

Electronic Marketing: A Brief Description Of The Consumer's Benefits

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I. ABSTRACT

Innovation in the high-tech sector is contributing a lot in shaping the new generation of modernity. Internet has come to our attention as a key factor in the mix that is changing our lives for better. Internet is so essential to the extent that all marketing principles and strategies had to be reviewed, adapted and applied to the internet environment, and that was the introduction of "Electronic Marketing" as we know it today.

This article is meant to assert the benefits that customers usually get from the use of Electronic Marketing. Many studies have been conducted, on how companies and organizations should apply E-marketing principles to maximize their revenues, gain more customers, build customer relations, increase their brand awareness and loyalty etc. What about the consumer's side? How does he benefit from this, and at what level he enjoys being part of it?

In this article, we talked largely about the benefits one can get from the use of Electronic Marketing such as, the availability of information, inexistent time constraint, enhancing brand loyalty, easy and cheaper way of shopping, a wide range of products and services to choose from, freedom of the buyer, no geographical barriers, saving time and resources, E-shopping, home delivery, cash on delivery or other payment methods, etc.

The benefits of using electronic marketing are many, but this descriptive article, cite just some of them, according to the literature review, and the writer's judgment.

II. INTRODUCTION

It has been a human routine, to adapt to the surrounding environment by creating,



developing, and implementing ideas that are meant to make life a lot easier, comfortable Internet has been widely used all over the world, and it is also being applied in different fields including Marketing. With the use of Internet, the marketing concepts were brought into an online environment, and the concepts of E-marketing were initiated.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Philip Kotler, “Marketing is the art and science of identifying, creating and delivering customer value to satisfy the customers’ needs and wants” (Kotler, 2008). While in his other book co-authored with Garry Armstrong, called “*principles of Marketing*”, they argue that “Electronic Marketing is all about selling and promoting products and services over the internet”. (Kotler & Garry, 2004).

According to Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller in their book called, “*Marketing Management*” Electronic Marketing is defined as the application of marketing strategies over the internet. (Kotler & Keller, 2009)

According to Dave Chaffey, in his book called, “*Internet Marketing: Strategy, Implementation and Practice*” He defines Electronic marketing as realizing marketing objectives through the use of digital technologies. (Dave, 2006).

According to Peter Fisk in his book, “*Marketing genius*”, Electronic marketing is a very important subset of general marketing

and better.

Electronic Marketing has a lot of benefits for the marketers, companies, and organizations that use it, but also the buyers benefit from it in many ways. Our attention is not on the marketers, but on buyers. This article is meant to assert the benefits customers usually get from the use of E-marketing.

as we know it, since the marketing concepts are almost the same except the fact that for E-marketing, those concepts are applied using internet and digital technologies (Fisk, 2006).

Fillis Johnson and B.Wagner in their article entitled “*Factors impacting on e-business adoption and development in the smaller firms*” argue that internet has been facilitating marketing procedures, and companies are using it to promote products and services. (Fillis & Wagner, 2004).

Luckily, the internet is being widely used across the world, and proving to be very efficient since it is fulfilling what is expected from it: “facilitating communication and allowing easy access and sharing of information”.

Electronic Marketing has been a success story since its introduction due to many benefits that comes along with its implementation, and many businesses across the world are adapting to this new tool that is designed to drive success to their organizations with relatively very low costs. The evolution and use of Electronic Marketing strategies differ from countries to



others, depending on many factors such as the economy, evolution and use of technology, people's awareness and willingness, Education, , industrial development, commitment, openness to new technology, availability and affordability of electronic devices, etc.

According to Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong in their book called "*Principles of Management 15th edition*" they argue that the economy is thought nowadays, and that is the reason why it is very essential for companies that wish to succeed to have a very tactical strategy of acquiring new customers (which increases sales and profits), and E-marketing is proven to be very efficient and effective for this situation. (Kotler & Gary, 2014).

It is with no doubt that E-marketing is revolutionizing the marketing procedures, and providing the best results compared to the traditional way of marketing products and services.

III.1 E-MARKETING TOOLS

III.1.1 SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO) AND A WEBSITE

According to Rand Fishkin and Thomas Hogenhaven in their book called "*Inbound Marketing and small SEO: insights from the MOZ blog*", they argue that the marketing channels shall be used efficiently to get attention of the customers. Therefore, it is essential to design E-marketing channels in a way that triggers the attention of the customers. (Rand & Thomas, 2013).

