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This increasing use of social media has left no choice for brands, but to market themselves on these mediums, subsequently, brands now invest lots of time and money in finding out which media to invest in to create consumer brand perception and influence their buying intention.

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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

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The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Behavior

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This increasing use of social media has left no choice for brands, but to market themselves on these mediums, subsequently, brands now invest lots of time and money in finding out which media to invest in to create consumer brand perception and influence their buying intention. Brands keep on trying new ways to penetrate into minds using social media and keep on playing with our minds. In the current scenario, brands don't have the option of whether to use social media or not but, the question is how well they use it?

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Highlights

- Social media has become a major influencer these days on consumer decision making.
- Word of mouth has changed to a world of mouth.
- How consumers are affected by their Digital Social environment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media is the new way how brands are interacting with potential and current customers, as social media has given the liberty to brands to maintain two-way communication and understand the needs and wants of the people and, then, serve them with tailor-made products which can change the way of life. Now consumers don't depend on the details which are provided by brands, with the mass use of social media consumers have developed new ways to gather and discuss about brand and its product with their peers and also with focus groups, the information that they get from these groups and their peers, gives shape to the consumer decision making, so now brands have no other option but to stay true towards its consumers and provide with the platforms on which they can discuss about it ex: Flipkart, Amazon, Yelp have provided the consumers on which they can interact amongst themselves and then make purchase. We are

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currently in the midst of the Digital media revolution. The decision-making process has five stages: Need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase, post-purchase behavior. Consumers now a days have become more dynamic and rational, consumers are no more affected by just a TV ad or a banner ad they won't make the purchase until it adds value to their life and make it better. In the current digital age, brands have only a way to demonstrate the product, and it is Digital Media. This paper shows Social and Digital media is influencing the purchase decisions of consumers and how much it is affected by peer recommendations.

II. DECISION-MAKING CYCLE

- **Need Recognition:** It occurs whenever the consumer recognizes the difference between his current stage and the desired stage of the level. Nowadays, people are very much concerned about how they are seen by the world this is called "Social Identity" this is the reason why social media content motivates consumers for new needs.
- **Information Search:** After discovering the need consumers then move forward to information gathering where he discovers about different products and discuss it with its peers or in a focus group (Quora), reads consumer reviews on Google, Amazon, and other websites, and then sees how these products can make my life better, the products which are more visible to him, now after the influence of Internet, is the most commonly used source of information search, which has brought the biggest revolution in the consumer searching process, and when the consumer sees that same product on social media, for which he was searching on web, he might get influenced and intend to buy it.
- **Alternative Evaluation:** After all the information is collected about different alternatives then it's time to assess each one of them on different grounds ex: when buying a Car, is tested on different grounds such as Mileage, comfort quality, performance even the resale value is also considered when making a purchase decision. Once the evaluation is completed, and the best product is discovered, we then move ahead with the purchase.
- **Purchase:** After analyzing different options and comparing it with other alternatives, the purchase

decision is made it's the main decision in this cycle it may be influenced by many factors such as modes of payment available, location of the shop, etc.

- *Post-Purchase:* Now after the purchase is made consumer evaluates the performance of that product on different scales and compare that product with the products that his peers own, if products give the feeling of satisfaction this

persuades a consumer to repeat the process and will suggest others also to buy it. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction also affected by how the consumer was feeling throughout the cycle, i.e., how hard the product was to find, how the reviews were, how many people recommend it, and untimely how was the in store experience, it all is taken into account when satisfaction from the product is measured.



III. THE PROCESS OF DECISION MAKING

The Consumer is overloaded with many choices daily and to cope up with the increasing amount of knowledge overload. They, therefore, have developed certain habits, which are shortcuts for creating the decision-making process easier. During this process, brands are the better shortcut: they facilitate many purchase decisions and offer reassurance as they connect with current and future decision experiences. Hence brands play a crucial role within the consumer decision-making process.

Hierarchy of Effects (HOE) model in communication and advertising. Rather than describing the series of steps that a consumer undergoes while making an acquisition decision, these models explain the mental stage of a consumer. HOE refers to the order within which consumer perceive and process the knowledge which they gained through advertising; this suggests that consumer first attains awareness and knowledge a few products and therefore the develops positive or negative feelings towards for and eventually acts in buying or rejecting the merchandise.

