

# INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL MEDIA

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## 1.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

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As the media is a part of any organization's public, we will now study the value of building positive relationships with the media and how to do so. You should be able to:

- Describe the fundamentals of digital media in society;
- Discuss the scope and growth of digital media in society;
- Apply the theoretical understanding of digital media in real life.
- Illustrate the trends, effects, and other issues that have emerged due to the advent of digital media;
- Evaluate the development of digital media across the globe; and
- Critically analyze the implications of digital media in society, politics, economy, and culture;

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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The term 'media' as an umbrella term refers to 'communication media' as well as the institutions and organizations in which people work (the press, cinema, broadcasting, and publishing, for example), as well as the cultural and material products produced by those institutions. Media denotations have evolved from analogue (print and electronic) to digital media, embracing both convergence and divergence of media. However, the transition from electronic to digital media has occurred with the increasing importance of media, particularly new media. While television and radio have a long history in developing world families, new media has become ubiquitous in the developed world: in living rooms, offices, and schools, on the streets, and in children's playrooms and bedrooms. While new media penetration is novel in the developing world, it is dynamic.

With the advent of the Internet in the 1990s, the media domain underwent significant restructuring, from the point of production to the processes by which media information and representations are distributed, received, and consumed by their audience, as well as how media are regulated and controlled by the state or market. However, digital media as a notion originated in the 1980s as a result of the transition from analogue to digital.

Nonetheless, the spread of digital media has transformed the media landscape, as well as the social, political, economic, and cultural realms of existence. Thus, when we study digital media in society, we investigate and scrutinize the new dynamics of digital media in the social, cultural, political, and economic spheres, all of which contribute to the overall structure of society.

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## 1.2 DIGITAL MEDIA SOCIETY

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The materialization of digital media has resulted in the creation of a second identity for the logic of media, which previously consisted of print and the audio-visual medium. The history of media as a unique entity has fragmented and re-integrated over time, paving the way for digital media. As a result, the fulcrum between conventional and new media is skewed in terms of production, consumption, and distribution patterns.

Media as an institution has converted into a space of convergent and divergent spaces with overlapping characteristics of conventional and new media, owing mostly to the collapse of space and time as well as a mode of production. Newspapers and magazines have enriched the debate and consumption patterns of news in the arena of news, while television news channels and online news platforms have enriched the debate and consumption patterns of news. This is true in all spheres of life and society.

To appreciate the extent to which digital media has spread across society, it is necessary to quickly trace the history of digital media and its span of expansion and development. We will examine the properties of digital

media in order to paint a complete picture of the medium. Additionally, we will examine the manifestations of digital media norms, ideologies, and conceptions in current society.

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### 1.3 UNDERSTANDING DIGITAL MEDIA

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From printing and photography to television and telecommunications, the media sphere has been perpetually in a state of technological, institutional, and cultural change or development. However, with the introduction of digital media, the pace of change has accelerated significantly since the late 1980s.

The larger frames of cultural and social change that began in the 1960s influenced the emergence of digital media, particularly the transition from modernity to postmodernity, intensifying globalization processes and the transition from the industrial age of manufacturing to the post-industrial age of information. We were introduced to the notions of digital media, online media, and new media as a result of this change.

As a generic term, new media imposes an arbitrary distinction between old and new media, which encompasses both digital and online media as well as other evolving media forms, implicitly emphasizing the shift in media logic that delves into the openness and conflict between diverse ideas, users, and logics.

As a notion, online media refers to the Internet, which serves as the new medium. The name "online media" emphasizes the connectivity element, or the manner in which it is connected to other media, primarily computers, but also, more recently, mobile devices.

The term "digital media" refers to the fact that all information or data included within electronic media is encoded in numbers, the most popular of which being the binary code of 0 and 1. Thus, technology is the defining dimension of the media, as it monitors the move from digital storage to physical storage of information, such as a USB flash drive, digital photographs, or MP3.

Due to the ambiguous nature of the term "new media," which is heavily reliant on subjectivity, and the limited perception of online media, which focuses exclusively on internet-based media, we have chosen to focus on digital media in this Unit in order to align with the facet of online media enhanced by the Internet.

**According to the Unit's focus point, the qualities of digital Media :**

#### **Digital:**

All data is turned to numbers in a digital media process. Digital information is programmable, alterable, and amenable to algorithmic manipulation due to its numerical representation. It can be compressed and decompressed utilizing algorithms, allowing for the efficient storage and distribution of enormous amounts of data.

### **Interactive:**

Interactivity, according to Jensen (1998), is "a measure of the media's potential and capacity to allow the user to exert control over the context and/or form of the mediated communication." Interactivity can be viewed in this context as a value-added characteristic of digital media.

### **Hypertext:**

Hypertext is a type of text that is made up of nodes or blocks of text that comprise the content, the links that connect these blocks of text, and the buttons or tags that enact the link from one node to another. Thus, hypertext and digital media combine to enable data synthesis and retrieval at a later point.

### **Dispersion:**

In this context, dispersion refers to the spread of digital media, in comparison to mass media, at the level of consumption and production, through site proliferation, segmentation, and the resulting individualization of media usage.

### **Virtuality:**

It is a concept that emerged as a result of the confluence of digital image technologies with older analogue media and computer-mediated telecommunications networks. The 'virtual' component of digital media comprises the Internet and the World Wide Web; immersive, three-dimensional, and spectacular image technologies; and screen-based multimedia and animation.

### **Telepresence:**

The potential for digital media to affect our sense of presence is significant. We get the potential to live in two distinct settings simultaneously as a result of digital media: the physical environment in which our body is positioned and the conceptual or interactional space in which we are present through the medium's use.

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## **1.4 EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL MEDIA**

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The origins of digital coding may be traced back to Charles Babbage, who conceptualized codes and information using machines in the early 1800s, and Ada Lovelace, who developed the first instructions for computing numbers on Babbage's machines in 1822 and 1823.

However, the digital media timeline began in 1941 with Konrad Zuse's invention of Z3, an electromechanical 'Z' machine. It was the first operational machine to incorporate binary arithmetic and a measure of programmability, and is also considered one of the first computers, being succeeded in 1944 by the invention of Harvard Mark 1, a large-scale electromechanical computer. After World War II, in 1947, digital

technology such as the Xerox machine, communication satellite, microprocessor, virtual reality, and augmented reality Head Mounted Display (HMD) system were invented.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) established ARPANET in 1969.

Sony introduced the first videocassette in 1970, followed by floppy discs and microprocessors in 1971. The Magnavox Odyssey, the first video game console, was released in 1972, while Hewlett-Packard pioneered the desktop computer in 1973.

Interestingly, Nam June Paik, a twentieth-century South Korean-born American video artist, claimed to have originated the phrase 'information superhighway' in 1974, referring to a route or network for high-speed data transit. 1975 was a watershed year because Bill Gates started Microsoft, the first significant ISP (Internet service provider), and the first hand-held mobile phone was introduced. In 1979, Japan established the world's first cellular phone communication network. The early 1980s saw an explosion of technological inventions and advancements, including compact disc players, Apple computers, the CD Walkman, the silicon microprocessor, and the CD-ROM, to mention a few.

Tim Berners-Lee described the idea of the World Wide Web in 1990, which resulted in an increase in the scope of development in the media arena. The decade that followed saw the development of the first internet website, digicam, short messaging service (SMS) to a mobile phone, DVD, digital still picture camera, and the first digital television service (DirectTV).

In 1994, the US government relinquished control of the Internet, and the World Wide Web (WWW) was made available to the public, significantly altering the media landscape. In the second half of the decade, e-commerce platforms (Amazon.com, Alibaba Group), online search engines (Google), email (Hotmail), and social networking websites (MySpace) all developed.

Following the first O'Reilly Media Web 2.0 conference in 2004, the term 'Web 2.0' gained currency. Additionally, Facebook was launched in 2004. It was followed by YouTube in 2005, Twitter in 2006, WhatsApp in 2009, LinkedIn and Instagram in 2010, Snapchat in 2011, and TikTok in 2012.

The digital media landscape is not limited to the devices or social networking websites mentioned previously; many more such digital media platforms emerged unexpectedly, transforming the narrative of how we live and sustain ourselves in society.

### **Medium Specific Trends:**

Digital media have affected the formation of trends that have fundamentally altered the media, political, and social landscapes,

including the emergence of cyber laws, arguments over net neutrality, the mobile revolution, digital literacy, and gaming.

### **Check Your Progress:**

1. Explain in detail 'Digital Media Society'.

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2. Discuss the evolution of Digital Media.

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### **Cybercrime Laws:**

With the advent of digital media, legislators throughout the world have devised cyber laws to manage communication technologies, most notably cyberspace or the Internet. Cyber rules apply to all users of this space, as it carries a sort of global jurisdiction. Cyberlaw is also a subfield of law concerned with legal issues arising from the use of networked information technology.

Cyber laws have been developed strictly in the majority of industrialized countries, particularly in Western countries, based on their residents' privacy and security standards. Cyber laws in India are codified in the Information Technology Act, 2000 (IT Act) and its subsequent revisions, which took effect on October 17, 2000. The Act's major objective is to legalize electronic commerce and to simplify the filing of electronic records with the government.

### **Net Neutrality:**

This is based on the premise that all data on the Internet should be handled similarly by corporations, such as internet service providers, and governments, regardless of content, user, platform, application, or device. Network neutrality mandates that all Internet service providers (ISPs) provide the same level of service.

Neither the service nor the website can be blocked or impaired. ISPs are not permitted to enter into exclusive agreements with services or websites in which companies who provide them with services receive preferential network access or speed.

The term "network neutrality" first appeared in 2002. The proposal was made in reaction to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) efforts to require internet providers to share their infrastructure with competitors. Internationally, countries such as the United States of

America, Japan, Brazil, Chile, and Norway, among others, have enacted some type of legislation or regulatory framework affecting net neutrality.

In July 2018, the Indian Telecom Regulatory Authority (TRAI) implemented net neutrality legislation. The Indian net neutrality regulations state that internet access services should be governed by a principle prohibiting any form of discrimination or interference in the treatment of content, including practises such as blocking, degrading, slowing down, or granting any content preferential speeds or treatment.

### **Mobile Media Revolution:**

Mobile media has been ingrained in our daily lives in the modern world. Mobile phones have provided us with the unique ability to communicate with others regardless of our location. They do so by altering our perception of space and upending the boundaries we had established between private and public space, as well as between work and social-private life. With the proliferation of mobile devices, the new highly mobile, personalized, atomized, hybrid work-social life has fundamentally altered the social, cultural, and political dynamics of our way of life.

