobile internet in India is growing significantly. An outstanding 88% of respondents access social media through their mobile phones. Mobile-centric users are accessing different content, news and platforms all from their smartphones. Brands and marketers can effectively integrate mobile in to their marketing plans.

Fig. 12 Age-wise break up for using app to access social media



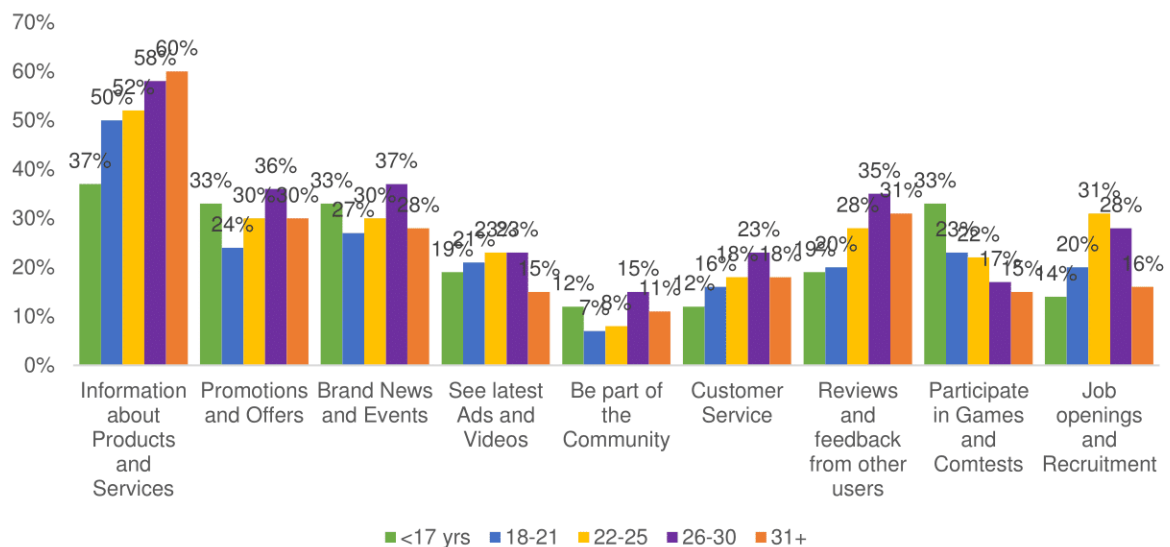
## 4.4 Social Media & Digital Usage - Affinity with Brands

Fig. 13 What do you look for when visiting company/brand accounts on social media?



More than 50% of the respondents say the primary reason for consumers to engage with brands on social media is to gather information about the brand's products/services. Discount/offers have been a pervasive trend to attract/engage fans/followers on social media.

Fig. 14 Expectations from a brand across different age groups



As the age of the customer increases, they become more interested in information about products and services and less interested in participating in games and contests

