

SOCIAL MEDIA: A SUCCESSFUL TOOL OF BRAND AWARENESS

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ABSTRACT

Whenever a person starts a business whether offline or online, the first thing which comes into his mind is the success of that business. The success and recognition of the business brand are the most crucial points which must be kept in mind while making a business plan. Today no one can deny the role of social media marketing to set and market throughout the globe. Social media is getting popular these days to promote various brands. The World is full of new media and digital communication technologies. There are many ways to promote the brand with the help of social media. The impact of promotion through social media is immense and gives a combination of speed and relevance. Brand awareness is one of the important factors which boost up the sales ratio of the product of the company. The present paper is an attempt to find out the purpose and benefits of using social media in brand awareness. The paper also highlights some important social media networks and gives a glimpse of the hindrances of the same.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Brand, Awareness, Communication, Network

INTRODUCTION

Social Media, today, is among the 'best opportunities available' to a brand for connecting with prospective consumers. Social media is the medium to socialize. It has a strong impact on the purchasing process of a consumer. The traditional buying process of a consumer includes search detail information of a brand/ product, and after getting detailed information they consider many brands and then from those brands they evaluate a few brands and in the end, the final decisions are taken according to his/her needs.

Nowadays, due to advancement of technology, social media is considered as the right way to get right information at the right time by the consumer. Social media give consumers high control as it enables the buyers to gather much more information, watch reviews, and make comparison of different products, while sitting at home.

These techniques have proved to be quite cost-effective and have attracted many customers. In today's world internet is considered as the best way to spread messages. Therefore many companies have gained a lot from digital marketing and fans through social networking. Social Networking Websites including Facebook and Twitter which are now being used by various multinational companies in order to convey their message to the customers.

Social Media has become a major factor in influencing various aspects of consumer behavior which leads to brand commitment.

According to Barnes, N. G., & Mattson (2008) social media takes less time to reach out to customers and has endless possibilities. It helps to grab attention of a customer by writing a blog or leaving a comment on someone else's blog. One can reach out to potential clients in a cost effective manner by advertising on social websites, especially if one is a small business owner who doesn't have the budget for television and advertising campaigns.

In the 21st century, brands need to have a social story to leverage the emotional and persuasive elements that make offerings successful.

There are three strategic roles that help to build the brand. Marketers must use social media to serve their brand building objectives. It can help the brand to:

- Build a relationship to become more trusted;
- Differentiate through an emotional connection to become more remarkable and unmistakable; and
- Nurture loyal fans to become more essential.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were the following:

- To find out how the company can use social media networks to create brand awareness.
- To elaborate the challenges faced by companies while making brand awareness through social media.
- To analysis why the traditional ways of advertising i.e. television, radios, magazines, newspapers etc., are no longer effective.
- To find out the purpose and benefits of using social media by the companies.
- To understand the highest priority of social media initiative.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to the above stated objectives, the research problem can be concluded as Social networks /media can be used by companies to create brand awareness and the challenges faced by the companies. Moreover the research problem area is further divided into the following points –

- Role of social media and its impact on brand awareness.
- Challenges faced by companies using social media.
- Are the traditional advertising media /channels for branding still relevant and worth branding?
- To conclude that the social media tools/channels are the best to adopt in the present world, for brand awareness.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researchers faced lot many problems while conducting the research study. The first and the foremost problem was related to the sample size. The findings cannot include all the companies that use social media but other than this, the objective of adopting the social media is also different.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The first sociologist who started to use the term social network systematically is J.A. Barnes who used the term for the first time in his 1954 study “Class and Committees in a Norwegian Island Parish”. Barnes (1954) used the term to describe the existence of social networks, "largely a system of ties between pairs of persons who regarded each other as approximate social equals", next to the other terms that were used in sociology in those days. Social media are described by Blackshaw and Nazzaro (2006) as consumer –generated media. This form of media, describes a variety of new sources