Horizontal social networks have grown in popularity across the political spectrum, but the extent to which political mediation may be democratized and the pressures of commercialization and control of mobile media remain a contentious subject. While the socio-cultural results of the mobile revolution have seen an increase in individual liberty and a revived sense of creativity and imagination as a result of the entry of various messaging and calling digital platforms, the consumer culture has supplanted face-to-face communication.

Additionally, mobile phones have aided in the rapid expansion of dissemination, with rates exceeding 100% in certain wealthy countries. Additionally, access to mobile phones has increased significantly in poorer countries. The lower middle class is also becoming increasingly reliant on mobile phones for information, including access to the Internet via mobile phones, which is a vital source of information for all segments of society in emerging nations such as India.

### **Initiatives to Promote Digital Literacy:**

With the transformation of what and how we read and consume information brought about by technology, the concept of digital literacy becomes critical. Digital literacy, as defined by the American Library Association (ALA), is "the capacity to use information and communication technologies to locate, evaluate, produce, and convey information, involving both cognitive and technical abilities." Digital literacy, in this meaning, covers more than schooling, as the Internet has evolved into a primary source of knowledge. It is critical to be digitally literate, to understand what constitutes legitimate and trustworthy information when consuming information. Individuals who are digitally literate understand the fundamentals of Internet safety, such as choosing



strong passwords, comprehending and utilizing privacy settings, and knowing what to share on social media and what not to share.

While digital literacy as a concept has gained significance at institutional levels throughout the world, India has launched the National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM) to promote digital literacy across the country, not just for students but for all strata of society. The National Digital Literacy Mission is a dynamic and integrated platform of digital literacy awareness, education, and capacity-building programmes designed to assist rural communities in taking the lead in the global digital economy and sustaining their competitiveness. Additionally, it will contribute to the development of a technologically empowered society. The Digital Literacy Mission's (DLM) vision is to build a multi-stakeholder consortium and collaborate with the government on various schemes and agendas in order to demonstrate in some of the panchayat constituencies how digital literacy can improve governance, empowerment, social inclusion, educational approach, and employment.

### **Games & Gaming:**

With the advancement of current technology such as artificial intelligence, India's gaming sector is poised to flourish. It is certain to transform the game experience. According to a study conducted by KPMG in 2019, there are approximately 275 game development companies in India now. This figure was just 25 in 2010. This figure speaks words about the gaming industry's growth and potential in India. With the world's largest youth population and second-largest internet population, India is one of the world's major gaming markets. India has a population of over 22.2 crore gamers who spend an average of 42 minutes each day playing mobile games.

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## **1.5 REVOLUTION WITHIN THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE**

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### **1.5.1 Mass Media adaptation into Digital Media:**

Electronic media developed in tandem with print media, as the two kinds of media complemented one another in terms of usefulness, accessibility, and distribution of information that appealed to an individual's various senses. However, with the advent of digital media in the post-industrial age, the media landscape was fundamentally altered, with digital media constantly posing a threat to print and electronic media due to its omnipresence and interactive capabilities. This point is addressed extensively in a recent KPMG report published in 2019. Between 2015 and 2019, the total industry performance in digital media increased by 38.5 percent, whereas the overall industry performance in television and print, cinema and radio is 9.9 percent, 5.6 percent, 9.6 percent, and 8.6 percent, respectively. The digital segment is considered to be the industry's torchbearer, and a similar outcome is forecast for India through 2024.



Significant technical advancements in the media and entertainment industries are upending the traditional method of information delivery.

Connectivity in rural India, public internet access via the Common Service Centres network, e-governance, and the commercial and public sectors of the economy adopting digital consumption.

The comfort of digital media platforms, as well as their ease of use and access, has permitted the disruption of traditional mass media by digital media, which is predicted to continue to dominate in the future.

### **1.5.2 Convergence in Digital Media:**

Convergence on a technological level is the first type to discuss. Convergence technology is the process by which practically all media and information are converted to digital electronic formats, storage, and transmission: the digitisation of all media, communications, texts, sound, images, and even currencies into a standard digital format or language. This procedure necessitated a transition from analogue to digital media.

As a result of technological convergence, governments or politicians saw the necessity to amend the legislation governing this new technology.

This resulted in the second type of convergence, which we will refer to as Regulatory Convergence. This is a policy of deregulatory convergence in the media and telecommunications industries that has been implemented by the governments of many industrial economies since the mid-1990s. This series of regulatory developments has had a considerable impact on the structure of the media, telecommunications, and computing industries, as well as on our contemporary media culture.

Following the alteration of the legal environment, a wave of mergers and acquisitions occurred across the media business, fueled by a mix of technology advancements and the neoliberal deregulation and globalization climate.

The dominance of media conglomerates through large-scale mergers and acquisitions paved the way for large-scale cross-industry expansion or horizontal integration, in which a firm in one industry (for example, telecommunications) expanded into another industry (for example, television broadcasting), as well as vertical integration, in which a firm concentrated on one point in a sector's production chain (for example, film production) expanded into another part of the chain. Both of these expansion strategies fueled a broader industrial convergence strategy inside the media and telecom sectors, which resulted in the third form of convergence that altered the total media landscape.

### **1.5.3 Trends of Digital Media:**

The most anticipated digital media trend coming to India is the implementation of 5G internet access. Although India has remained mostly a 2G market since 2017, there has been a boom in smartphone sales due to a combination of factors including dropping data prices,

improved network coverage, affordable 4G handsets, and the development of locally relevant content. Not only will the 5G network enable the telecom sector to meet the need for high-speed data services, but it will also enable the delivery of rich content-specific OTT services. With the smartphone user base expected to surpass 800 million by 2022, an increasing number of Indians are likely to rely on digital distribution as their primary source of video consumption, posing a serious challenge to traditional, linear distribution.

8K content and hardware may be the second most emerging trend in digital media. In established markets such as the United States, China, Japan, and Europe, leading television makers have begun releasing 8K televisions. With the introduction of 5G, it is projected that streaming of HD material will become more prevalent, which will promote the selling of 8K televisions. In India, we have yet to see significant progress in developing 8K content, although this is projected to improve in the coming years.

The third most significant digital media trend is the rise of Content Delivery Networks (CDN). CDN dramatically reduces site latency, increases page load time, lowers bandwidth use costs, and assures content is available globally. Predictive acceleration powered by AI and the adoption of hyper-local CDNs are two major trends in this space. India is experiencing a rapid rise in data consumption, particularly in the area of radio, and hence the need of CDN is greater than ever.

Digital labor is the fourth most significant trend in digital media today. Digital labor may be broadly categorized into three maturity levels: basic robotic process automation, improved robotic process automation, and cognitive automation. Digital labor has found applications in the media and entertainment industries, including content creation, discovery, and regulation, as well as support function automation. Numerous start-ups concentrating on intelligent automation, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and big data have emerged in India.

The fifth digital media trend is Augmented and Virtual Reality, which is continuing to change how media is made and consumed. Market leaders such as Facebook, Google, Microsoft, and Magic Leap are introducing breakthrough goods and solutions. In India, virtual reality content creation is gaining traction in sectors such as gaming, tourism, sports, and advertising. While AR/VR usage is increasing, general adoption is still in its infancy in India.

#### **1.5.4 The Messaging Revolution:**

Due to the speed, ease, and variety of social messaging, it has become integrated throughout the customer journey, even more so than traditional channels such as emails, phone calls, or live chats.

Through WhatsApp and similar other social messaging apps, users may communicate texts, videos, photographs, and other content over a digital platform. While these applications are referred to as IP messaging

applications, they have mostly evolved into 'Social Networks.' WhatsApp, Viber, Google Duo, Hike, Skype, Facebook Messenger, VChat, Instagram Messenger, Snapchat, and Telegram are the market leaders in the IP messaging space, with WhatsApp leading the pack across the country.

In the last decade, a shift in the messaging trend has occurred, with voice calling taking a second seat and IP messaging becoming the primary mode of communication. Additionally, these IP messaging systems enable users to make video or audio calls (also known as VOIP), altering the dynamics of the telecom business in India and throughout the world.

IP messaging applications also engage in various forms of content exchange to stay current with technical improvements and the interests of users and prospective users. The use of emojis, GIFs, emoticons, and stickers has grown in popularity, particularly among the younger demographic, as has the sharing of photographs, videos, documents, and locations, which have also attracted worldwide attention.

### **1.5.5 Regional Languages in Online Media:**

Bengali speakers' number 97 million, which is more than Germany's whole population. Similar comparisons in the context of regional languages have revealed staggering figures; for example, the number of people speaking Marathi (83 million), Telugu (81 million), and Tamil (69 million) is greater than the combined populations of Turkey (82 million), France (65 million), and the United Kingdom (67 million).

Due to the increasing audience size and their preference for material in their native languages, media players/platforms have expanded their portfolios to include specific regional language content on digital platforms.

Digital platform players such as Zee5, Voot, Hotstar, and Amazon Prime Video are aggressively investing in regional language content creation.

To entice an audience, OTT operators are also partnering with large regional language production houses to acquire film rights, a strategy that was previously prevalent in the General Entertainment channels (GEC) market. Additionally, players in the Indian music streaming industry such as Gaana, Google Play Music, JioSaavn, Hungama, Spotify, Airtel Wynk, Apple Music, and Amazon Prime Music are establishing a foothold by promoting regional content, partnering with local brands such as Saregama, T-Series, Zee Music, YRF, and Sony Music, and curating playlists based on the tastes of Indian audiences.

With the growth of web/voice searches in regional languages, search engines are encountering a lack of high-quality websites capable of serving these queries. This presents a unique opportunity for area marketers to maximize their impact by capitalizing on the relatively low competition for localized keywords. Businesses are capitalizing on this opportunity by optimizing their content for these searchers. This provides companies with access to a targeted audience at significantly lower costs

than they would pay for English or Hindi; as a result, website localisation is at an all-time high in India at the moment.

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## 1.6 EFFECTS OF DIGITAL MEDIA

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The effects of digital media are felt at both the local and macro levels of society. When we analyze the effects of digital media, we must address issues of cybercrime, security, privacy, surveillance, online hatred, disinformation, misinformation, and digital addiction.

### 1.6.1 Cybercrime and Information Security:

Although the advent of digital media has transformed the media landscape and altered our personal and professional lives significantly, it has also unleashed a slew of digital-related crimes, such as cyber-attacks, identity theft, cyber theft, and online scam, which jeopardize both individual and national security.

While online frauds, identity theft, and cyber theft all represent substantial risks to individuals exchanging identities on social media platforms and e-commerce platforms, cyber warfare and national-level cyber-attacks have had a greater impact on governance.

