THE LACK OF DIGITAL MARKETING SKILLS: DEVELOPING A DIGITAL MARKETER MODEL FOR THE RETAIL INDUSTRIES

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ABSTRACT

The digital talent gap in the current scenario can create obstacle for an industry or a company to prosper. The key purpose of the study is to find out the lagging areas of digital marketing and further develop a digital marketer model for the Malaysian retail industry. Research problem or rationale that is investigated in the primary terms provides ideas on recent statistical aspects regarding lagging digital skills amongst the Malaysian retail industry. The study consists of five chapters that accelerate with introduction and proceeds towards conclusion after literature review, methodology and discussion. In the Introduction section, the issues related to digital marketing skills in Malaysia have been discussed. Literature Review section has kept its focus on the positive impacts of digital marketing along with a cohesive analysis of the challenges. On the other hand, the Methodology section has shown the data collection method and analysis techniques for the article. Results and Discussions have helped to know the different effects of digital marketing and its benefits in the present market. Finally, the Conclusion section has summarised the entire discussion and provided a recommendation to the retail industry for developing the above-mentioned model. The key observations depicted that the inclusion of different elements regarding digital marketing skill adopters, laggards, evaluators, followers, and leaders has been depicted through the model description.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; Digital Marketer Model; Retail Industry; Positive Factors

1. INTRODUCTION

The advanced marketers take supports from digital technologies while applying the digital marketing process, especially, through the internet. The marketers also access display advertising, mobile phones and other devices in the time of conducting the skills included in digital marketing. In the present section, the issues related to digital marketing skills have been discussed along with the failure of the Malaysian retail industry to enhance these skills for the best approaches in the market. Different problems or the issues of the marketers to develop the model have been analyzed here, which directly shows the lack of skills of the marketers to develop a digital marketing-oriented model in the present sector.
1.1. Rationale and Background

While the entire world has started to develop digital marketing in the businesses, only a few Malaysian businesses incorporate it as a strategy for their gradual growth. It is observed that only 3% of the digital leaders support the digital growth in the Malaysian retail industry and it is the main issue that 97% of leaders do not support it in an actual manner (Bizhive, 2017). It has also become a major issue now as digital transformation and digital strategy develop business growth and the lack of skills hinders the performance of the retail sector in the respective market. From the viewpoints, it is also seen that retail sector has lack of budget and resources for developing the digital marketing skills and it is a major reason behind the failure of digital marketing in the mentioned sector. The lack of orientation of the digital leaders has also been analyzed within the section in a significant manner. In the following figure, the lack of digital marketing skills has been mentioned and the entire research may shed light on the problems through which the retail sector may develop Digital Marketer Model in a significant manner.

![Figure 1.1: Association with digital marketing in Malaysia](image.png)

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Depending on digital marketing, the retail industry of Malaysia has become able to develop the loyalty of its customers towards them and the management of the retail companies has successfully retained customers by mitigating challenges and applying the positive sides of this type of marketing (Bizhive, 2017). In this section, different challenges of the retail industry have been discussed to mention the negative impact of the lack of skills of digital marketing in the retail sector along with defining the positive impact for the marketing of the above-mentioned sector.
2.1 Factors of digital marketing that affect retail industry

Different literary surveys have made it clear that digital marketing is a tool, which is used by customers to select the advanced marketing process. As per the explanations of Hua et al. (2017), the retail industry of Malaysia has started to develop ICT (Information and Communications Technology) through which both the decision-making process and behaviours of customers are influenced. Practically, the positive setting of retail helps to attract customers towards digital marketing based on which they develop loyalty towards the sector. From the notations, it is also known that digital marketing supports the marketers to enhance customers towards internet using from where customers also gain a vast amount of information regarding the sector by accessing the platform of Web 2.0 (Bollweg et al. 2019).

This platform has also supported them to know different facilities of the industry, which they may get while setting their tour plan based on which customer retention is enhanced. Hua et al. (2017) also commented that approximately 90% of internet users have shown interests in the retail sector of Malaysia and the accession of the location has been used by 18.6 million people. Arguing this view, Jia et al. (2018) discussed the feedback on social media of customers that motivates customers towards the facilities of the retail industry. From the view, it is clear that using the SM networks, marketers share information for the customers and customers also gather experiences from other customers.

2.2 Challenges faced by the sector to handle digital marketing

In many cases, it is found that the management of the retail sector has failed to implement the interaction and communication paradigms in a proper manner for which they fail to develop social media applications in order to support customers in the digital marketing process (Roque & Raposo, 2016). In this way, consumers have also failed to gain information from the Malaysian retail industry and it has hampered the growth of the sector. On the contrary, to the above view, Ismail et al. (2018) mentioned that the retail industry has applied digital technologies as a secondary strategy in few cases due to which they have failed to promote new information in a gradual manner. It is also noted from the perspective that the marketers have utilized the high and advanced technology for marketing through Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and others, though, the investment has not been determined highly and it has hindered the performance of the entire digital marketing. In the following figure, it is highlighted that the retail sector has 53% of investments on digital technologies whereas only 47% of companies have successfully adopted sharing knowledge for the implementation of the technologies (Bizhive, 2017). In addition to that, challenges like smaller budgets in digital marketing, no conversions in paid website optimization, tough competitive rivalry and non-frequent posting in social platforms are found. Furthermore, establishing word of mouth with a digital marketing paradigm can be challenging as consumer trust is mostly based on direct reviews from known persons instead of digital confirmation. Furthermore, customer experiences on a specific website are another significant area of challenge in case a website does not contain any customer feedback system.
2.3 Positive impact of digital marketing on the retention of customers

Presently, 4.2 billion people are accessing social media sites using mobile devices from where they have become capable to gather huge information regarding digital marketing and it also supports marketers to analyze customers’ involvement (Hamid et al. 2016). Even, customers are encouraged to see and access this information based on which their demands towards digital marketing are increased in a vast manner. Practically, the management of the industry has implemented web-based technologies through which social interactions between customers and management teams have become possible that enhances the contents of the retail sector to bring changes in the revenue generation process (Dangi et al. 2017). Thus, the sector has become able to retain customers after developing loyalty towards them.