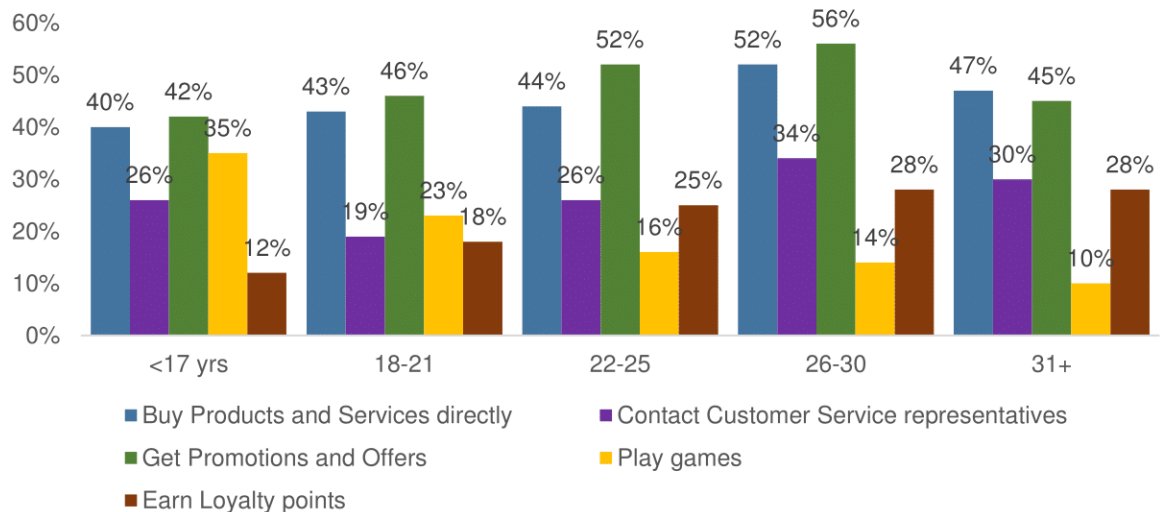
## 4.5 Engagement & Purchase - How consumers engage with brands

Fig. 15 How would you like to engage with brands social media?



Close to half of respondents would like to know more about promotions and offers from a brand. 46% want to be able to buy products and services directly. Respondents also find it important that they earn loyalty points (23%) and be able to contact customer service (26%) through social media platforms.

Fig. 16 Age-wise break up view of brand engagement on social media



Promotions and offers seem to be a favourite across age groups. Moreover, brands perceive promotions and offers as important communication hook in paid and social media campaigns. Getting in touch with customer service is consistent between 26%–34% across all age groups. Lastly, as age increases, earning loyalty points gains some importance.

## 4.6 Engagement & Purchase - Preference for online shopping

Fig. 17 What is your preferred online shopping channel?

49% respondents prefer to shop online through mobile apps, as compared to a mobile browser (32%) and a computer (19%). For e-tailers this shows how the future of mobile commerce is shaping up. App adoption has always been a primary focus for brands to gain more followers and transactions through aggressive discounting and app exclusive deals.

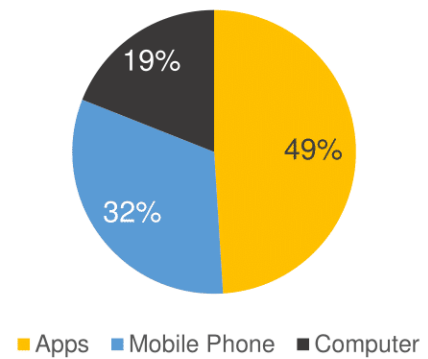


Fig. 18 Gender-wise break up for preferred online shopping channel

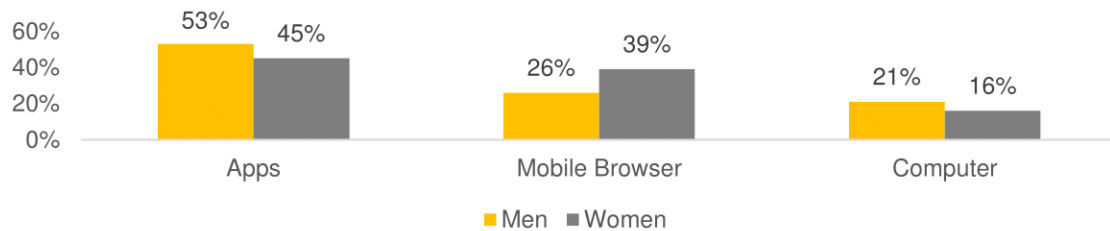
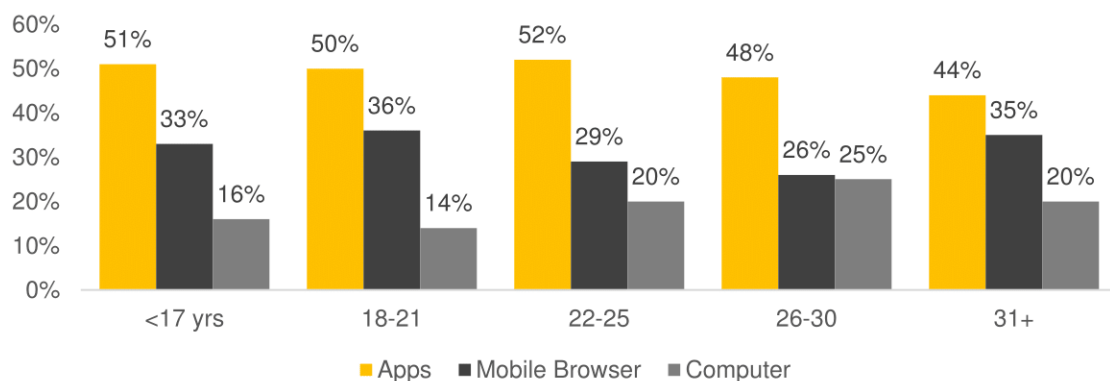