IV. SOCIAL MEDIA

Increasing focus of development on a worldwide level and use of tech in marketing, and promotion have changed the way within which brands interact with consumers, studies have shown that technology plays a crucial role in expanding and growing the buyer base and building the marketing strategies. At the identical time advertising has started

that specializes in psychological, emotional, and social factors influencing consumer behavior. As a result, the businesses have to take a look at the four essential C's of Social media marketing: Creating, Content, Connecting, and Culture these four aspects should be looked at before building any marketing strategy as these items have a very high impact on the consumer decision-making process. Social media is seen as a gaggle of internet-based applications that are built on the ideological and technological foundation of web 2.0 and allowed the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The term Social networking is commonly used interchangeably with Social media. However, both of them are different because social media allows participants to unite by sharing personal information. Social Media has five distinct types: Social Networking, Social News, Social Media, Blogs, and Micro blogs. And every form of media has differing kinds of impact on consumer because the type and format of content is different, studies have shown that 79% of individuals tend to believe video-based content and only remember the visual of that product if it's present to them in a picture format, and also it's proven that by 2018 videos will account for 2/3 of consumers usage.

Companies have access to several kinds of technology which helps in enhancing consumer interest, expand brand recognition and helps in marketing, the studies have shown that use of social media is going to be a trend for marketing purposes, instead of using short-term marketing, now companies are integrating social media mechanics to make a long-term relationship with consumers.

Social Media websites became the middle of knowledge distribution of products and marketing of the products; Social Media provides a chance to use Word of mouth marketing effectively to the broader audience, supporting the buyer to consumer communications and advancing brand awareness through a large-scale social network.

Social Media are often defined as consumer-generated media, created and utilized by users consumers out to sharing information with others regarding any topic of interest (Kholi, Suri, & Kapoor, 2014) By 2019 the world social media audience is to be around 3.78 billion people when measuring social media as a marketing tool, many of us include both web and mobile-based media to specialize in the way how people share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content, this is often speculated to be the biggest shift within the way how companies market themselves because now companies are hoping on consumers over ever before.

Unlike print or television advertising, social media isn't an advertising platform; companies are often challenged with determining how consumers' information and engagement impact the branding process. Positive comments on social media, venues can have a positive impact, but negative comments may also be an element of the brand dialogue and will not be controlled by the businesses using social media for marketing, at the identical time, consumer participation within the discussion and exchanges that influence the branding process.

Facebook is taken into account to be the chalice of marketers due to its specializing in the mixing of advertising into the participant's social content. Within the Facebook the advertisers present their information about specific product or brand and consumers show their support by Liking, commenting, or sharing the content, Social Media includes a significant impact on how marketers design their strategic approach, how they deliver brand info and the way they scale advertising.

Facebook has provided a brand new way of how brand-related content gets shared with consumers by generating content that's useful for consumers, due to this type of shift within the marketing format through which how consumers engage and share products amongst their peers, the web has become a vital a part of marketing, consumers are now happy to share content that reflects their brand preferences. The more consumers are engaged during this process, they're more likely to encourage others to follow the identical, In understanding the role of social media in marketing, it's important to grasp their desire to make consumer engagement, and therefore the impact of social Marketing on influencing the buyer purchase deciding.

V. INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON BRANDING

With the increasing influence of Social Media on branding Brand Loyalty has become a increasing focus of companies, The Instagram has emerged as a brand new platform for users to precise their view on brands by sharing pictures and videos of their favorite products and types online, Instagram has over 500 Million + active users daily, As a results of this advertisers now see Instagram and other media platforms because the most user full tech to market their brand.

Companies also see Facebook as the way to market their brand and gain brand awareness, although all the advertising in social media doesn't yield a positive result, Social Media based advertising is typically seen as an unwanted element by the consumers, the businesses must focus more on how their content is perceived by the patron on social media. Studies have shown that when starting a brand-new social media campaign and wish to try to do a detailed Audit of content and attention on the brand community.

When creating a Social Media identity for your brand, the Brand based communities play a vital role because these communities have a deep understanding of how these social media works. Brand communities are made from individuals, who are the advocates of the brand on a social platform; they assist brands in introducing a brand-new product.