Charles Trepper in his book about "*E-commerce strategies*" argues that for any type of business to be competitive in today's new era of technology, it is mandatory to have a web presence; otherwise, it will be hard to prosper. (Trapper, 2000)

For the online marketing initiative to succeed, it requires a strategic plan. According to J.P. Richardson in his book called " *SEO:2016: Search engine optimization, internet marketing strategies & content marketing*", he says that search engine optimization is very essential if a company wish to see good results from their online marketing activities. (Richardson, 2016).

According to a Forrester Research, Search engine optimization consists of ensuring that the company's website appears among the top results returned by the search engine. (Forrester Research, 2003).

Search engine Optimization is said to be the process that is being used, to maximize the visitors of a given website by ensuring that it appears on the top results provided by a Search engine. (Richardson, 2016).

When the SEO is efficient, the number of web visitor's increases, which brings more traffic, increases of sales, and of course increases revenues.

According to Tim Ash, Rich Page, and Maura Ginty in their book called "*Landing page optimization: the definitive guide to testing and turning for conversions*", they argues that the landing page which is the



first page that the viewer sees while visiting a website, shall contain useful and important information, but it should also be designed in a way that interact with the viewer's emotions and feelings.(Tim et al, 2012). The web design is so important here, since the appearance of a website in the eyes of the viewer plays an important role in getting him interested.

Benefits of using Search engine Maximization includes, Easiest way of connecting with customers, Wide range of information, Reliability, Effectiveness, driving traffic to the company's websites etc.

III.1.2 BANNER ADVERTISING

Have you ever tried to look up something online using one of many search engines and on the result page, you notice a banner advertising another product or service that is not necessarily related to your query?

Banners are graphical ads that are meant to attract and direct visitors to the website of the advertiser. This where comes Pay Per Click (PPC) banners whereby, the advertiser has to pay a certain fee, when the viewer clicks on the banner.

III.1.3 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

According to Dan Zarrella in his book, "*the Social Media Marketing*", he argues that big brands should use Electronic Marketing to keep their big names, but also small and medium business should use it if they want to build big names for themselves. (Dan, 2010).

Social media is becoming very efficient as a way of marketing products and services. As long as we have access to the internet, and of course a laptop, a smart phone, a desktop, a tablet or any other digital tool, a company can connect with the customers with relatively very low costs. Social media includes Facebook, Linked-In, Instagram, YouTube, etc.

According to Kathryn Rose and Rubin Ted in their book called "*return on relationship*", they argue that there is a direct correlation between the use of social media and the brand awareness, which creates customers loyalty, and the result is the increase of sales and profits. (Kathryn & Rubin, 2013).

Social media marketing opens a gate for viral marketing: In his magazine about *web Marketing*, Dr Ralph Wilson defines viral marketing as the willingness of people to freely share the information with others, so that the message can reach a broad number of individuals in a very short time. (Wilson, 2002).

On Facebook for example, someone can share any information with his friends, family and members of different groups. Some social Medias offer the options of paying certain fee so that the advertised products and services can be available and visible to different peoples in a very short time.

III.1.4 EMAIL MARKETING

According to Forrester research, E-mail marketing consists of e-mailing potential

clients and target audience, and share valuable information. (Forrester research, 2003).

Email marketing is another form of marketing that consists of adding customers to the mailing list with prior consent or selected randomly, whereby they constantly receive emails about the promoted products and services.

This happens in many ways, either the customer himself subscribe and accept to receive regular emails, known as opt-in, while opt-out emails, are sent randomly as spams or junk mails in the mail box.

III.1.5 CONTENT MARKETING

Content Marketing consists of sharing information using videos, posts on the social media, chat rooms and blogs etc. it consist of creating awareness of the products and services offered, and persuade viewers to become buyers by showing them how they might benefit from using them. Most of the people like to see how a product works before taking any decision. Content advertising, plays with their phycology, and shows them how the product or service they are looking at in the video is probably the

best they can ever find on the market. It is also about connecting a given brand to the daily lives of buyers, potential, and loyal customers.

III.1.6 MOBILE MARKETING

People are using smartphones more than ever before. Smartphones are helping different consumers to access information, and communicate much more easily and efficiently.