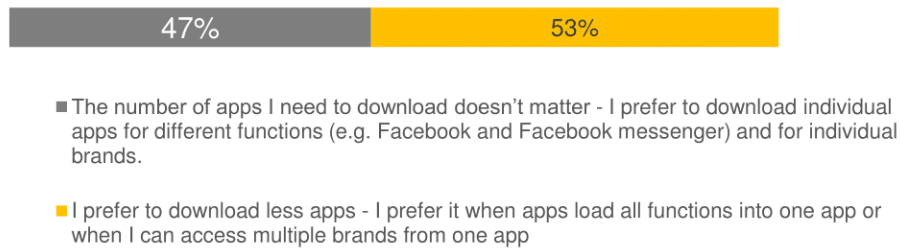
Fig. 19 Age-wise break up view for preferred online shopping channel



Both men and women prefer apps over mobile browser and desktop computer. Same is also applicable across age groups.

## 4.7 Engagement & Purchase - Types of Apps

Fig. 20 What kind of apps do you prefer to download?

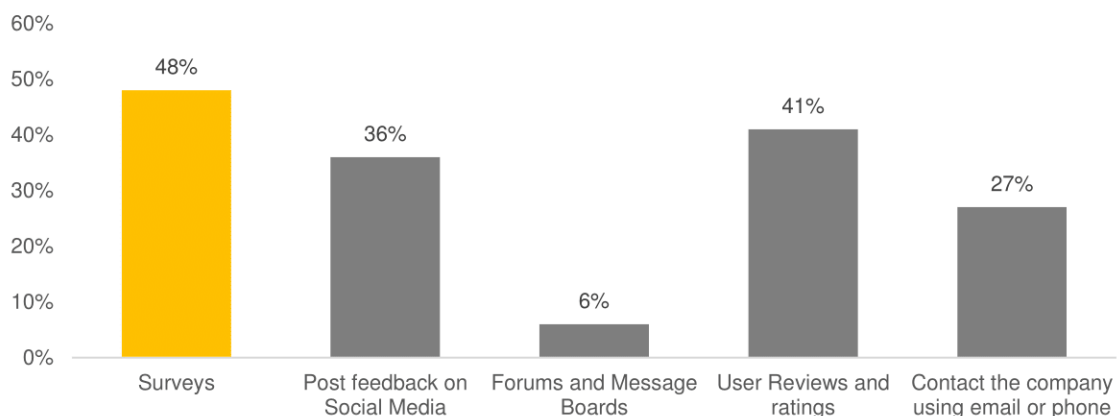


The respondents are almost evenly split between having multiple apps for different functions and a single app for all functions.

With the advances in artificial intelligence, chat bots seem poised to become a new way for brands for brands to interact and converse with customers. They may go on to replace an app if the experience can be managed well. Users who prefer downloading limited number of apps may prefer options like this and as chat bots mature.