of online information that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers', intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues. (Blackshaw and Nazzaro 2006) Another definition of social media by Larson, (2011) is rare in that the author defined social media from the perspective of companies, bypassing the fact that social media exists by favor of users and not by companies. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), put more emphasis on the underlying technology when defining social media," Social media is a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content". Mangold and Faulds (2009) define, social media encompasses a wide range of online, word of mouth forums including blogs, company sponsored discussion boards and chat rooms, consumer to consumer email, consumer product or service ratings' websites and forums, internet discussion boards and forums, moblogs (sites containing digital audio, image, movies or photographs), and social networking websites to name a few. Kaplan et al (2010) gives a more categorized version of this list and mentions the following different types with accompanying examples, "collaborative project (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs, content communities (e.g. youtube), social networking sites (e.g. facebook), virtual game world (e.g. world of Warcraft) and virtual social worlds (e.g. second life).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For making this research successful and worthy, a questionnaire was structured.

Through the help of the questionnaire, primary data has been collected. Informal interviews have been taken of 200 respondents. The research also includes secondary data which has been collected from various websites, books, journals etc.

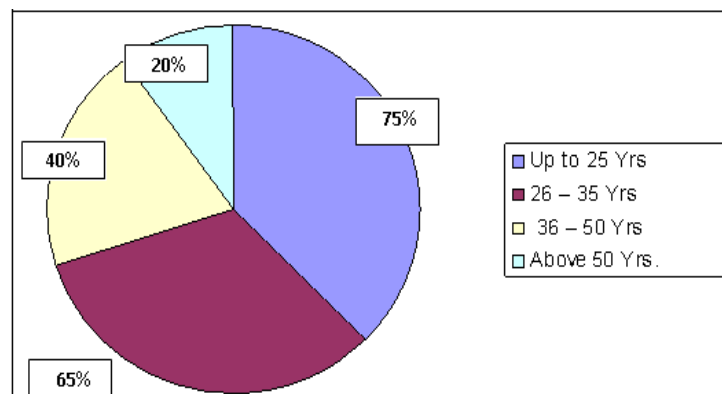
Sample Size

The respondents in the sample consisted of consumers who used to see and shop through the social media networks. 200 (two hundred only) respondents around the area of Kota, Bundi (Rajasthan) were interviewed. The samples are further presented in the tabulation form with their responses.

Analysis of Data

Table 1: Age of Respondents

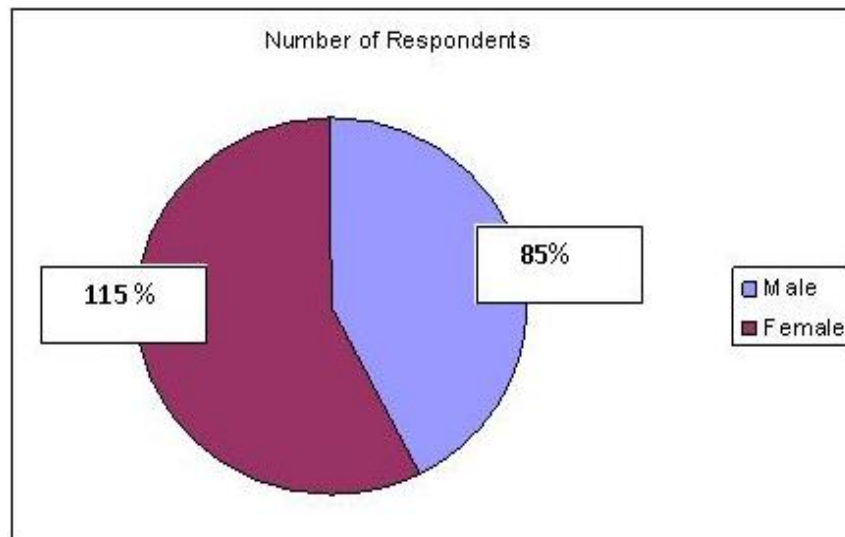
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Up to 25 Yrs	75	75
26 – 35 Yrs	65	65
36 – 50 Yrs	40	40
Above 50 Yrs.	20	20
Total	200	200