Over the previous decade, cyber breaches and attacks have expanded substantially, revealing sensitive personal and commercial information, disrupting key activities, and exacting significant economic penalties. Between 2016 and 2018, India became the second most hit country by cyber-attacks. Cyber fraud and deceit in the form of email scams, phishing attacks, and identity theft have become prevalent in India as well, with noteworthy examples include the Union Bank of India.

In July 2016, a heist occurred; in May 2017, Wannacry ransomware was discovered; in June 2017, Zomato data was stolen; and in May 2017, Petya ransomware was discovered. The Cosmos Bank Cyber-Attack in Pune, the hacking of the Canara bank ATM, and others were the year's notable cyber-attacks. Pegasus Attack, which targeted Indian journalists, attorneys, and human rights activists in 2019, was one of the most prominent cyber-attacks of 2019.

The Digital India Mission and growing cybersecurity concerns have accelerated the growth of this industry, which is currently valued at \$4.5 billion and is predicted to reach \$35 billion by 2030. Government, information and technology services, and banking are the three industries in India that are actively invested in cybersecurity initiatives at the moment. In 2018, the Indian government released the National Cyber

Security Policy, which was developed in conjunction with all essential parties, including users ensuring a secure computing environment and fostering enough trust and confidence in electronic transactions, as well as leading stakeholders' efforts toward cyberspace protection.

### 1.6.2 Confidentiality and Surveillance:

According to the 2019 Forrester GlobalMap of Privacy Rights and Regulations, "regulations allowing governments to access citizens' personal data continue to undermine the overall privacy protections provided by certain countries."

India has been identified as a country with few constraints on data privacy and protection, where government monitoring should be viewed with care, in comparison to countries with extensive government surveillance, such as China. According to business experts, one of the key reasons for the high amount of government surveillance is a lack of constitutional protections allowing for monitoring of government operations.

### 1.6.3 Online Homophobia:

Cyberbullying, hate speech, and online sexual harassment are all forms of online hatred that are extremely prevalent among adolescents and teenagers worldwide.

Young people, who are increasingly integrating several types of social media into their intimate, social, and political lives, generate, consume, and oppose hate speech online. Additionally, they do so in an environment where the definition of

Racism and hate speech are essential features of internet involvement and discursive interaction.

Cyberbullying is a form of harassment that involves the use of internet means of communication. Bullying can take the form of spreading rumors about another person, making threats, making sexual comments, releasing the victim's personal information, or engaging in hate speech. Cyberbullying victims have decreased self-esteem, increased suicidal impulses, retaliation, and emotional breakdowns, and are also more prone to frustration, anger, and depression. Numerous studies have demonstrated that cyberbullying may be just as destructive as other forms of bullying.

Anonymous chat rooms are popular among teenagers as a way to meet new people and converse with a variety of people. However, this contemporary take on pen pals has significant risks. Bullies frequently utilize websites' anonymity clauses to target children, either by making sexual and vulgar comments or by sending improper content without their knowledge.

All parties, including the government, youth, and parents, must keep the need to battle online hate in mind, and appropriate efforts must be made to address it.

### 1.6.4 Falsehoods and Misinformation:

The difficulties of disinformation, misinformation, and mal-information can be understood using the United Nations' definitions of the terms:

- **Disinformation:** False information that is purposefully spread in order to harm an individual, social group, organization, or country.
- **Misinformation:** False information that is not intended to cause harm
- **False information:** Information based on reality that is utilized to cause harm to an individual, social group, organization, or country.

The spread of fake news and disinformation in India and throughout the world has disrupted the flow of information between consumers, resulting in the construction of bias and stereotypes. Digital media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Google, and Twitter amplify the spread of disinformation and misinformation, wreaking havoc and raising questions about the information's reliability and validity.

Social media and messaging applications are at the heart of India's disinformation problem. According to a poll done by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford, 52% of respondents claim they obtain their news from Facebook, while the same percentage get their news through Facebook-owned WhatsApp.

With an estimated quarter-billion Indians having joined the internet since the 2014 general election, businesses like Facebook, Google, and Twitter have become a vital component of the Indian media environment, including the disinformation challenges it faces. Indians are constantly inundated with fake news and divisive propaganda from a variety of sources, ranging from television news to worldwide platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp.

Legions of internet trolls and naïve people promote false tales, which has a deadly effect. According to IndiaSpend, a data journalism website, a claim disseminated on social media about child kidnappers arriving in various parts of India has resulted in 33 deaths in 69 cases of mob violence since 2017.

Six months before India's 2014 general elections, sectarian violence claimed 62 lives and displaced 50,000 people in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. The authorities discovered that a bogus film was disseminated on WhatsApp in order to stoke sectarian sentiments.

In 2018, "horrified by heinous acts of violence," WhatsApp reduced the maximum number of chats to which messages may be forwarded in India from 256 to five, and made it more difficult to transfer photos, audio clips, and videos (Some of these restrictions have since been rolled out worldwide).

### 1.6.5 Characteristics Of Millennials':

Millennials, also known as Generation Y (born between the 1980s and 1990s), and Generation Z (born in the 2000s), were the first generations to grow up with computers, the Internet, and cell phones as fundamental components of their daily life. These so-called "digital natives" spend an

average of more than seven hours every day online, on their smartphones, or on numerous devices simultaneously (PC, laptop, tablet, and wearables).

The next generation of digital media users is more engaged. While conventional media is read passively, consumers today have increased opportunity to share material, interact with producers, contribute to content development, and even facilitate or sponsor content creation.

The millennial customer journey, more than that of any other generation, is heavily influenced by technology. Millennials place a premium on digital experiences.

Due to their easy-to-use websites and mobile apps, millennials are the most likely to use online and mobile banking channels. For millennials, technology equals convenience.

Investing in millennial engagement requires striking a mix between analogue and digital interactions. Opportunities to meet millennial expectations and prepare brand marketing for Gen Z customers will expand as the world becomes more digital.

Manner of operation in response to millennials' aversion to advertising, growing usage of social media, and hunger for new technologies. This potent trifecta encourages firms to stay current on digital marketing developments. A transition from traditional to digital media, namely social media websites and marketing on blogs and recommendation websites, is required.

### **Check Your Progress:**

1. Discuss the revolution of digital media within media spaces.

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2. Explain the convergence in digital media.

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3. State the effects of Digital Media.

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## 1.7 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

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- The fundamentals of digital media in society;  
The scope and growth of digital media in society;  
The theoretical understanding of digital media in real life.
- Illustrating the trends, effects, and other issues that have emerged due to the advent of digital media;
- The development of digital media across the globe; and
- The implications of digital media in society, politics, economy, and culture;

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## 1.8 QUESTIONS

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1. Write in brief about Online Homophobia
2. Write in detail about the Five Trends of Digital Media
3. Write Short Notes on:
  - Net Neutrality
  - Digital Media Trends
  - Cybercrime Law
  - Initiatives to provide Digital Literacy
  - The Messaging Revolution

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## **SOCIAL MEDIA, PLATFORMS OF SOCIAL MEDIA, SOCIAL MEDIA OPTIMIZATION**

### **Unit Structure**

- 2.0 Objective of the study
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Understanding social media
  - 2.2.1 Definitions
  - 2.2.2 History
- 2.3 Mass Media and Social Media
- 2.4 Social Media in India
- 2.5 Social Media Optimization
- 2.6 Some Techniques for Maximizing Social Media Efforts
- 2.7 Internet search engines
- 2.8 Web Search and Exploration
- 2.9 Managing Data
- 2.10 A Search Engine's Internal Mechanisms
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### **2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

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- Understand the evolution, types of social media and its channels;
- Differentiate between traditional mass media and social media;
- Explain the right social media etiquettes;
- Explore social media's utilization in marketing and advertising, crowd sourcing of information, crowd funding etc.; and
- Understand the social, cultural and economic impact of social media.

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### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Social media applications are the creative side of the communication system, if the Internet and World Wide Web are the technological breakthroughs. Every social media user has their own space in which they can speak, interact, create, and cooperate with others. Others may consist of a small number of close friends, thousands of individuals with similar

interests, or an infinite number of social media users. Particularly, social media platforms enable a variety of communication channels, such as text-based interaction on Facebook and Twitter, photo sharing on Instagram, and the ability to send video communications. YouTube enables you to share your knowledge, and another famous network, Wikipedia, provides a similar platform. If you want to categorize all of your internet information and share it with a large audience, Pinterest or Reddit can help.

Participation, sharing, and collaboration are the primary characteristics of social media, and the development of mobile devices has significantly increased the acceptance of social media in recent years. Facebook and Instagram have monthly user bases that exceed one billion. Since they function in global contexts, the growth and prominence of these social media institutions have international repercussions.

In this Unit, we will investigate the world of social media, its characteristics, and its applications in a variety of sectors.

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## **2.2 UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA**

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The Internet is a network of networks, a worldwide system of interconnected computer networks. Internet and World Wide Web (WWW) are terms that are often used interchangeably, yet they are distinct. While the Internet is a global network of interconnected computers, the World Wide Web, commonly known as the web, is a collection of interlinked documents and resources that are linked using the Internet's resources.

In the beginning, there was a web known as Web 1.0, which was static and read-only. This was superseded by what we refer to as Web 2.0, which is a dynamic or interactive website. Web 2.0 contributed to the growth of Internet interactivity and heralded the entrance of social media. From the early to mid-2000s, Web 2.0 has been used by several authors to refer to a variety of concepts. The one characteristic of Web 2.0 that most opinions agree on is that it was a more social platform.

The usage of certain software technologies is one of the numerous reasons web 2.0 has become what it is today.

The social aspect of the web meant that users did not merely consume content from a static web, but also created it. This was made possible by social media platforms or what the general press refers to as social media. Then, one could say that social media is a combination of Web 2.0 technology, i.e., interactive apps, user-generated content, and media richness, and the Web ideology of openness and accessibility of information and resources. Adding Information Technology (IT) and markets, such as cellphones, broadband, wifi, and affordability, to this mixture yields the underpinnings of social media.

Social media is a highly interactive platform via which individuals and organizations can co-create, share, discuss, contribute, and change user-

generated material or self-curated content, as well as have complete control over the content's creation and release. All content creation, sharing, etc. occurs in a social environment, meaning that users are a part of the community and its culture while also developing new cultures. Social media provides people with pervasive network connectivity (Asur & Huberman, 2010) and enables them to form virtual social networks that match the genuine social networks they have in real life. The term "social media" has also been referred to as "social media sites" (Diga & Kelleher, 2009). Social media is a collection of information technologies that allow interactions and networking (Kapoor et al., 2017; Oestreicher-Singer & Zalmanson, 2013).