## 4.8 Loyalty - Customer Feedback

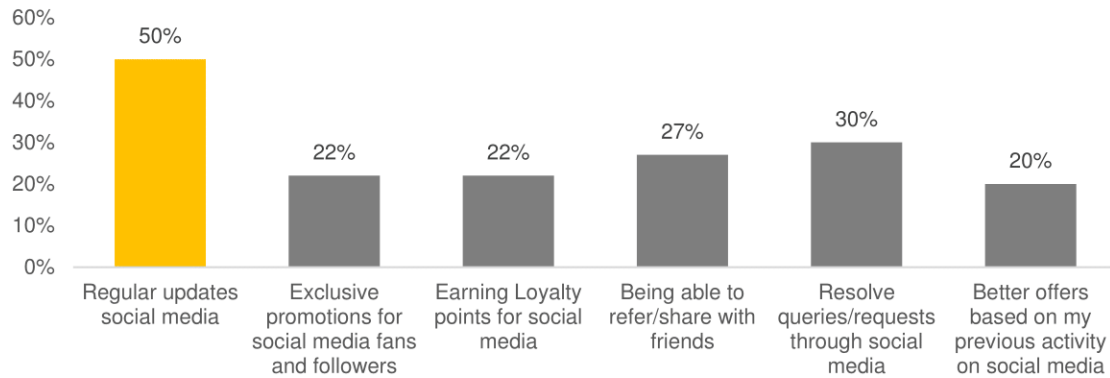
Fig. 21 What is your preferred means of providing customer feedback to a brand?



According to 48% of respondents, surveys are the best mode to provide feedback to a brand, with user reviews and ratings being the next best method at 41%. Interacting with the brand on their official social channels seems to be the third-most preferred option for users to provide feedback to the brand.

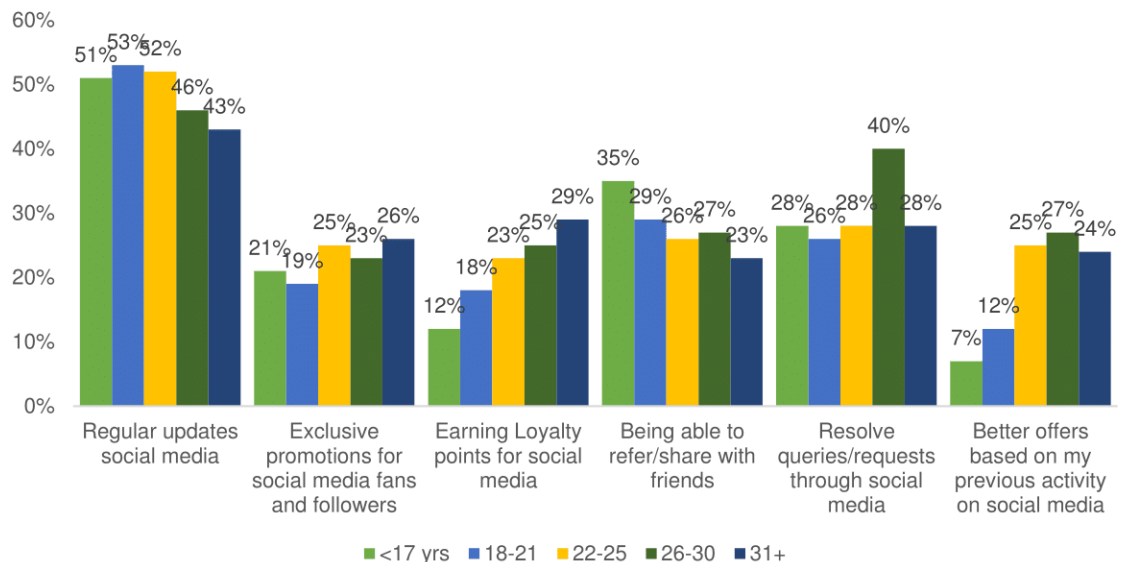
## 4.9 Loyalty - Repeat Usage and Purchases

Fig. 22 What social media activity would make you a loyal user/repeat purchases?