According to Sam Del Rowe, in his article titled *"It's a fast-paced, Mobile first world, and Marketers need to deliver something of value to customers and prospects"* he argues that the marketers should prioritize the mobile marketing, and other tools like a laptop or desktop should follow. And if they are not prioritizing it, he says that they are "lagging behind" due to its instant, easy sharing and access of information. (Sam, 2016)

Nowadays, we can use our smartphones to do each and everything that we used to do with laptops in the past. In addition to that, someone can access the web anytime, and anywhere, which make it super easy and instant to access information.

III.2 4PS OF MARKETING MIX IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT





Source: "Principles of Marketing" book by Phillip Kotler & Gary Armstrong.

The image above shows us the 4ps of the marketing mix, Product, Price, Promotion, and Place. The following part asserts how they fit within an online environment.

Product

In the past years, when a buyer felt the need of buying a certain product, he had to walk into different stores to find the ones that best fit with his requirements, look for information, process that information, evaluate alternatives by looking for substitute products, and make a purchasing decision.

Nowadays, that process has been simplified, and no longer painful, costly and time consuming as it used to be. Consumer can get all the details and information that they are looking for by searching it on the internet. By consulting the internet, the buyer can locate the best products and services provider, in the local stores, national level or even internationally. He can also easily get the information about the quality of the products, prices, designs and packaging, customer services etc. this process used to take very long, but with the use of E-marketing, the buyer can get all the information he is looking for in a very short period of time.

Price

The price has always been an important factor while making buying decisions. With E-marketing, the buyer can easily get the

information about the prices of the products and services he is looking for.

Place

The third element of marketing mix is known as place or placement. For the traditional marketing, it used to be a system of physical locations, stores, inventory, distribution channels, etc.

Companies shall focus on the web presence which can replace the physical placement. This web presence requires a combination of many elements of E-marketing such as websites, Search engine optimization, social media, mobile marketing etc.

Promotion

Promotion that is generally made via E-marketing is meant to catch the buyer's attention, and get him to want to know more of the promoted products and services. Promoting products and services includes advertising, sales force, sales promotion, publicity etc. all of this were initially done through the traditional way of doing marketing, but for the online presence, all this aspects have to be adjusted to fit within the online environment.

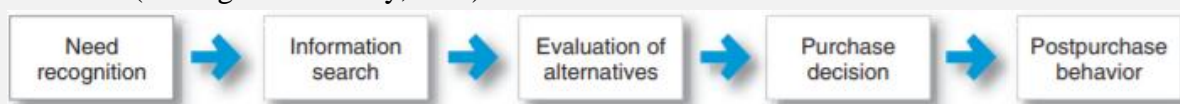
If the promotion is successful enough, it might result into an increase of sales volume, which is best for the company, and the buyers who benefited by getting what they wanted effortlessly, with relatively very low costs.

III.3 CONSUMER BUYING PROCESS IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

According to Robert Lavidge and Gary Steiner, in their theory about the *Hierarchy of Effects model*, they argue that necessarily, a customer has to go through different steps from the time of viewing the advert to the purchasing decision. Those steps are awareness, knowledge, liking preference and purchase. (Lavidge & Garry, 1961). We

won't go through all these stages, but our focus is just on the purchasing process and how it interacts with the online environment.

According to Phillip Kotler and Gary Armstrong, in their book "*principles of Marketing 15th edition*", a buyer goes through the following 5 stages while buying products. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012)



Source: "*Principles of Marketing, 15th edition*" book by Phillip Kotler & Gary Armstrong.

Need recognition

Normally the consumer buying behavior starts with the need recognition. Here the buyer feels the needs and wants of having a certain product or services based on what he believes, he will benefit from possessing or using it. The companies have understood this and have created many ways of convincing buyers and consumers that they probably need their products and services.

E-marketing happens to be one of many ways different companies use to get the buyers' attention. Through E-marketing, marketers have developed an easy and efficient way of convincing buyers that they need to buy advertised products and services.

This is done by making the information widely available, describing how it fits with the buyer's needs and wants, by creating content videos showing how others enjoy

using it, by persuading them that they won't regret it if they buy it, giving out warranties, customers' relations and sales agents to constantly interact with the buyers, creating websites, using social medias, sending emails and SMS, providing other benefits such as, sales, promotions and discounts, etc. E-Marketing is good at creating the needs and wants in the minds of the buyers.