The virtual world resembles the real world because, as would be expected, humans constructed computers and associated networks based on their understanding of the real world's capabilities. Consequently, many aspects of how social media networks operate resemble how humans build networks, with the exception that in the virtual world, you can create an anonymous identity, operate in the shadows, and conceal yourself behind many avatars. The virtual world also accelerates the progression of events in the actual world. Messages and responses are transmitted in real time. Humans are able to communicate and share with other humans across distance and time thanks to social media.

Why would humans seek a virtual social network when they already possess a physical one? This is linked to the concept of "Social Presence," which humans anticipate in their interpersonal interactions. Social presence is defined as "the extent to which a medium enables users to see other people as psychologically present" (Hassanein & Head, 2005). Presence is "the illusion of being there or the sense of being in a setting while physically located elsewhere" (Li, Daugherty, & Biocca, 2002). When media facilitates human interaction, friendliness, and sensitivity, it is seen as warm (Hassanein & Head, 2005). Cheung, Chiu, and Lee (2011) find that social presence boosts users' continuous usage of social media.

### **2.2.1 Definitions:**

Different authors and academics define social media in numerous ways. Boyd & Ellison (2008) define social media as a "platform to create profiles, make explicit and traverse relationships"; Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre (2011) identified social media by the set of functionalities or "building blocks"; and Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) introduced the social media taxonomy by dividing it into six distinct categories (Blogs, Social Networking Sites, Collaboration Projects, Content Communities, Virtual Social Worlds, and Virtual Game Worlds).

However, Carr and Hayes (2015) provided a comprehensive description of social media, which significantly improves comprehension. Social media are Internet-based channels that enable individuals to opportunistically communicate and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both large and limited audiences that gain value from user-generated content and the perception of contact with others.

While explaining this rephrased definition, Carr and Hayes (2015) listed five Ave components that encompass the entire spectrum of social media: 1) Internet-based; 2) Disentrained, permanent channels; 3) Perceived interactivity; 4) User-generated value; and 5) Mass personal communication.

### **Internet-based:**

The World Wide Web is an Internet application, however social media networks are growing more independent and less web-based. These social media "apps" utilize other Internet resources more closely in order to complete their communication process in every way.

### **Disentrained, Persistent Channels:**

As mobile-based social media 'apps' grow in popularity, individual users' contact with social networks is ongoing, regardless of whether or not the person is continuously 'present' online, such as via video chat. Moreover, during these exchanges, both users do not need to be online in real time (synchronous mode) to receive and consume messages continually. This promotes a more effective presentation of one's ideas and one's self'. Asynchronous communication may occur, but the platform survives and encourages interaction around the clock. This is the second essential characteristic of social media.

### **Perceived Interactivity:**

Carr and Hayes explain, "A social medium is essentially social"; therefore, social media fosters parasocial interaction among its users. A user may subscribe to a personality on Twitter or Instagram, and despite the fact that the personality may constantly post messages, the individual who is following the personality feels that s/ he receives messages and communicates with the personality. Whether a social media user is sending a message, sharing information, or commenting on the posts of others, their simple existence demonstrates their participation in the communication process.

### **User-Generated Value:**

Social media is a product of Web 2.0, in which each user can participate with any message through comments, likes, and sharing choices. Collectively, these contributions from other people add information and value to the original message. The greater the number of user-generated values, the greater the message's popularity, which suggests either widespread acceptance or rejection of the original message. Any given user derives meaningful interpretations from the original message and user-generated content.

### **Mass personal Communication:**

The nature of engagement with social media enables a user to connect with others in a multidirectional manner. For example, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram may be used to communicate with a mass audience and can

also be used for one-on-one interactions. This multidirectional communication flow permits user-to-user, user-to-audience, audience-to-user, and audience-to-audience interactions in social media.

### 2.2.2 History:

It is crucial to comprehend the history of today's technology-mediated social media and social media networks. The majority of students appear to believe that computers and the Internet are the cause of social media. However, if we examine human history, we find that the antecedent of the current computer-based social media networks was established eons ago.

Cursus publicus, the state-run courier, is one example (and transportation) whose rule began in 27 B.C. The courier system or postal system is essentially a social message network because it transports messages from one person to another. The telegraph, telephone, and radio were Internet forerunners. In the 1960s, the initial forms of the Internet, such as CompuServe, were created. UseNet enabled users to connect via a virtual newsletter in 1979.

In the 1980s, home computers became more prevalent and social media became increasingly sophisticated. IRCs, or Internet relay conversations, were introduced in 1988 and were popular long into the 1990s.

"Six Degrees" was the first social media site that resembled social media as we know it today. It was launched in 1997. It allowed users to upload their profiles and connect with other people. In 1999, the first blogging website, Blogger, gained popularity, spawning a social media phenomenon. In the early 2000s, MySpace, Facebook's predecessor, and LinkedIn rose to prominence. Then came photo-sharing websites such as Photobucket and Flickr, which made online photo sharing possible. In 2005, the video-sharing platform YouTube emerged, introducing a completely new mode of human communication.

In 2006, Facebook and Twitter became accessible to people worldwide. Other websites, such as Tumblr, Spotify, Foursquare, and Pinterest, entered fill categories.

Kietzmann et al. (2011) define seven types of social media building blocks. These are present in variable amounts in every social media programme and can be replaced and enhanced by the inclusion of additional applications.

On Facebook, identity might be the user's profile, including her display photo and her interests, hobbies, etc.; on Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., it could be her biodata. The connection is a representation of a user's social network. It could be as straightforward as whose post the user "likes" or who she "follows" or is "followed". It may also be a representation of real-world relationships. These connections may be either unidirectional or bidirectional.

Reputation determines the level of trust among community members. The platform's verification or the offered biodata and content could instill confidence.

Users express their affinity through groups, which are also used to manage relationships.

Conversations enable users to engage in dialogic interactions in real-time or in a time-delayed way. Sharing is how information spreads. Sharing content does not require a social link between users. Sharing also occurs between platforms. Presence involves familiarity with other community members.

While LinkedIn is about reputation, Facebook will be about relationships, Twitter will be about conversations, WhatsApp will be about sharing, TikTok will be about identity, and Foursquare will be about presence, each of these social media platforms can be used as a combination of the seven functional building blocks listed above. When users label themselves as "safe" on Facebook, for instance, it may be utilized as a presence indicator after a natural disaster.

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## 2.3 MASS MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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Additionally, social media is a form of media. Media is simply the plural form of medium. When pundits refer to the media, they are referring to either mass media or conventional mass media. Traditional mass media are one-to-many communication channels in which the consumer is passive and isolated. It is message-driven and has limited channels that are targeted. It has a limited audience due to the ephemeral impression that has an expiration date, i.e. content that is no longer available after publication or broadcast.

In contrast, social media is both one-to-one and many-to-many communication in which the user/consumer is involved. A prosumer/prosumer is a user/consumer who both produces and consumes material. It is conversation-driven and offers an infinite number of tailored channels. It has no boundaries, as it may reach all Internet-connected regions of the world, and social media dialogues are permanent and searchable.

In contrast to traditional media, there are no cultural gatekeepers such as curators, editors, etc. in the social media realm, which disrupts the balance of control. Users now have the means to build their own culture, which affects the consumer-producer relationship and the economic and cultural value of mediatization.

Social media are dialogic (many-to-many) as opposed to the mono-logic (one-to-many) nature of traditional media such as print and broadcast. These differences include reach, frequency, interactivity, usability, performance, and even quality. Today, the line between traditional and social media is somewhat blurred, with traditional mass media also using websites and social media accounts to foray into user conversations that



are accessible across the Internet and whose content can be searched using a search engine or a search tool on their website.

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## 2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA IN INDIA

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A channel is just a channel along which information is transmitted. The numerous social media platforms are the social media channels via which people network. Facebook and its associated Facebook Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp, YouTube, WeChat, QQ, QZone, Weibo, Twitter, Tumblr, Telegram, Baidu Tieba, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, Viber, VK, Reddit, etc. are among the most prominent and most popular social media websites, with over hundreds of millions of registered users.

India has a population of around 1.36 billion people, of which 604 million are Internet users and approximately 400 million will utilize social media by 2020. According to a recent World Bank analysis on the state of social media, India has the most Facebook users of any nation. The Indian YouTube audience has increased by 85 percent in the past year. And WhatsApp has 400 million active users. The subcontinent is currently the most lucrative region for all three networks. Instagram has 69 million users in India, whereas LinkedIn has 56 million users. Twitter and Snapchat have very tiny user bases; however, Snapchat's popularity is growing.

The following graph illustrates the percentage of social media users who utilize various channels. With 82 percent of social media users utilizing this platform, YouTube leads the pack, followed by Facebook and Instagram. Twitter is one of the sixth most popular social media platforms in India, which is quite engaged in public affairs, with a usage rate of 49 percent.

The Internet has a 51 percent penetration rate in India, whereas social media has a penetration rate of approximately 29 percent. All social media users have a mobile data connection, which is the most significant fact. This is one of the reasons for YouTube's success channel might be that it entails making video material without requiring a user to be literate or know how to write any language; merely by employing visual clues, young people with a smartphone in the rural and small towns of India can simultaneously consume and make content for YouTube channels. Regardless, video is a more popular format for social media than text, as shown in the following chart of the most popular social media networks.

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## 2.5 SOCIAL MEDIA OPTIMIZATION

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Social Media Optimization (SMO) is the process of optimizing the delivery of information to a broad community or traffic base. Social Media Optimization and Search Engine Optimization are the two sorts of website optimization techniques (SEO). Social Media Optimization is a methodical approach to social media activities that tries to attract visitors to a website by fostering quality relationships between its members.

Search Engine Optimization, on the other hand, is a methodical approach

to attracting users to a website; it is a technique for bringing users to your website via search engines.

It is possible to claim, however, that the procedures and strategies applied in any practices are universal and interchangeable. It is difficult to dispute that there exists a significant chance for profit when applying or at least considering basic SEO best practices and implementing them in the social media sector.

There are many advantages to social media optimization. Among its numerous advantages is the fact that participation and investment are free. Social media optimization (SMO) is a new idea in the field of internet marketing, even though it has existed for some time in our culture. Men are sociable beings with a strong need to gather among those who share their interests. These like-minded individuals establish a group, which will eventually become a society. In the internet realm, similar concepts are observed.

As a viral marketing approach, SMO has been demonstrated to be an indispensable tool. This is the origin of the term "viral marketing." Viral marketing spreads exponentially as the information reaches millions of people and continues to spread at an accelerating rate. This increases the number of visitors to a website and spreads the message to millions of individuals. As social media optimization is improved, the marketing plan will undoubtedly have a viral character.