50% of respondents said regular updates on a brand’s social media channels is likely to increase their loyalty and encourage them to make repeat purchases, with the ability to resolve queries (30%) and refer friends (27%) being the second- and third-most important activities respectively. Men are more open than women toward exclusive promotions as an incentive for their loyalty.

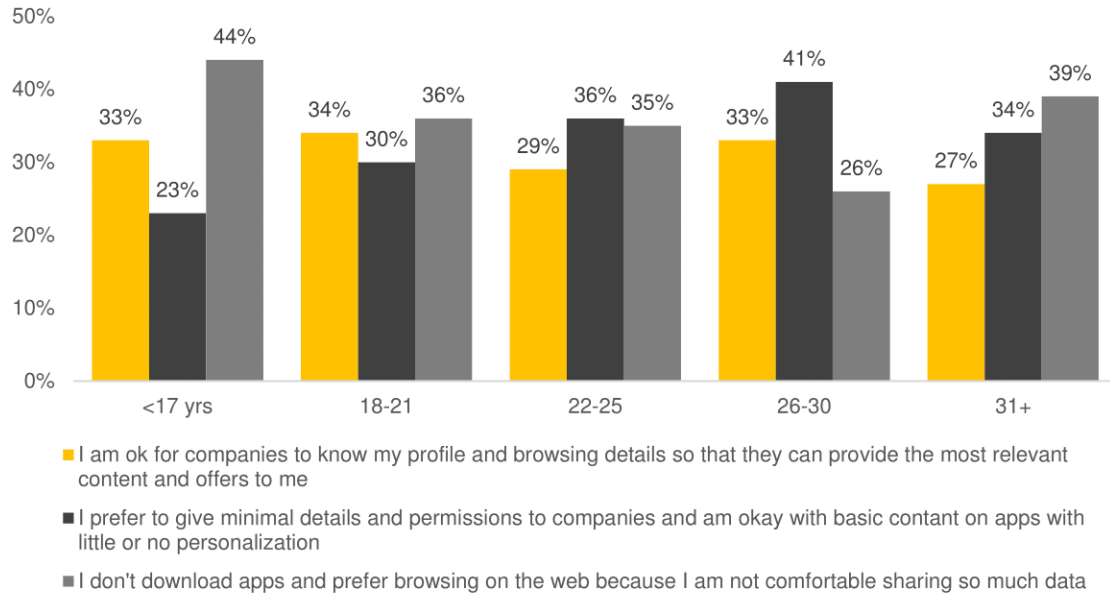
Fig. 23 Age-wise break up view across age groups which determines loyalty toward a brand



As noticed even earlier, target groups of more than 31+ are inclined toward earning of loyalty points, resolution of queries, customized offers and tailor-made offers.

## 4.10 Loyalty - Personalisation

Fig. 24 How comfortable are you with detailed profile and usage data being collected in exchange for tailored offers and personalised content and services?



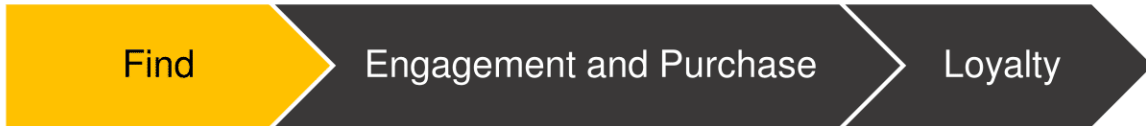
Across age groups (except 26-30), people are not comfortable sharing personal information with brands, while those between 26-30 are marginally less hesitant to share their personal details.