The above table and figure shows that most of the respondents are up to 25 Yrs. of age.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

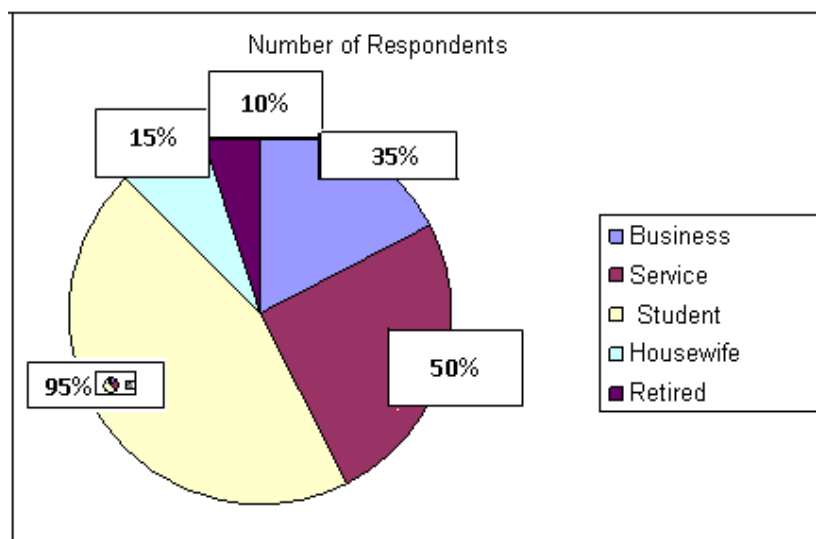
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Male	85	85
Female	115	115
Total	200	200



The table number shows that most of the respondents who are engaged in networking sites are Females.

Table 3: Occupation of Respondents

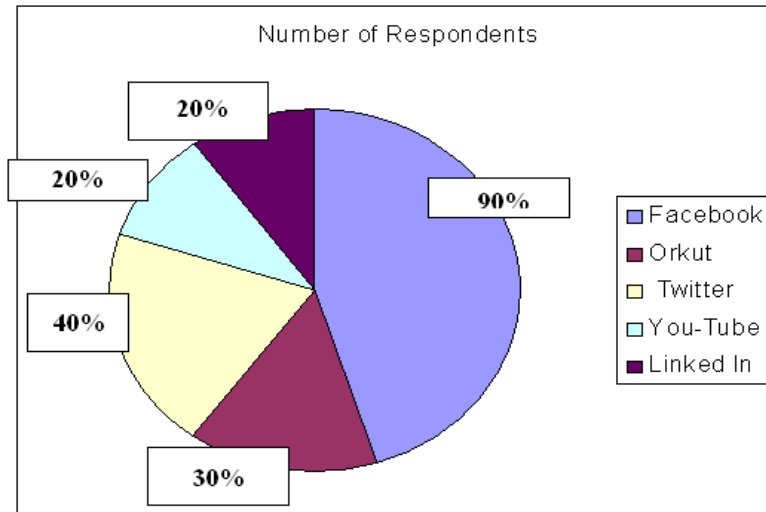
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Business	35	35
Service	50	50
Student	90	90
Housewife	15	15
Retired	10	10
Total	200	200



The table and figure represent that maximum respondents are students and the least are retired and housewives.