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## **2.6 SOME TECHNIQUES FOR MAXIMIZING SOCIAL MEDIA EFFORTS**

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Effective social media optimization keeps web developers on track to target the appropriate social networks, attracts more visitors, and establishes reputation, all while achieving the desired outcomes. In addition, it is advantageous to employ strategies that are not destructive to the efforts and enhance credibility. Constantly revising the methods and techniques aids in the long-term improvement of optimization.

Exciting material is desired by site visitors. Important as it is for attracting more visitors and, thus, for social media optimization, material should be often updated. Users desire simple content-addition procedures. Consequently, it is essential to create a tool that simplifies this procedure for social network members.

Mashups mix data from several sources to provide users with a unified experience. The likelihood of attracting a growing number of users to a website is contingent on the availability of tools that allow for the embedding of links. There is no doubt that promoting such online applications would improve social media optimization.

Mashup, as defined by Wikipedia, is a web page or application that mixes data, presentation, and/or functionality from two or more sources to create new services. For instance, YouTube's decision to allow embedding of

uploaded video codes on other websites has contributed to the site's expansion by increasing its traffic.

Social networking is a two-way street. A website's content must be bookmarked and tagged. Incorporating a space for maintaining links into and out of a site directly relevant to the subject matter is a vital component in this regard. In other words, reward beneficial users. People enjoy incentives and become devoted allies. In social media optimization, the most valuable assets are people who are helpful and valuable.

By facilitating the sharing process with tools such as 'AddThis,' users of a website will find it simple to access the site's information and to disseminate it. This increases the content's popularity and its ability to be shared.

People in social networks desire simple information accessibility. Even if one receives nothing in return, it is worthwhile to give users with valuable information that they will employ. In addition, because content is so important in social media marketing, it is advantageous to develop fresh, original, and engaging content on a frequent basis so that site users are confident they won't miss the most recent information they're seeking.

Social media networks necessitate constant, active participation. Social media optimization audiences might be catastrophic. Therefore, it is advisable to take the time to identify the appropriate audience with which to engage.

To gain the trust of users, a website's content must be authentic. Users may quickly spot fraudulent content. Humility is an essential attribute for social media users. Being the top expert might be a fleeting position, so one should avoid being egotistical. Social media optimization requires a creative approach. People desire to view, read, learn about, and experience novel objects. Creativity draws more visitors and highly-engaged, devoted network members.

Backlinks, which are also known as incoming links, inbound links, inlinks, and inward links, are advantageous for SMO. These are inbound links leading to a website. In order to boost the SEO process, page content with social media features such as RSS feeds is essential. RSS feed (Really Simple Syndication) is a portion of the web feed format used to publish constantly updated information; it is a method of disseminating a list of information to a large number of people, which is then organized by special computer programmes called "RSS aggregators." These apps automatically access RSS feeds and organize the results in a format that is easily accessible.

### **Check Your Progress:**

1. Explain in detail 'Social Media'.

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## 2. Discuss the History of Social Media.

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## 2.7 INTERNET SEARCH ENGINES

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In the early 1990s, as online content reached its top, the progress of Web search reached its zenith. In its infancy, the Web was completely unorganized. Webpages lacked standards; there was no definitive relationship between websites and content, and there were no conventions for taxonomy and organization. The Web was confronted with such formidable obstacles, which necessitated a search for viable answers. Another issue that needed to be resolved was the content's significance, which allowed for expansion. The evolution of information technology has enabled professionals from various fields to share their research findings, thoughts, and experiences.

The Internet contains a vast quantity of information on a variety of fields of study.

The majority of websites that incorporate a database system can get information from structured sources with specified properties from a collection of objects based on business rules and database queries. The Web has become the virtual platform for accessing and digesting information for billions of information searchers today.

The introduction of Web 2.0, with its practically limitless breadth and size, has made data mining a previously unfathomable possibility. Text mining and information extraction have not only been applied to the web, but also to the analysis of other semi-structured and unstructured information systems, such as online library catalog systems, online document management systems, and the newly developed Web search engines.

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## 2.8 WEB SEARCH AND EXPLORATION

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Web mining is the process of extracting data or knowledge from the World Wide Web. Content, structure, and usage are the three domains that can be cited in Web mining. Web content mining is the process of extracting usable information, such as text, image, audio, and video data, from a Web page's content. Information retrieval, natural language processing, and text mining are common technologies utilized in Web content mining.

The content of a document can be immediately retrieved and edited by users. The other domain of Web mining is Web structure, a method that enables users to obtain more information than what is included in a single

document. For example, the popularity of a document can be determined by the number of links leading to it, while the content of the many topics mentioned in a document can be determined by the number of links pointing away from it. The third domain, Web usage mining, is used to learn about usage behavior and structure.

Analyzing the Web access logs of various websites makes this possible. Web usage mining employs generic access pattern tracking that is used to analyze the web log to learn about access patterns and trends in order to build a more efficient structure and cluster content providers. On the other hand, customized usage tracking is frequently employed to study individual trends in order to personalize website users.

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## 2.9 MANAGING DATA

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A database is a large storage space where information on many subjects is kept. Each URL (Uniform Resource Locator) is represented by numerous Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) data points (URI). URL defines the address of the web pages on the web server, which is a combination of computer hardware and software that is connected to the internet and holds all the assets of a website. Search engine providers select how to organize and rank the information in their own unique way. For instance, Google's ranking systems are referred to as PageRank and are quite complex and discreet.

The rating scores are determined by the companies, and they are kept strictly confidential. On the basis of Web usage patterns, these organizations typically modify the element weighting parameters. And page quality is taken into account when assigning a score. Historically, keywords were the most important aspect in page rankings and scoring.

In terms of web architecture, a database is a collection of data that serves the same goal and provides support for it. DBMS (Database Management System) is a computer application that permits the development, maintenance, and utilization of databases. DBMS is typically used to store, retrieve, manage, update, and remove data.

Databases containing the data are the origins of internal site searches. Before implementing the search, the website should have a keyword or search phrase input area. Keywords are search terms typed into a search engine or search input field in order to locate only user-specifically relevant content. These terms should be utilized as meta tags on web sites in order to increase their search engine rankings.

For this project, MySQL was chosen as the database. MySQL is a popular open-source database system that employs techniques for categorizing, accessing, and executing queries on data stored in a database. Wikipedia, Flickr, Google, and Facebook are popular websites that utilize MySQL.

## **Internal Search Engine Optimization:**

Optimizing internal site search is the process of refining search results in order to increase the relevance of the data returned from a query in less time. To maximize internal search results, it is crucial to understand what visitors are searching for, how frequently, and why, as well as to prevent them from entering queries that return no results by suggesting related and common search phrases as they type. Internal searches should also yield keywords that are employed for SEO.

When a search query yields too many results, it is essential to narrow down the results to display only the pertinent information. Therefore, there should be a method for filtering out extraneous details and narrowing the search results to a finer degree. The results of a search query should be suitable for sorting based on any quantifiable result field included in the search criteria. It is prudent to provide users with the closest possible match for misspelled search queries.

## **Indexing by Crawlers, Spiders, and Robots:**

Crawlers, spiders, and robots are software programmes that function on the internet by exploring and cataloging material to facilitate search indexing.

There are no fundamental distinctions between these programmes, and their purpose is to pull and gather information from a website and catalog it in an appropriate manner. This operation occurs within the computer's operating system. The only elements visible to the user are the query interface and search results. Web crawlers are often known as ants, bots, or mechanical indexers.

The World Wide Web (WWW) is a tremendously large, unstructured, and geographically diverse phenomenon often known as the web. It is a collection of interrelated hypertext pages. The presentation of content on a web page in such a way that hypertext links connect the various sections of the site. A Hyperlink (Hypertext Link) is a reference to the route of the page that is used to link to the document. Text or images may constitute a Hyperlink. Web pages refer to these documents. A website is a collection of these files that are accessible via the Internet and are kept on a web server.

Every piece of content on the Internet is published in HTML and may be retrieved via the HTTP protocol. HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol) is a networking protocol and collection of rules that regulates the format and transmission of messages across the World Wide Web.

While there are specific guidelines for the inclusion of Meta information, all indexed content is accessible to all users. On the other hand, such content collection can be complicated regardless of the normal case, i.e., when the data comes from centralized, structured systems.



Crawling, Real-time Query, and Feed methods allow for the acquisition of content.

Intranets, websites, file systems, and occasionally databases use the Crawling mechanism, while the Real-time Query method retrieves meaningful results and the Feed technique inserts content or meta into an index. Intranet, which is restricted to a single company, is the antithesis of the internet. Access to intranet networks is controlled to allow only the specified organization to safely share any portion of information on its server.

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## 2.10 A SEARCH ENGINE'S INTERNAL MECHANISMS

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A search engine is a web-based technology that is used to locate information on the internet. Web pages containing text, images, videos, and other forms of media may be made available as compensation. Paid or pay-per-click (PPC) listings and natural or organic search results are the two types of search lists provided by search engines. It is simply a very huge database containing a record of individual web pages from the entire web.

### **Algorithms for Search:**

Different aspects of web-based search engines are vital. The search engine algorithm serves as the basis for the others. Its objective is to serve as a problem-solving method. On-page algorithms, whole-site algorithms, and off-site algorithms are the three basic classifications for search algorithms. Each of these categorizations assesses distinct aspects (parts) of a Web page. Using a search algorithm, systems take a problem, evaluate a number of potential solutions, and then return the solution.

A problem can be described in the form of a word or phrase by utilizing a database containing the words or phrases. When identified, the method provides sites that include the keywords or phrases that were searched. There are several classifications of search algorithms, and each search engine utilizes algorithms that differ slightly. Due to this, using the same word or phrase with different search engines can provide different results.

### **Complex search algorithms consider the following elements:**

- Text matching which can be utilized for phrase matching, exact matching, or partial matching.
- According to Wikipedia, concept searching is an automated information retrieval technique used to search electronically stored unstructured text (such as digital archives, email, scientific literature, etc.) for information that is conceptually similar to the information provided in the search query.
- Common misspellings, idioms, and acronyms are analyzed by a spellchecker and thesaurus.



- Query expansion refers to the expansion of a search query to match additional contents.
- In-Linking in which the quality and number of inbound links to the site are calculated and displayed as a search option output based on its relevance.

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## 2.11 SEARCH ENGINES OPTIMIZATION

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Search Engine Optimization (SEO) seeks to increase a website's visibility on the web by ensuring that all of its parts are tailored to the needs of the user. — Search engine optimization, or SEO, is the act of configuring your website so that it ranks highly for specific keywords in the unpaid search results of Google, Yahoo, and Bing. SEO requires internal and external website analysis, as well as link building, correct website architecture and development, competitive analysis, keyword research, and content generation, among other activities. The top ranking in Google is not always the same as in Yahoo or Bing, thus a designer may be able to learn something from a site that is exclusive to one search engine, or more crucially, from a site that is regularly ranked at the top of each engine.