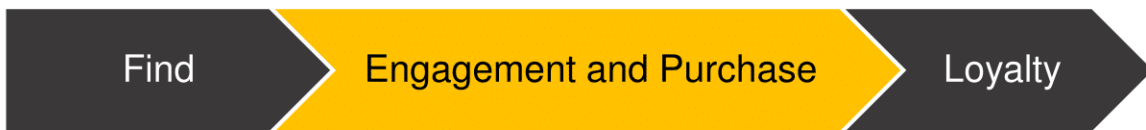
# **CHAPTER 5**

## **FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

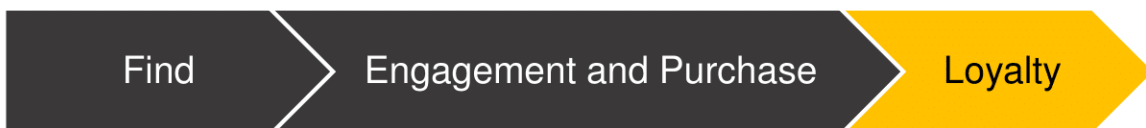
## 5.1 Findings



1. Facebook is the undisputed champion for consumers as well as marketers. 94% consumers say they are active on Facebook as opposed to any other.
2. The differentiating factor between the LinkedIn and Instagram is that younger consumers are more attracted to Instagram, while as the age range increases, they prefer LinkedIn.
3. Moreover, the gender-wise break up shows Instagram and Facebook has marginally higher adoption among females than males
4. Surprisingly, fast-growing Snapchat can now being explored by brands as 42% of respondents are active on Snapchat.
5. Pinterest and Twitter both have minimal usage among Indian consumers, at 4% and 1%, respectively.
6. Generally, all age groups spend 1–2 hours on social media per day. However, the amount of time spent on social media seems to decrease as the age of the respondent groups increases.
7. A whopping 88% prefer apps to access social media from their mobile phone and that percentage tends to gradually increase for respondents aged 25 and below.
8. As the age of the respondents' increases, they become more interested in information about products and services and less interested in participating in games and contests.



1. Promotions and offers seem to be a favourite across all age groups.
2. Getting in touch with customer service on social media also seems to be a consistent choice across all age groups.
3. Consumers aged more than 31 years are inclined toward earning Loyalty points. Lastly, as age increases, earning loyalty points tends to gain some importance.
4. Both men and women prefer apps over mobile browser and desktop computer. This is also applicable across gender and age.



1. Almost 50% of the respondents consider surveys as the best mode to provide feedback to a brand.
2. 50% of respondents said regular updates on a brand's social media channel will increase their loyalty and encourage them to make repeat purchases.
3. Respondents across most age ranges are not comfortable with sharing their personal information with brands on social media; however, the age group between 26 and 30 is marginally less hesitant to do so.

## 5.2 Recommendations

- Based on responses received from the consumers, brands will be able to understand what kind of questions they should be asking themselves which will help them understand whether their Digital and SMM strategies need to be modified or optimized.
- Brands should choose 1-2 key social network based on the demographics and psychographics of their target audience and pick the one that has the closest match.
- Both brands and customers agree that regular engagement and customer servicing on social media are the best ways to drive engagement and conversion. Although brands pay more attention to personalization and exclusive promotions, they should shift their focus on word of mouth referrals from reference groups as these are deemed to be the top 2 drivers as far as customers are concerned.
- With cheaper mobile devices, internet penetration on the rise, there will definitely be a significant increase in the number of people accessing the internet via their mobiles. Brands that do not have a mobile presence may want to leverage this opportunity and introduce mobile-friendly sites and apps to reach and capture new audiences.
- With the advent of IOT technology, it's best to strategize a multi-device approach that connects with customers across various online and offline touchpoints.