This platform has supported customers to connect their networks with specific online communities through which marketers have gained entire planning about the usage of digital marketing skills and significantly, “information search” has become available to them (Hamid et al. 2016). Applying these ways, the Malaysian retail industry has successfully made connections with consumers and broadened marketing-oriented settings for them in an easy manner (Hanaysha, 2018). The attitudes of customers have been changed in this way and they have been attracted to the retail marketing of Malaysia.

It is estimated that digital marketing also assists in the feedback gathering process through which the marketers to bring changes in the facilities also gain responses of customers (Chowdhury et al. 2019). Thus, customers get satisfaction from the retail industry and their attitudes towards the sector are changing. Supporting the above descriptions of Hua et al. (2017) commented that consumers have a strong intention to use social media platforms for gaining extraordinary and new information about the retail management processes and it has become their habit. Due to the information-friendly nature of the Digital Marketer Model, the customers have successfully accessed it to solve their queries regarding the retail industry. Thus, SMM positively affects the Malaysian retail sector along with retaining huge numbers of customers.
Being a straightforward concept yet effective, retention marketing holds different positive impacts like low pricing, quick customer interaction, time convenience, and others. Likewise, as per the study of Sherif (2018), increasing customer loyalty through digital marketing has seen a boost in the previous year due to the increasing usage of the internet over the last decade. Apart from this, personalized content marketing automation and analytics tool are primarily emerging with positive changes in terms of digital marketing.

2.4 Literature Gap

The above sources have vastly supported the article and mentioned the major factors related to digital marketing to enhance customers’ loyalty and attitudes. However, Jia et al. (2018) have mentioned the risks, though, no such information regarding the challenges of digital marketing have been expressed here. Hua et al. (2017) have also defined the tool related to digital marketing for choosing the positive processes for customers though; its influences have not been discussed broadly. Thus, there are certain gaps in the study, which have been identified in this section.

3. METHODOLOGY

In order to conduct the research for making the article, secondary sources such as journals, websites, newspaper articles, books, and others have been selected. As per the viewpoints of Johnston (2017), secondary sources have the capability to develop further research work in a proper manner. Depending on the sources, vast information has been collected about the impact of digital marketing skills on the customers’ loyalty, attitude, and retention in the retail sector of Malaysia. On the other hand, thematic analysis has been developed, which has supported the flexible data analysis process. It is also found that secondary sources have been accessed with free if cost as it is cost-efficient as well as timesaving methods.

Practically, this data collection method has helped it to gain broadened data from different perspectives regarding customer retention in the retail sector. Sherif (2018) mentioned that peer-reviewed journals support
this analytical process based on which scholarly sources are gained. However, it can be stated that there are different research limitations due to which the article development method has been hindered. The research work has failed to collect information from participants applying primary data collection methods as well as qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. In such a case, certain information and quantity of the marketers to develop the above-mentioned model have been gained from a practical path.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Theme 1: Customer engagement using digital marketing skills

Retail industries have highly tried to engage customers by using digital marketing skills through which they can develop their revenue structure. From the perspectives of Hashim & Fadhil (2017), it is known that digital marketers fail to create a quick “intro video” because of which the entire retail services face problems. However, it is also known that SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) has been utilized by the industry in a proper manner based on which they have directly engaged customers towards their services and created digital marketing campaign for mentioning their digital service-oriented facilities. From the definitions of Leong et al. (2019), it is also vivid that digital marketing skills develop online engagement through which the customers become able to know about the retail industries and their involvements are accelerated. Most importantly, digital marketing skills support the marketers to build an entire digital strategy while communicating with teammates through which interaction-related problems are solved with high customer involvement.

4.2 Theme 2: Effects of digital marketing to bring changes in retail industry

From different sources, it has become clear that the Malaysian retail industry has different problems related to digital marketing skills for which they have faced some issues while conducting market growth processes. Mohamad et al. (2019) evaluated the process of content marketing that supports the retail sector to make SEO-friendly content while strategizing and developing market features (Leong et al. 2019). Depending on this process, the industry also grasps social media marketing that also becomes analytics in the marketing skills to enhance changes. Thus, the retail sector develops content for supporting the customers along with developing Google Analytics that boost the entire monitoring process for the above-mentioned sector. It is also found from the discussion that digital marketing understands design-based thinking and recognizes the problems developed in the time of approaching.

5. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it has become clear that the retail sector of Malaysia has failures to achieve digital marketing due to which its revenue structure has not been improved in a proper manner. It is found that the industry has not been invested rightly for digital marketing and it has become the main reason behind their issues to enhance the Digital Marketer Model. From the above discussions, it is also known that companies under the sector have tried to bring changes in the marketing process because of which they have taken supports from the digital technologies. However, its positive impacts and challenges have been evaluated to inform the marketers regarding its benefits and possible problems. The study has also highlighted the methods that have been applied to develop the article and the secondary sources have been utilized while collecting the data in a
gradual manner. Finally, it can also be recommended to the companies to implement the Digital Marketer Model through which certain changes in the skills can be adopted.

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