**Among the techniques for search engine optimization are:**

Not awaiting search engines to index and crawl your site. Instead, personally submit it. You can wait for these crawlers to discover your site on their own, or you can take a proactive approach and inform search engines about your site.

Websites must be aesthetically pleasing and simple to rank. Developing a website with quality content, Meta tags, and keywords helps boost its rating. A search engine really must pay special attention to title and description elements.

Keywords should specify the context of the site's topic and content accurately.

Exchange links with other websites that contain similar information.

Traffic-generating strategies should include keyword advertising, link exchanges, and marketing efforts.

Website visitors seek out particular information. The quality of the content in terms of dynamism, relevance, freshness, or timeliness, as well as sufficiency, is what satisfies and draws it. Outdated content has the potential to be rejected or disregarded by search engines. For a website to attain a high search engine rating, its material must remain current.

Crawlers, spiders, and robots, which are used to categorize content on the Internet, facilitate site linkage. Therefore, it is essential that all links function correctly and precisely.

Accurately linking a website is facilitated with a site map. This site map is an SML file that contains information about each page on the site. All of a

website's pages can be indexed by utilizing XML. Therefore, it is vital to have an accurate and up-to-date site map to establish a good link.

### **Check Your Progress:**

1. Discuss SEO.

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2. Explain Social Media Optimization.

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3. State the effects of Social Media.

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## **2.12 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS**

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- Understanding social media
- Definitions
- History
- Mass Media and Social Media
- Social Media in India
- Social Media Optimization
- Some Techniques for Maximizing Social Media Efforts
- Internet search engines
- Web Search and Exploration
- Managing Data

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## **2.13 QUESTIONS**

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1. Explain in detail with examples the History of Social Media
2. What are the techniques to maximize the Social Media Efforts?
3. What are Internet Search Engines?

4. Write a Note on:
  - Indexing by Crawlers, Spiders, and Robots
  - Search Engines Optimization

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## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

### Unit Structure

- 3.0 Objective of The Study
- 3.1 Introduction
  - 3.1.1 Search Engines: Definitions
  - 3.1.2 Search Engines: Evolution
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### 3.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

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The objective of this unit is to focus and discuss:

- Search engines and their evolution;
- How search engines work;
- Components of a search engine;
- Categories of search engines;
- Search techniques;
- Metadata and search engines;
- Evaluation of search engines; and
- Important search engines.

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

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The expansion of the Internet has created a contradictory circumstance. On the one hand, the Internet contains a vast amount of information, but on the other hand, the sheer volume of unorganized material makes it difficult for users to obtain relevant and reliable information quickly and efficiently. On millions of servers connected to the Internet, the Internet is the most comprehensive, significant, and helpful source of information on virtually every element of human knowledge. It is a well-known truth that

neither established policies for hosting information nor a centralized database for organizing and searching the information available on the Internet. This makes the Internet the most diversified and disorganized information resource. For a number of Internet users, searching for specific information is the primary reason for accessing the Internet. Due to the availability of abundant information, it is now quite difficult for the average Internet user to locate exact and pertinent information. To address this issue, computer scientists devised search tools that sift through the Internet's material to get the user's desired results. Numerous searches, resource finding, and navigation methods have been developed to facilitate more effective information retrieval. Search engines are one of these instruments.

To search the web, search engines use automated programmes called bots, robots, spiders, crawlers, wanderers, and worms. In order to index web pages, robots roam the web. Some of them index websites by their titles, some by their Uniform Resource Locators (URLs), others by the words included in each document on a website, and others by a combination of these methods. These search engines operate in a variety of ways and search distinct portions of the Internet. In this Unit, we will investigate the world of social media, its characteristics, and its applications in a variety of sectors.

### **3.1.1 Search Engines: Definitions**

Search Engine is a generic word for software that "searches" the web for pages relevant to a certain query. Google and Excite are two examples of popular search engines that index and search a substantial portion of the World Wide Web. Multiple websites employ their own search engines to index their own content. Multiple sites on the World Wide Web are devoted to indexing the material on all other sites. These websites enable users to search the web for information resources using any term or word combination.

#### **Internet search engines:**

A search engine is a computer programme that searches the Internet for documents containing the user's search terms. A search engine is a tool for discovering, categorizing, and storing information on multiple Internet domains. Using a variety of search techniques, it can assist in identifying relevant material on a specific topic.

This service indexes, organizes, and frequently rates and reviews websites. It aids Internet users in locating the proverbial "needle in the haystack." Different search engines operate in various ways. Others rely on automation to identify crucial information on websites throughout the Internet, while some rely on people to maintain a directory of websites or web pages. Some mix the two service kinds. Therefore, searching the Internet for the same topic using different search engines yields diverse results.

Search engines can also be characterized as online tools that rapidly search thousands of web documents for a certain term or phrase. Although some search engines are subscription-based, the vast majority are supported by advertising revenue. It should be emphasized that no single search engine indexes the entirety of the Internet's web pages.

Each search engine defines its scope in terms of the content of the web pages it hosts. In addition, some search engines index each and every word on each page. Others only index a subset of the document. Full-text search engines often retrieve every word in the text, with the exception of stop words like 'a', 'an', 'the', 'is', 'and', 'or', and 'www'. Some search engines distinguish between capital and lowercase letters, while others save all terms without regard to case. Due to these factors, a user receives different results from various search engines.

Web clients called web browsers are commonly used to access search engines. Each search engine offers distinct search choices and has its own distinct characteristics. In addition, search engines differ substantially in the types of sites a user can search. Numerous search engines provide search and browsing interfaces.

### **3.1.2 Search Engines: Evolution**

The Archie, created in 1990 by Alan Emtage, a student at McGill University in Montreal, is the first search engine to index and search files on the FrP server. It was in fact an indexing spider that visited each anonymous FrP website, read all directory and file names, and then indexed them into a massive database.

In 1993, inspired by the success of Archie, the University of Nevada created Veronica. The University of Nevada developed VERONICA (Very Easy Rodent-Oriented Netwide Index to Computerized Archives) to search all menu items on Gopher servers. Soon, another user interface named Jughead with the same function as Veronica was introduced. Rhett 'Jonzy' Jones created the JugHead (Jonzy's Universal Gopher Hierarchy Excavation and Display), a strong Gopher search tool. It was an application that searched for a particular Gopher site (not all). It simply searched directory headings, not the contents of Gopher submenu resources. Archie, VERONICA, and Jughead no longer exist, yet prior to the web's astronomical rise, these search engines were the Internet's true workhorses.

Matthew Gray introduced the first web-searching robot, dubbed World Wide Web Wanderer, shortly after the 1993 birth of the World Wide Web. In October 1993, Artijn Koster created ALIWEB, a web indexing programme similar to Archie. It allowed users to submit the websites they desired to be indexed by ALIWEB, along with their own descriptions and keywords, without the use of a robot. By December 1993, three robot-fed search engines, including JumpStation, the World Wide Web Worm, and the Repository-Based Software Engineering (RBSE) spider, had emerged on the World Wide Web.

JumpStation extracted the title and header information from web pages using a straightforward linear search. As the web expanded, JumpStation came to a halt. Titles and URLs were indexed by the WWWorm. The JumpStation and the World Wide Web Worm did not employ a ranking system to present their search results; instead, the results were listed in the order in which they were discovered. A rating mechanism was implemented by the RSBE spider.

Excite was a byproduct of the 1993 Architect project, which was initiated by six Stanford undergraduates. They utilized statistical analysis of word correlations to increase the efficiency of their searches. Midway through 1993, Excite search software was released. However, the Excite approach appears unimportant because the spiders lacked the intelligence to comprehend what all the linkages meant.

In January of 1994, the EInet Galaxy Web Directory was launched. Since then, the EInet Galaxy has been a success. In addition to its online search functionality, it contained Gopher and Telnet search capabilities.

David Filo and Jerry Yang founded Yahoo as a compilation of their favorite websites on April 19, 1994. As their number of links increased, they had to reorganize and create a directory that could be searched. As an enhancement to the Wanderer, the Yahoo directory gave a description for each URL along with the URL. On April 20, 1994, Brian Pinkerton of the University of Washington introduced the WebCrawler. The first crawler to index complete web sites. Excite acquired WebCrawler in 1997, and AOL began using Excite to power NetFind in 1998. WebCrawler paved the way for a multitude of services to follow suit.

Three significant search engines, namely Lycos, Infoseek, and OpenText, emerged shortly following the birth of Web Crawler. In July of 1994, Carnegie Mellon University created Lycos, the subsequent significant search engine. Lycos was started on July 20, 1994, with a database of 54,000 documents. By November 1996, Lycos had indexed over 60 million documents, more than any other web search engine. In August 1994, Lycos had identified 394,000 documents. In October 1994, Lycos topped Netscape's list of search engines by providing the most results for the phrase "surf." Also, Infoseek was founded in 1994.

Netscape began utilizing Infoseek as its primary search engine in December 1995. Additionally, AltaVista was introduced in December 1995. It added numerous key capabilities to web searching. They were the first to permit natural language searches and advanced searching strategies.

In 1996, the LookSmart directory began operation. The Inktomi Corporation was founded in May 1996 with the Hotbot search engine. It was purchased by Yahoo. In April 1997, Ask Jeeves was introduced, followed by the Northern Light.

In 1998, Google, the most potent search engine to date, was introduced. Google ranks its pages based on the amount of incoming links. Google's



popularity has grown to the point where major portals such as AOL and Yahoo use Google to search their directories. In 1998, MSN search, Open Directory, and Direct Hit were the three most prominent search engines and directories to be introduced.

In 1999, Disney introduced the Go Network. Fast developed its search technology in the same year as Google and was regarded as its closest competitor. The Teoma search engine, which employs clustering to organize sites by subject-specific popularity, was introduced in 2000.

Ask Jeeves acquired Teoma in 2001 to replace the Direct Hit search engine.

In 2002, LookSmart acquired the WiseNut search engine to power its new search offering.

Google began incorporating semantic components into its search product in 2003, significantly enhancing its search results, Overture acquired AllTheWeb and Alta Vista, and Yahoo acquired Inktomi and Overture. In 2004, MSN abandoned LookSmart for Inktomi and Yahoo abandoned Google for its own search engine. Yahoo! has created a distinct database from the Inktomi database, which in March 2004 superseded both Alta Vista and AllTheWeb.