## CONCLUSION

A brand is the customers' perspective about a company and its imaginary personality. To churn profit, fuel growth and staying afloat is virtually impossible without the correct marketing strategies. Therefore, the only innovative solution to reach a heterogeneous audience in digital market is through 'Social Media Marketing'. With 600+ registered accounts on twitter and with daily over 550 million active users on Facebook strengthen the role of social media in online marketing.

To express their brand story, company has got content, community and creativity. And to win over the market and reach out to potential customers. The channel of social media not only provides more exposure to the brand, but also builds a strong connect with the customers. Humans buy from humans. Trust and reliability plays a vital role in this. Personalisation builds emotional connect. Enhanced and focused social media strategies can impactfully work for your brand and make it intensify online.

In this race to achievement, marketers are trapped in the loop of budget sanction, execution of campaigns and prove the ROI. However, in the need to gain customer agreement and satisfaction, it's important for the brand marketer to ask about his/her brand's digital journey, its existence and future perspective. In the end, the balls drops down at the customer. To cater to their needs, we need to analyse their behaviour and listen to them to ensure a change in their buying habits. It is effective for a marketer to automate monitoring and social listening to the next set of challenges.

Deeper analysis not only makes you understand the customer, however it also brings about a growth in the brand technology and develops maturity. Focus your strength and investment to make the digital marketing efforts effective.

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# ANNEXURE

## A Customer's Perspective towards Brand Engagement on Social Media

This survey is conducted as a part of my dissertation to understand the customer's perspective towards engagement with the brands on social media. The questionnaire would take about 5 minutes to complete and your responses will remain strictly anonymous.

\* Required

### Find

---

#### 1. What platforms are you active on? \*

*Check all that apply.*

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Snapchat
- Pinterest
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. How much time do you spend on social media? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- 1-2 hrs
- 3-5 hrs
- 5+ hrs

#### 3. How do you typically access your social media accounts? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Mobile Phone
- Computer



**4. What do you look for when visiting company/brand accounts on social media? \***

*Check all that apply.*

- Information about Products and Services
- Promotions and Offers
- Brand News and Events
- See latest Ads and Videos
- Be part of the Community
- Customer Service
- Reviews and feedback from other users
- Participate in Games and Contests
- Job openings and Recruitment

## Engagement & Purchases

---

**5. How would you like to engage with brands social media? \***

*Check all that apply.*

- Buy Products and Services directly
- Contact Customer Service representatives
- Get Promotions and Offers
- Play games
- Earn Loyalty points

**6. What is your preferred online shopping channel? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Apps
- Mobile Phone
- Computer

**7. What kind of apps do you prefer to download? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- The number of apps I need to download doesn't matter - I prefer to download individual apps for different functions (e.g. Facebook and Facebook messenger) and for individual brands
- I prefer to download less apps - I prefer it when apps load all functions into one app or when I can access multiple brands from one app.

## Loyalty

---

**8. What is your preferred means of providing customer feedback to a brand? \***

*Check all that apply.*

- Surveys
- Post feedback on Social Media
- Forums and Message Boards
- User Reviews and ratings
- Contact the company using email or phone

**9. What social media activity would make you a loyal user/repeat purchases? \***

*Check all that apply.*

- Regular updates on social media
- Exclusive promotions for Social Media fans and followers
- Earning Loyalty points for social media
- Being able to refer or share with friends
- Resolve queries/ requests through Social Media
- Better offers based on my previous activity on Social Media

**10. How comfortable are you with detailed profile and usage data being collected in exchange for tailored offers and personalized content and services? \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- I am ok for companies to know my profile and browsing details so that they can provide the most relevant content and offers to me
- I prefer to give minimal details and permissions to companies and I am okay with basic content on apps with little or no personalization
- I don't download apps and prefer browsing on the web because I am not comfortable sharing so much data

## Demographics

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**11. Gender \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- Men
- Women

**12. Age \***

*Mark only one oval.*

- <17 yrs
- 18-21
- 22-25
- 26-30
- 31+