Table 4: Preference of Social Networking Sites

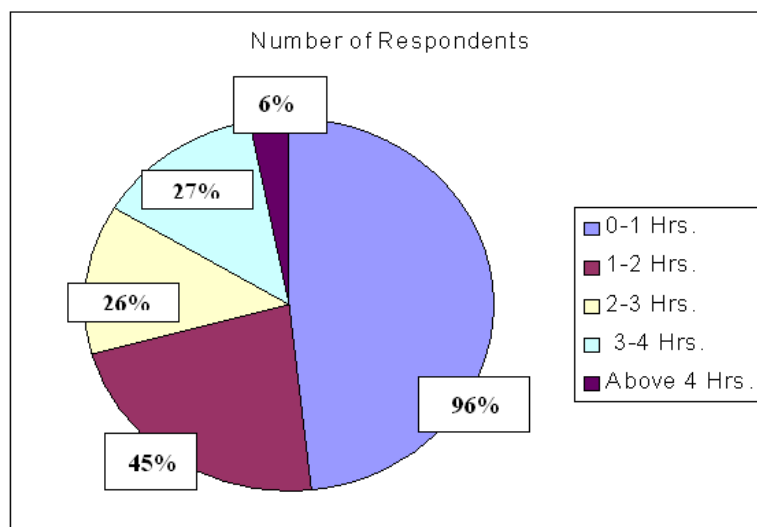
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Facebook	90	90
Orkut	30	30
Twitter	40	40
You-Tube	20	20
Linked In	20	20
Total	200	200



By this we can conclude that, the most preferred social networking site is Face-book.

Table 5: Time Spent on Social Media Networking Sites (Per Day)

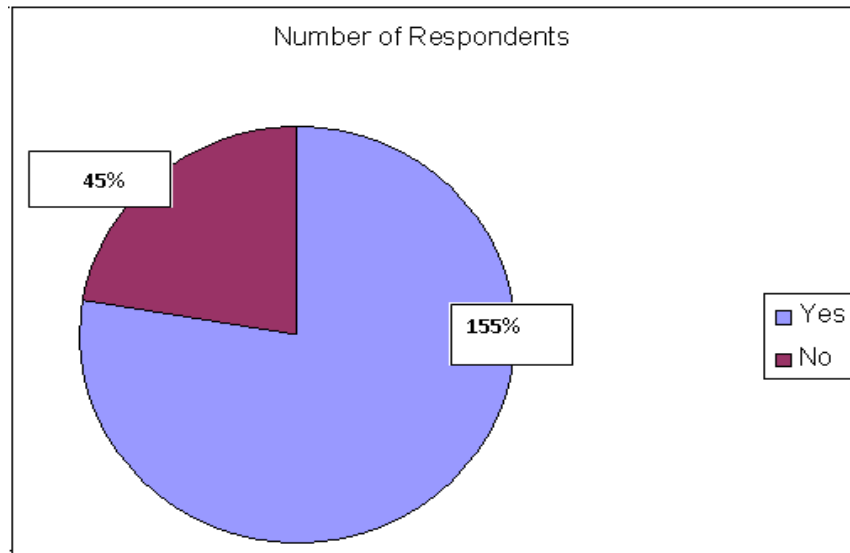
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
0-1 Hrs.	96	96
1-2 Hrs.	45	45
2-3 Hrs.	26	26
3-4 Hrs.	27	27
Above 4 Hrs.	6	6
Total	200	200



Maximum respondents surf Facebook up to 1 Hr. only

Table 6: Preference of Buying the Product through these Social Networking Sites (on Trial Basis)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Yes	155	155
No	45	45
Total	200	200



The respondents usually prefer to buy the products on trial basis.

Table 7: Reason for Using these Sites by the Respondents (Respondents have Selected More than One Option)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Keeping in touch with friends	170	170
Making new friends	25	25
Shopping (for trial basis)	155	155
Local Events Information	50	50
Planning Events	20	20