The abbreviated history shown here does not encompass the emergence, marginalization, and demise of numerous smaller search engines.

### 3.1.3 How do search engines work?

Search engines do not actually perform direct Web searches. Instead, they search their own databases, which contain the keywords or complete text of online sites that were previously selected and gathered from billions of web pages located on servers across the globe.

When a user searches the web using a search engine, an archived version of the actual web page resides on the search engine's server. When a user clicks on the links supplied in a search engine's search results, he/she is redirected to the most recent version of the page. A typical search engine consists of the three components listed below:

#### Check your Progress

1) Name 3 Search Engines from 1990 to 1999.

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2) Define a Search Engine

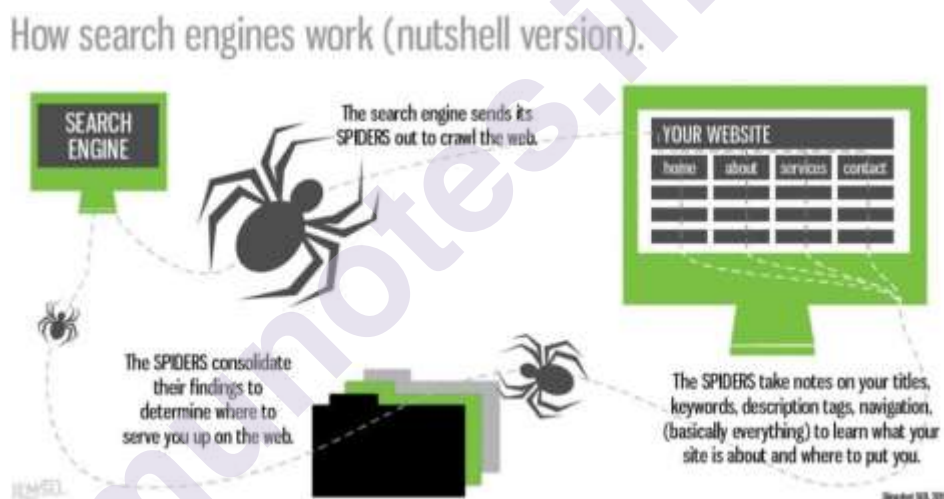
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## 3.2 THE ROBOT OR SPIDER

Variably referred to as bot, robot, spider, crawler, web wanderer, or indexer, these are computer programmes that automatically traverse the information space of the World Wide Web. These programmes navigate from one web page to the next by visiting links placed on each page, thereby creating an index of visited web sites. This method is comparable to citation searching, in which a user follows a reference from one journal article to another on the same subject. The spider resides on a host machine and uses the HTTP protocol to access remote web pages (as would any web browser). Spiders are capable of retrieving files in any format. They crawl the online to discover new sites, index the web for keywords, and search for broken links for automatic maintenance. A robot, unlike a virus, does not physically move from computer to computer; it just accesses websites and requests that documents be indexed, similar to a user. A robot or spider's primary functions include indexing online pages, HTML validation, link validation, identifying fresh information, and replicating websites.



### 3.2.1

#### Thematic Presentation of Functioning of Web Robots:

*Image Source: [www.digitalthirdcoast.com](http://www.digitalthirdcoast.com)*

To index the web, many robots employ various methodologies. In general, the majority of search engines begin with a meta resource site or a subject portal including links to multiple other sites. They continuously scan the Internet, keeping track of newly-appearing documents and removing duplicates. Most search engines allow users to manually input URLs, which are then queued and visited by the robot at a later time. Others limit themselves to indexing only web pages, whilst some search engines scan every type of resource available on the web, including newsgroups, discussion forums, Gopher, listservs, and FTP sites, among others. Others are programmed to visit specific websites at predetermined intervals.

Utilizing their own spider software, search engines index content from websites based on predetermined criteria. In a similar fashion, search interfaces are modified to highlight the unique characteristics of various

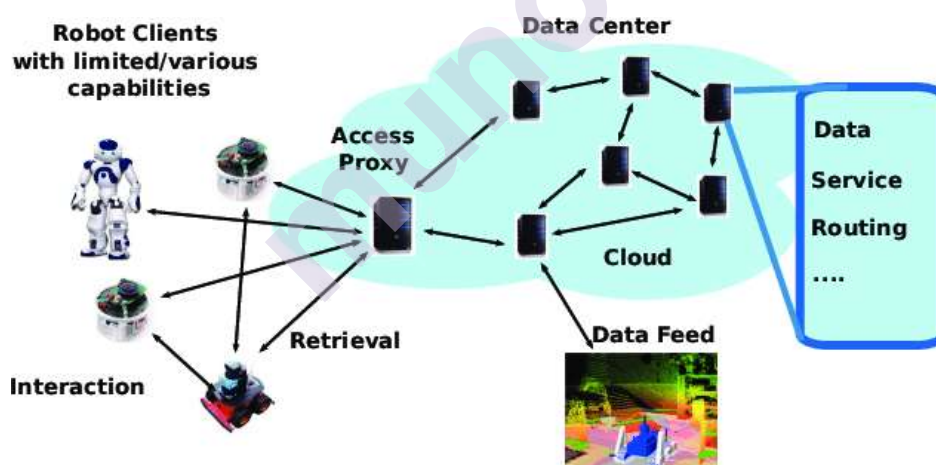
search engines. Each search engine uses its own algorithm or set of criteria to choose, index, and retrieve websites.

By policy, certain sorts of content and links (such as pornographic sites) are prohibited from the majority of search engines. In addition, there are websites that prohibit search engines from indexing them. Furthermore, search engines are unable to index database-driven websites. These sites are referred to as the 'Invisible Web' or the 'Concealed Web', as the information they contain is hidden behind databases and is priced.

After discovering web sites, spiders send them to another computer software for "indexing." This application recognises and stores the page's text, links, and other content in the search engine's database files.

### **The Database:**

A robot or a spider scrapes indexing information from web pages that it has visited and stores it in its database or catalog, which includes URLs, titles, headers, words from the title and text, first lines, abstracts, and sometimes even the complete text. The robot searches in such a way that the most popular websites are discovered and indexed first. The resulting database, which contains millions of web pages, is the index that users search. This database's size impacts the exhaustiveness of a search engine. Most search programmes additionally generate a secondary database containing web page, URL, title, and summary entries. When a user obtains results from a search tool, they are presented with a summary record.



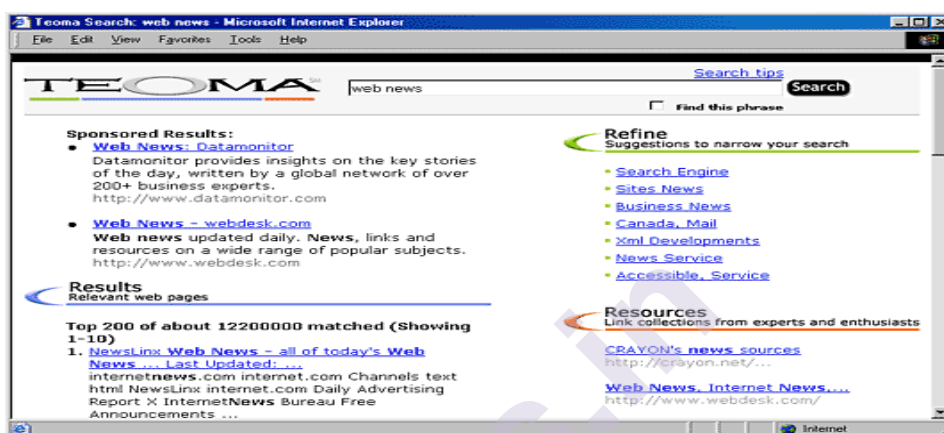
### **Instructions to Robots or Intelligent Agents Prohibiting Systematic Download of Contents from the Site:**

Either search engines update their databases cumulatively or rebuild them at a predetermined frequency. Lycos, for instance, cumulatively updates information on new and old URLs rather than recreating it. Excite, on the other hand, periodically rebuilds its database by sending its spider to retrieve the contents of pages recognised from 'new sites' each week.

## The User Interface or the Agent:

The user interface or agent is a software programme that accepts queries from users and searches the index of millions of pages included in the database.

The agent compares the query to the database, locates matches, and ranks them according to their relevance. The results consisting of online links and brief descriptions are displayed to the users in order of relevancy. The most popular websites are listed first among items of equal relevance.



## Search Interface for TEOMA Search Engine

### 3.2.2 Search Engines: Categories

In addition to serving as a tool for locating websites, the majority of search engines offer a variety of other features. They contain information such as recent news articles, newsgroup postings, reference material (dictionary entries and maps), and email addresses, street addresses, and telephone numbers of businesses and persons. It is possible to divide search engines into the following categories:

#### Leading Search Engines:

Primary search engines utilize web crawlers or spiders, web wanderers and webworms to explore the World Wide Online and scan websites for words, phrases, or the entire site in order to compile a database of web pages. Scan engines do not search the web in real time; rather, they employ a database of web pages acquired by their robots' hypertext links that is regularly updated. The most frequently used search engines are primary search engines. These vary considerably with regard to:

- **Database size:** breadth and depth of websites indexed by their "spiders."
- **Database content:** Full-text or metadata, such as URL, keywords, title, etc.
- **Syntax used:** word search, Boolean search, phrase search, as well as other sophisticated features

- **Ranking** of results based on sponsored sites, update frequency, popularity, etc.

According to the manner their robots employ to collect information for their index databases, primary search engines can also be categorized into the four groups listed below.

Automated robots scan a significant portion of the web wherever they are permitted.

### **Designated Robots:**

The designated robots (such as those employed by ALIWEB or W3 catalog) are trained to scan only specific web pages as opposed to the entire web. Sites that employ "designated robots" allow users to submit their websites to a search engine. Upon submission of a URL, the new URL is added to the robot's queue of websites to be visited on its next venture into the internet. Even if a user does not submit its site, a designated robot may discover it via sites that link to it.

Some robots focus more on top-level materials, which are more likely to be indexed by subject-oriented index engines like JumpStation II.

A query made on "breadth-oriented search engines" would get fewer results, with a greater proportion of meta information and subject portals.

**Search Engines with a Focus on Depth:** Depth-oriented robots (such as web crawlers) follow links to deeper levels. They retrieve specific items from the indexes of a server and follow links to other servers. Additionally, robots with a focus on depth have a tendency to retrieve duplicate or false hits. Search engines with a focus on depth tend to catalog an excessive amount of information.