Information Search

Information search has never been this easier. Before the introduction of e-marketing, a buyer had to recognize the need of buying a product and service, and had to visit different retailers, wholesalers, or ask friends and family for information. Not forgetting that the buyer also had an option of getting the information through TV, radio, newspapers, and catalogues and magazines advertisements.



Nowadays, thanks to E-marketing, a buyer can just use internet to get the information he needs. Most of the times this is done by looking for the information through the search engine (google, yahoo, ask etc), then visiting different websites, where he can get the details about the products he is looking for, the prices, discounts, offers, the manufacturer and suppliers contacts, he can ask questions and get responses, he can see how the products work on YouTube, or on social media, he can view other people comments and ratings etc.

Evaluation of alternatives

The current business environment is very competitive, and it's hard to find companies with absolute monopoly. Substitute products are widely available, sometimes even cheaper from different manufacturers.

E-marketing makes the process of comparing different products easier for the buyer. He can get the information from different sellers, evaluate the information, compare prices and then decide which one is best suitable to fulfill his needs and wants.

Purchasing decision

After going through the stages described above, the buyer can decide to purchase the products he believes will fulfill his needs and wants. The buyers used to walk into the stores, to get the products they needed, but things have changed.

With the use of E-marketing, the buyer has an option of E-shopping. A buyer can choose a product he wants, pay for it,

through online payment systems (debit, credit cards, net banking etc, or choose the cash on delivery option), then wait for his products to be delivered at his home. In this case, he is no longer limited to buy from the local stores; he can buy his products from the seller of his choice worldwide.

Post purchase evaluation

After the process of buying a product, the buyer gets the experience of using it. He can tell if he bought the right product that is good enough to satisfy his needs and wants, or if he bought the wrong products. E-shopping provides a possibility of returning the products once the buyer is not satisfied by the quality, or if the products are damaged, or incomplete.

With e-marketing, the buyer can share his experiences with others by rating the bought products, by leaving comments, by sharing and recommending the products to others, etc

IV. CONSUMER'S BENEFITS FROM THE USE OF E-MARKETING

According to Hinson and Sorensen, they argue that E-marketing offers different benefits, for both the customers and sellers. Those benefits include, easy and quick sharing of information, easy selecting and purchasing products and services, offering of customer value, easy and quick access to information, wide range of audience and target markets, time saving, no geographical



barriers, 24/7 availability, etc. (Hinson & Sorensen, 2006)

The following are some of the benefits the buyer's gets from the use of E-marketing:

- *Easy access to information*

By using E-Marketing, provided information reach a broad number of consumers as long as they have access to the internet. The buyer can get all the information regarding a product or service easily by just searching it using internet. It's fast, instant, and accurate. A typical example here is a website. A company's website can be viewed all over the world by anyone who wishes too, and in such case, any information posted will be quickly seen by the viewers.

Another example here is the use of social media. Any one that wants to spread quickly any given information with very low cost and efforts should turn to the use of social media. Facebook, linked-in, and whatsapp, Snapchat, Instagram etc are some practical examples.

According to the statistics provided by www.statista.com, the number of active Facebook users have reached 1.71 billion worldwide.(statista.com, 2016). Imagine a company that wants to share some information with potential customers, and then creates a Facebook page, and share it with their potential clients on social media. Surely that page will not get 1.71 billion views, but at least many people across the globe, will be aware of the information.

- *Electronic Marketing is costs effective*

An effectively planned E-marketing strategy is far less inexpensive compared to the traditional marketing strategies such as radio, TV advertising, Newspapers, Magazines, Billboards, etc. With nearly insignificant cost, a company can communicate and connect with customers about their respective product and services using internet and digital channels. On the other hand, the buyers get all the information that they are looking for with no cost. All it takes is just using the internet, and get all the information they is looking for.

- *24 hours availability*

We are convinced that a 24/7 marketing opportunity is a good way of ensuring this long term connection with loyal customers. Consumers can connect and interact with the products and service providers any time they want too, and transactions can be made in convenient time. A consumer can sit in his house, and just by using internet, he can get all the information he is looking for on a given product or service. He can make purchasing decision, buy and pay for without moving out of his house, and wait for his products to be delivered right at his front door with relatively low costs. All of this can be done anytime of the day, anywhere, as long as internet is available, and they have time to use it.

- *No time constraint.*



The good thing about E-marketing is that in fact, there is no time constraint. A customer can visit the website, read emails, search for information, compare products, make transactions, track bought products etc whenever he wish too, depending on his availability, 24 hours a day any day. There is no rushing or any pressure of any kind and the consumer choses products and services, and buys when he wants too.