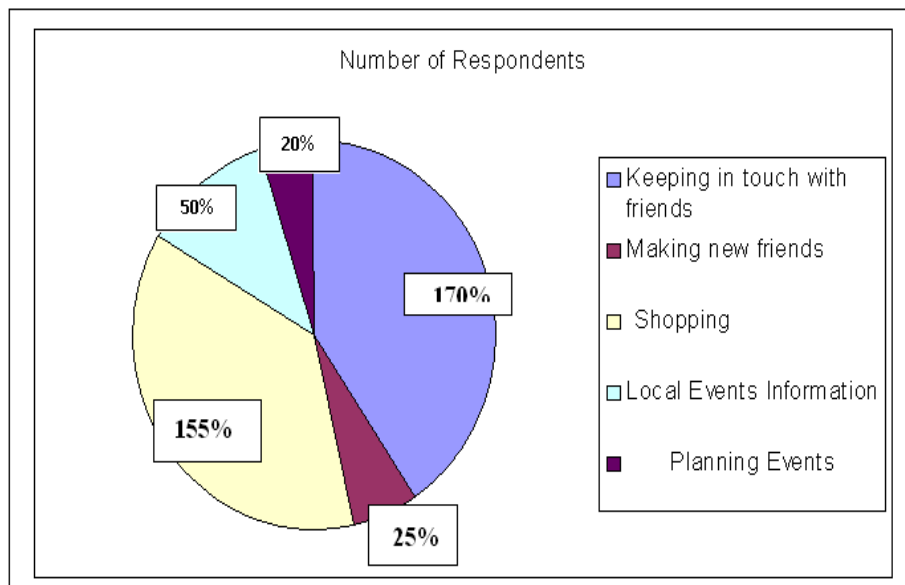
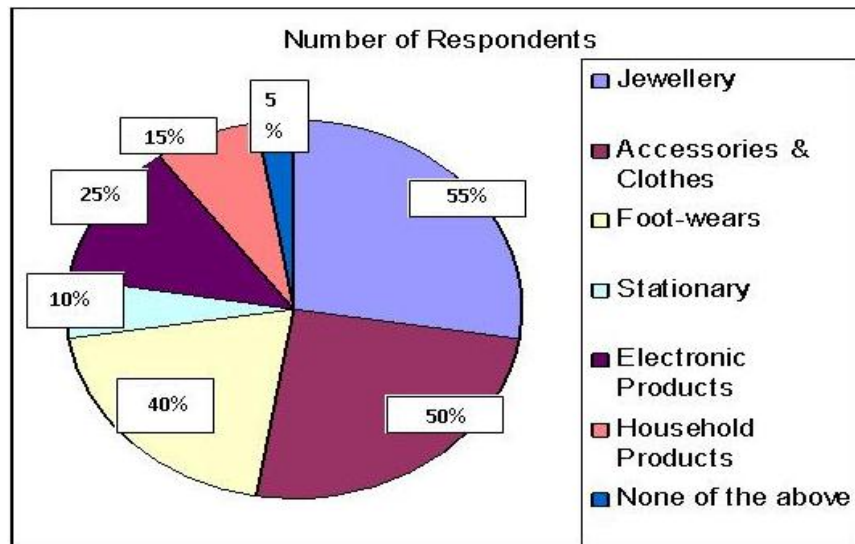
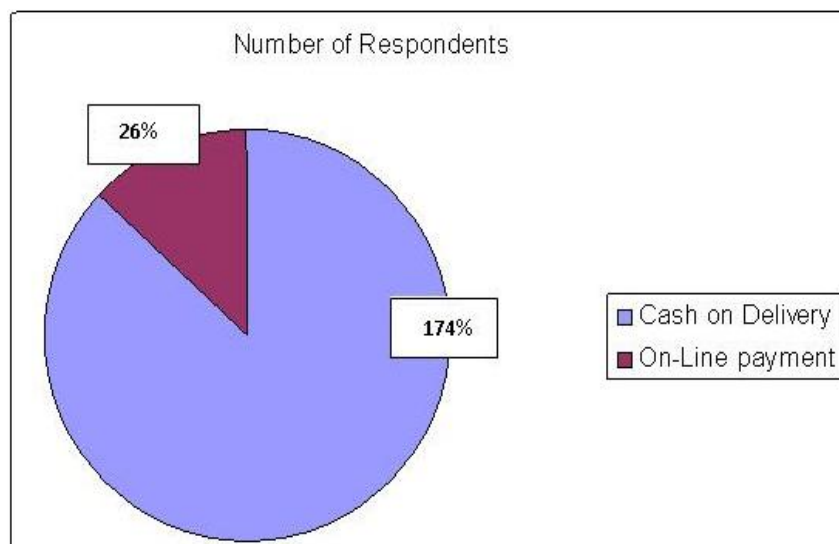