The important feature of media platforms is that they develop social interactions and build engaging content, the content should be able to encourage individuals to interact the content, Ex: when a brand uploads any form of content on any media then the consumers are asked to love, Share, and treat a specific post by which the consumers show their loyalty towards brands, and these simple tasks help consumers to interact with the brands on social media which help brands to see their brand power on social media, Effective measuring of Consumer Interaction in social media content is a vital a part of Social Media marketing strategy. Social media has ultimately changed the way how consumers communicate with brands.

VI. BUYING INTENTIONS AND BRAND AWARENESS

The increasing influence of social media has marked a serious shift within the way how brands were pursuing brand awareness and were making relationships with consumers; brands are now viewed as an ongoing human process, Studies have made clear that increasing awareness of the social nature of brand names and therefore the importance of brand relationships in creating value and supporting consumer higher cognitive process.

Accomplished companies know that numerous tasks to try to do in a very day and higher cognitive process is one in all the important tasks therein process, and social media contains a big impact on how they perceive different brands at the time of creating purchase decision, Consumers have a predesigned mechanisms for taking purchase decision, when deciding what product to shop for, the patron first gather information about this brand/ product on different media platforms, so develop a positive or negative impact on the merchandise and, at last, lead to buying or not buying it.

Consumers decide within the first few seconds of viewing a product whether to shop for it or not, supported the impression of the brand. If the patron doesn't have a positive experience with the brand, he won't be moving further within the higher cognitive process. Because the foremost important thing within the buying higher cognitive process is that the BRAND and if the impression of the brand isn't good within the mind of the patron, he's not gone but the merchandise regardless of what quantity spend within the marketing its vainly.

As the consumer moves further within the decision-making process, evaluation and competitor strategy acquire play. For Example: if a consumer is looking to shop for a flagship smartphone then he may rule out some brands immediately supported his or a number of his peer experience or due to the brand image so when consumer travel to the subsequent level where brand perception isn't into play and that they may shape their decision supported perceptions that are influenced by social media, including consumer needs, values, interest, or is also influenced by the peers. Decisions don't seem to be always as simple as selecting a product or not; often consumer finds themselves seeking an improved way of evaluating a product and appearance to social media platforms for brand clues.

VII. SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

The Social Media has provided companies a cheap way of engaging with the consumers for creating responsive and fascinating content which is linked to different social networks; This has led to major investments in marketing in social media that exceeds over \$6.7 billion a year in marketing investments.

When this level of investments is made in any filed then, companies must make sure that their social media campaigns are yielding the simplest out of the platform, this has led to branded social media campaigns that are reflective on the fact that about 78% marketers believe that social media is a vital and pervasive element in marketing initiatives branded social media campaigns provide a further encouragement ongoing interaction between consumers and brand

which helps in enriching the brand image and encourage consumers to interact with brands content online.

User-generated content is one in all the dynamic and emerging approaches utilized by companies to boost their interactions with consumers and advance brand knowledge. This can be supported a growing view of the role that social media plays within the personal lives of consumers, including the idea that customers use social media as a way of making or building social capital and of making their sense of wellness through the psychosocial elements of the social media tools. Recognizing this connection can play a vital role in developing the content and shaping the connection between the patron and therefore the company

Researchers have maintained that while user-generated content can help to secure consumer behaviors in relevance to the second stage of product decision-making, firm-created social media content contains a greater overall effect on a brand image.

VIII. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it's proven that social media has become one of the strongest sources of reference utilized by consumers within the decision-making processes. The availability of data related to any purchase decision cannot be denied. The advanced level of technology and enhancement made by digital companies in ensuring users are connected to the web 24/7 has also contributed to the high usage of social media as some extent of reference. The foremost important reason why social media is more asked for compared to other means is that the first-hand information provided by other users. this is a valuable tool in supporting consumer engagement The changing technological era has led to increased activity in social network platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, all of which have created mechanisms through which consumers can develop rapport and make interactions with brand-specific content. An emerging strategic focus is on the use of user-generated content, content that's created by consumers in response to specific brands or brand requests and influences the perceptions of other consumers. Brands will keep on looking at the new ways and technologies of how they can shape consumer behaviors.

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