- *Buyers are connected to sellers*

According to Jerry Hart in his book called “*blueprint for success: eMarketing & winning the Internet game*”, he argue that E-marketing is becoming the most popular option that companies are adopting to attract, keeping and developing strong customer’s relations. (Jerry, 2006).

According to Marsha Collier in her book called “*the ultimate guide to online customer services guide: how to connect with your customers to sell more*”, she argues that online marketing is one of many ways that can be used to ensure long term loyal customers. (Marsha, 2011).

E-marketing creates brand awareness, which allows buyers to get to know their products and services provider, connect with them, communicate, bargain, etc. the constant communication and interaction between the company and the customer create loyalty over time, since the customer feels valued, and updated about their favourite products and services.

- *Freedom of the consumer:*

The buyer has the freedom of choosing which product to buy, and when to buy it. There is no pressure of any kind on him; he can buy whenever he wants too. It is not like visiting stores, where the sales agents are pressuring them to buy certain products. The buyer buys when he feels that he wants to buy.

- *Substitute products evaluation.*

This comes along with brand comparison, where the consumer can eventually compare one product to another to see which one fits properly with his personal needs and wants.

The buyer is no longer stuck with his initial brand. He gets a chance to see what other companies can really offer, and he gets the freedom of choosing which one he wants.

Many consumers use a certain type of products because they don’t know what is really out there. E-marketing breach that gap, and the customers get information from different companies, and the choice of staying loyal to his initial brand or try other substitute brands is a benefit he gets from the use of E-Marketing.

- *Easy way of making transactions.*

Back in the days, one of the primarily objectives of marketing was driving sales. Marketing was there so that the companies sell more and more.

Nowadays things have changed, thanks to the internet. After getting all the information we need, we can now buy products online. All the type of products we used to find in



the stores can now be bought through e-shopping.

With e-shopping, a buyer can get the information he needs, compare products and evaluate alternatives, buy any products of his choice, pay using his bank cards, Pay time, or use the option of Cash on delivery, and he can do all of that in his convenient time. With e-shopping, the discounts, promotions, are also applied. It is Just like the normal way of shopping except the fact that the buyer doesn't walk in the retailer's store. He can buy products from different corners of his country, and internationally, pay and get his products delivered at his home.

- *No geographical barriers and boundaries.*

Nowadays, it doesn't require someone to drive long distances, or take the bus to visit a store. With E-marketing, you can locate where your product supplier is at, buy the products you want, and wait for them to be delivered at your house. The seller can be in the same region, same country or even internationally, this doesn't stop the buyer since the transactions are secured, and he can get his products delivered within few days after making the transactions.

- *Buyers save time.*

It used to take time, a lot of it for someone to leave his home and go shopping. Before buying, a buyer had to take time, walk around, view different products, and decide which ones he wants to buy. Nowadays, it doesn't take that much time to buy a product

online. A buyer can do all of that, without moving out of his house, and he can do that anytime he wants too.

Therefore, the effective use of E-Marketing saves a lot of time that was initially spent shopping in different stores.

V. CONCLUSION

Electronic Marketing has been a success so far, for companies, marketers, retailers, wholesalers, customers, buyers etc. As we have seen above, E-marketing is simply the application of marketing concepts over the internet. Internet is the key player in this situation, and without it, nothing would have been successful.

Thanks to the improvements in technology, many people across the world have access to internet, which make it easier for the marketers to market their products through E-marketing channels. Nowadays you can buy and sell without even moving out of your home, and through e-marketing, the painful process that buyers used to go through while buying products and services have been simplified.

E-marketing offers many benefits to the buyers including the fact that they can easily access the information they are looking for 24/7, costless information, long term loyalty, brand awareness, with no time constraint, no geographical barriers, prices comparison, evaluate alternatives, freedom of choosing brands, use E-shopping, different payment modes, home delivery, etc.



The benefits are too many for the buyers but in this article we discussed a few and most important of them.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE WORK PROPOSAL

This work is limited to the ideas from different books, journals, websites and .

VII. CITATION

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personal ideas of the author. Therefore, this make it a descriptive and purely theoretical based article, and further researches can be carried out by other researchers, by conducting primarily research and using statistical analysis and interpretation to create a research based version of this article

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