Table 8: Type of Product which Influence the Most

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Jewellery	55	55
Accessories & Clothes	50	50
Foot-wears	40	40
Stationary	10	10
Electronic Products	25	25
Household Products	15	15
Others	—	—
None of the above	5	5
Total	200	200

**Table 9: Type of Payment Mode they Prefer**

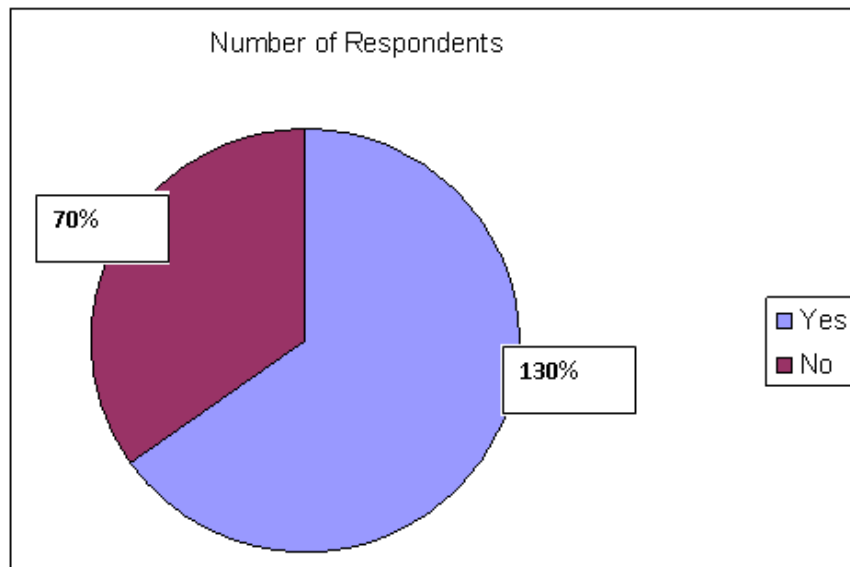
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Cash on Delivery	174	174
On-Line payment	26	26
Total	200	200



Cash on delivery is mostly preferred.

Table 10: Whether Cinema is Losing Battle with Internet

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%) of Respondents
Yes	130	130
No	70	70
Total	200	200



Out of 200 respondents, 130 respondents think that internet and social networking sites are having a big impact on a person's life, especially on youth.

EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

According to the survey done by Marketing Profs., a big change has been found from 2009 to 2012 i.e. 86% of the companies maintain a Facebook presence, 84% are active on Twitter, and 72% show up on Linked In.

Sources: Marketing Profs

BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In a survey, when asked to some people about why social media would be more of a priority in 2013, more than 65 percent said it was for building brand awareness. Close to 50 percent said social network-based marketing efforts help to create more brand loyalty, and more than 46 percent look to social media to find and create new audiences.

Social media **enables** companies to:

- Share their expertise and knowledge.
- Tap into the wisdom of their consumers.
- Enables customers helping customers.
- Engages prospects through customer evangelism.

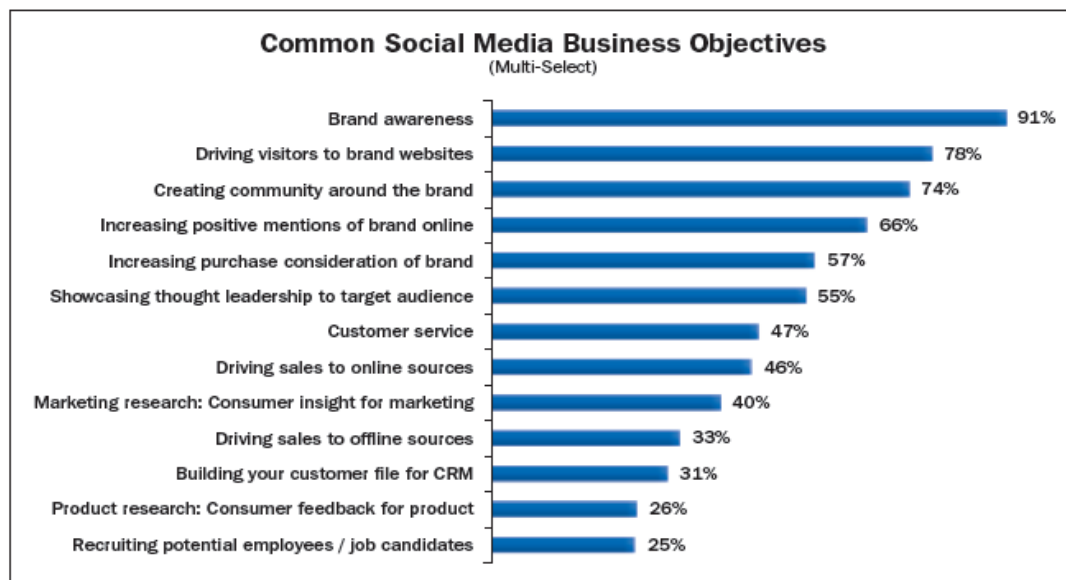
Thus the benefits of social media include: brand reach and awareness, consumer interactions through transactions, referrals and reputation management.

SOCIAL MEDIA OR SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES LEADS AS TOP ONLINE ACTIVITY IN INDIA

Today, social networking is truly a global phenomenon. While word-of-mouth has always been important, its scope was previously limited to the people you knew and interacted with on a daily basis. Social media has removed that limitation.

Top Online Categories by Share of Total Minutes - June 2012 Total Internet: India, Viewers Age 15+ Location Home/Work* Source: ComScore Media Metrix			
	Total Unique Visitors (000)	% Reach	Average Minutes Per Visitor
Total Internet : Total Audience	61,004	100.00%	772.5
Google Sites	57,826	94.80%	155.3
Facebook.com	50,890	83.40%	224.9
Yahoo! Sites	39,977	65.50%	63.3
Microsoft Sites	29,363	48.10%	19.8
Wikimedia Foundation Sites	21,031	34.50%	11.1
Times Internet Limited	20,535	33.70%	16.9
Network 18	17,891	29.30%	31.6
Ask Network	15,829	25.90%	3.5
Rediff.com India Ltd	15,346	25.20%	28.3
NIC.in	13,308	21.80%	23.6

Social Media Marketing Funnel or Objectives



Source: MarketingProfs 2012 Social Media Survey, February 2012. Chart Base: 256 marketers.

Source: Social media sales funnel: (<http://socialmediatoday.com/SMC/176665>)

There are the 5 ways to use social media to build the brand awareness:-

- Bring Your Brand to Your Customers
- Generate Quality Content
- Be Active on Social networking site
- Connect Customers, Contacts
- Make Yourself Available

Why Businesses Need to Consider Social Media Marketing Services?

- **Size:** Face book has over 250 million users globally. On an average, 70-100 tweets happen by the second. An average user on Facebook has 120 friends.
- **Transparency:** No cheat code involved. No black hat techniques allowed. Everything that happens in the social networking landscape is fool proof. Companies cannot fake authenticity in an attempt to get more people involved.
- **Reach:** It is possible to make a mark globally and do it quickly using social networking sites.
- **Branding:** Buying a candy may have been impulsive all your life, but if it is discussed on a social networking site, there is likelihood to get brand conscious even with a candy. Social media is a smart way to build brands. Social media platforms are known to be one of the most powerful and fast means of branding. Some of the big brands like Coke, Ford, Dell, IBM, Burger King are some of the well-known brands that have powerfully used social media platforms to endorse themselves.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no escaping the social media these days, either for individuals or for businesses. Today, it is impossible to separate social media from the online world.

Social media is a strong and potent communication tool. It presents brands with enormous reach and endless communication possibilities. It allows brands to emerge into a world of peer--to--peer dialogue and therefore the possibility of harnessing the brand building potential of the richest communication form available. However, it is important to do it right.

To approach communities and engage in dialogue that seems relevant and motivating for an audience of extremely sophisticated and literate users.

Therefore, for building up a brand, a marketer must remember to:-

- Be personal
- Be in dialogue
- Be a Product
- Be a community
- Be social now

Examples of Social Media

Here's the most surprising result of Com Score's research:

- **Nestle:** 2.7 billion impressions - The Company has 670K followers on Facebook, excluding separate pages for its brands. Its head of marketing and consumer communication, Tom Buday, is on Face book's client council.
- **Procter & Gamble:** 2.66 billion impressions - The Company believes that using social media rather than traditional media can help it save up to \$10 billion a year.

- **Kellogg:** 1.89 billion impressions - Kellogg doesn't just use social media only for promotion, it also uses it for consumer research/listening and new product ideas.
- **Nokia** – To promote its new E75 device with its own e-mail service, the company set up a community website where members could contribute and talk about e-mail and help each other. Nokia also created accounts on Orkut, Twitter and Face book to promote its device.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Hello Sir/Mam

I, Shruti Arora,with the guidance and support of my supervisor am here to conduct a research survey on the topics "Social Media: A New Hybrid for Brand Awareness. A study on the Selected Social Media Networks". Please give your honest opinion and understand that this information collected will be purely confidential and will not be shared for any purpose other than research.

(If you are aware of Social Networking Sites, then please fill this questionnaire)

A) Personal Profile

Name

(Please tick ✓ below)

Age

- 1) Up to 25 Yrs. ☐
- 2) 26 – 35 Yrs. ☐
- 3) 36 – 50 Yrs. ☐
- 4) Above 50 Yrs. ☐

Gender

- 1) Male ☐
- 2) Female ☐

Occupation

- 1) Business ☐
- 2) Service ☐
- 3) Student ☐
- 4) Housewife ☐
- 5) Retired ☐

Education Level

- 1) 12th ☐
- 2) Under-Graduate ☐
- 3) Post-Graduate ☐
- 4) Others ☐

Income-Group (Monthly)

- 1) Below 10,000 ☐
- 2) 10,000-15,000 ☐
- 3) 16,000-30,000 ☐
- 4) Above 30,000 ☐

B) (Please tick ✓ below)

1) Which social networking site you prefer the most?

- a) Facebook ☐
- b) Orkut ☐

- c) Twitter ☐
- d) You Tube ☐
- e) My Space ☐

2) How much time do you currently spend on Social Media networking sites (Per Day)? (i.e. Facebook, Linked In, Twitter, Orkut etc.)

- a) 0-1 Hrs. ☐
- b) 1-2 Hrs. ☐
- c) 2-3 Hrs. ☐
- d) 3-4 Hrs. ☐
- e) More than 4 Hrs. ☐

3) Does your social media presence effectively promote your personal brand ?

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

4) Do you prefer to buy the product (on trial basis) through these social networking sites ?

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

5) Does the company create goodwill on you while using these sites ?

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

6) You prefer to use these sites mostly for? (You may select more than one answer)

- a) Keeping in touch with friends ☐
- b) Making new friends ☐
- c) Shopping ☐
- d) Local Events Information ☐
- e) Planning Events ☐

7) What type of products influence you the most through social networking sites? (You may select more than one answer)

- a) Jewellery ☐
- b) Accessories & Clothes ☐
- c) Foot-wears ☐
- d) Stationary ☐

- e) Electronic Products ☐
- f) Household Products ☐
- g) Others (Please Specify) ☐
- h) None of the above ☐

8) Do you prefer to buy the products frequently through these social networking sites?

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐

9) Which type of payment mode you prefer?

- a) Cash on Delivery ☐
- b) On-Line payment (Debit/Credit card) ☐

10) Do you think that Cinema is losing the battle with Internet (Social Sites)?

- a) Yes ☐
- b) No ☐