To initiate a search, most search engines require the user to enter one or more search phrases, press 'Enter', or click on 'search' or 'go'. The majority of significant search engines provide three search options: any word, all words, and specific phrase. When 'any word' is searched, a list of all indexed pages containing any of the search terms is returned. A search for "Mahatma Gandhi birthdate," for instance, would yield all pages containing the word "Mahatma" as well as the words "Gandhi" and "birthdate." This type of search returns a substantial number of results. When a user is unsure of the search phrases he should use, 'Any words' search can be handy. The 'All words' search returns all indexed pages that contain the search phrases in any order. Again, there is a high likelihood of off-topic outcomes. The 'exact phrase' search returns all indexed pages containing the exact phrase entered, disregarding punctuation. Similar websites that are characterized using a different term will not be displayed. However, even this type of search may give inaccurate results, as the precise term may have been used in a context other from the one intended. On their homepages or on a page labeled 'Power Search' or 'Advanced Search,' most search engines offer more than these three basic search

options. Different websites support distinct functionality. The search results may vary significantly based on the option selected.

The number of times the search phrases appear in a document, the location of the search terms on a page (title, description, etc.), the number of inbound links, and how closely the document looks to fit the notion being searched for are typically used to rank search results.

### **3.2.3 Search Engines That Search Other Search Engines:**

Mega indexes, often known as meta search engines, lack their own databases.

They have access to alternative primary search engines. Meta search engines may do a search on a single primary search engine, or they may simultaneously search multiple primary search engines and offer the unified results in a single package. This type of search engine is also known as a multithreaded search engine. Ask Jeeves, MetaCrawler, Savvy Search, @Once!, All-in-One Search Page, Galaxy, Internet Sleuth, Magellan, Net Search, Dogpile, Metacrawler, Metafind, Metasearch, and ixquick.com are examples of well-known meta search engines.

A meta search engine is a search engine that simultaneously searches the databases of multiple other search engines to identify web pages that match a user's search terms. Meta-search engines, unlike major search engines and directories, do not have their own databases, i.e., they do not collect web pages, do not allow URL additions, and do not categorize or review websites. They instead send simultaneous inquiries to numerous search engines and/or site directories. Many meta-search engines integrate search results: duplicate finds are merged into a single entry, some rank the results based on various criteria, and others permit the selection of search engines.

Before running a search on a meta-search engine, it is essential to determine which search engines the meta-search engine includes. The bulk of popular search engines, including Google, AltaVista, Excite, Lycos, and GO.com, utilize metasearch engines as their default search engine.

Utilization of a metasearch engine is dependent on the present status of each of the used primary search engines. Some key search engines may be unavailable or overloaded at that moment. It should be emphasized that a query submitted to a meta-search engine, with its standardized search interface and syntax, is to be applied to the variety of individual search engines. Therefore, it is impossible for a single metasearch engine to utilize all the features of the separate search engines. Boolean searches, for instance, may yield diverse results. Perhaps phrase searches are not supported.

In a meta search engine, other functions, such as query refinement, are sacrificed.



In addition, meta-search engines do not typically do extensive searches and do not return all pages from each specific search engine. They only utilize the top 10 to 100 results from each search engine. While this is sufficient for the majority of searches, specific search engines must be consulted if results beyond the top hits determined by meta-search engines are required. This is facilitated by some meta-search engines that provide query links back to the individual search engines.

Specialized search engines are primary search engines with a narrow or specialized focus. Direct Search (<http://www.freepint.com/Jgary/direct.htm>), Beaucoup (<http://www.beaucoup.com/J>), Hoovers Online, (<http://www.hoovers.com/J>), and Sirius (<http://www.sirius.com/J>) are examples of specialized search engines.

### **Subject or Web Directories:**

Directories are the Internet's Yellow Pages. They contain data that has been supplied by their indexers or users who submit entries. Frequently, subject directories are manually maintained, searchable, and navigable online interfaces. The most popular subject directory is Yahoo! Yahoo! contains multiple subject headings. The information in a subject directory is organized into categories and subcategories or subjects and subtopics. One can search a subject directory, similar to a search engine, for all entries that include a given set of keywords. Although directories can be searched using keywords, it is often just as simple to click on a category and then navigate specific subdirectories until the appropriate subject is located. The majority of online directories are intended to be browsed by subject category. In contrast to indexes, however, directories organize information differently. Web indexes just compile an increasing number of records, whereas directories organize information into groupings of records that are related.

In addition to Yahoo!, the most recognisable directories include Open Directory Project ([Dmoz.org](http://Dmoz.org)) and LookSmart.

Directories of Search Engines have fewer resources than search engine databases. Because the resources in a directory are picked, managed, and updated manually. This can be advantageous for users, particularly if they are seeking a general topic. The directories boost the likelihood of receiving relevant results and the likelihood of discovering high-quality, trustworthy websites.

Additionally, the directories include drawbacks. In a directory, it is feasible to group entries with identical topics into two distinct subject categories. The databases of search engines are updated automatically by robots or spiders, whereas directories are updated manually by selecting, rating, and categorizing new entries. Due to the manual selection of resources, the directories may omit a number of essential resources.



## **Hybrid Search Engines:**

In the early days of the World Wide Web, search engines displayed either crawler-based or human-powered results. It is commonplace for search engines to display both types of results today. Typically, a hybrid search engine prioritizes one listing type over the other. For instance, MSN Search is more likely to display LookSmart's human-generated results. However, it also provides crawler-based results (supplied by Inktomi), particularly for esoteric queries. In addition, there are numerous directories that seek to organize the Internet by topic, as well as numerous search engines that combine directory and keyword search capabilities.

## **Subject Gateways or Subject Portals:**

Subject gateways, also known as meta resources, subject-based information gateways (SBIGs), subject-based gateways, subject index gateways, virtual libraries, clearing houses, subject trees, pathfinders, and guides to Internet resources, facilitate access to network-based resources in a particular subject area.

For the sake of terminology consistency, this unit would prefer to utilize "subject portals" over other prevalent terms. Subject portals lead users to the original digital content proprietors. It may provide its own indexing and search services, or it may aggregate the original resources of many suppliers. The aforementioned portals are limited to providing links to electronic resources hosted on other servers.

A subject portal can be characterized as an organized and structured guide to Internet-based electronic information resources that have been carefully picked after a prescribed evaluation and filtering procedure in a subject area or specialization. Subject portals are frequently standalone websites or sections of an institution's or library's website that provide a directory of Internet resources deemed suitable for their intended readership.

A subject gateway site that is part of an institution's website or a library's website may offer free access to resources that are subscribed to by the parent organization. A commercial firm may also create a subject gateway that is freely available up to the bibliographic level. A user may be compelled to pay a fee in order to access the full-text, though.

The homepages of all major education and research institutions, particularly in the industrialized world, provide an organized and structured directory of Internet-based electronic resources. LibrarySpot, Librarians Index to Internet, Argus Clearing House, BIOME, and BUBL are examples of subject portals.

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## **3.3 IMPORTANT SEARCH ENGINES**

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### **Google:**

Google is a brand-new, next-generation search engine with 4.3 billion web pages. Following in the footsteps of Yahoo, Excite, and WhoWhere, it has

transitioned from a student initiative to a commercial website. Its relevance ranking incorporates two elements that are not often included in search engine rankings: the number of links to the page from other pages and the 'importance' of the linking pages. Other ranking variables include the amount of occurrences of search phrases in the title and text, as well as their closeness to one another.

Since its introduction in 1999, Google has become the preeminent web search engine for many users. It has built a name for itself with its relevance ranking based on link analysis, cached content, and rapid expansion. Since its beta release, phrase searching has been available. It announced a database of over 560 million pages in June of 2000, which increased to over 600 million by the end of 2000 and 1.5 billion by December of 2001.

The more than two billion visits reported to their homepage as of April 2002 include indexed pages, non-indexed URLs, and various file formats. By November 2002, they had increased their claim to \$3 billion, and by July 2004 it had risen to \$4,260,000,000. The largest strength of Google is its database size and relevancy rating based on links.

In addition to web pages, its database also contains PDF, .ps, .doc, .xls, .txt, .ppt, .rtf, .asp, and .wpd files, among others. Google also features an image database, a Usenet News group, sponsored adverts that are typically displayed on the right side under 'Sponsored Links,' and web news sites.

Google provides Boolean searching, proximity searching, field searching, file type limitation, language and domain searching, character searching, and number and number range searching. Relevance is assessed by links from other pages, with authoritative sites receiving a greater weighting. Additionally, pages are grouped by site. Only two pages are displayed on each site, with the second page indented.

The display comprises the page's title, URL, a brief excerpt including content near the search terms, the file size, and a link to a cached version of the page for multiple hits. This cached version is sourced from Google's index and may be older than the currently accessible version on the web. Search phrases will be highlighted in the cached version. If multiple search terms are entered, each one is highlighted in a distinct color. The default output is 10 results per screen, but the preferences page allows the user to select 20, 30, 50, or 100 results per screen.

### **MSN Search:**

MSN Search is one of MAN's search engines. The system utilizes an Internet database. The standard search screen only displays a few options, but selecting the Advanced Search link reveals the entire range of search options. This study examines all accessible choices, some of which are exclusive to advanced search. MSN Search utilizes the LookSmart directory and the Inktomi search engine database. It receives its sponsored sites (ads) from Overture. On the basic search screen, MSN Featured Sites

and Directory results appear first. The advanced search only returns results from Inktomi.

MSN search enables Boolean searching, proximity searching, truncation, field searching, media type and file type restrictions, and field searching. Relevance determines the ordering of results. MAN's advanced search is the only one in the Inktomi family to offer the ability to sort "equally relevant results" by date, depth, or title. Please note that this will only sort records with the same relevance ranking scores. The presentation includes the title, a brief overview, and the URL. By default, MSN Search displays 15 results at a time. In the advanced search, customers can request displays of 10, 15, 20, or 50 entries at a time or modify their settings. There is also the option to exclude the summary from the advanced search.

### **WiseNut:**

This new search engine, which debuted in beta in 2001, has created its own extensive database. WiseGuide categories are similar to Teoma's automatically created, semantically related searches. It lacks complete Boolean and advanced search capabilities.

WiseNut offers a single index database for web pages. There are currently no additional databases or portal features available. WiseNut has one partner website, namely Korea WiseNut. It offers proximity searching and language-specific search limitations. By default, websites are ranked according to their perceived importance. There is no option for alphabetical, site, or date-based sorting. Title, 1 or 2 lines as they are, the number of links to other matches from the same site, and the URL are displayed in the results. WiseNut groups results by site, but assists the user by displaying the amount of further matches from the same site. WiseNut displays the query, total number of results, WiseGuide categories, and the top 10 search results above the search results.

WiseNut allows users to choose the presentation of the quantity of records with or without a summary, enable or disable site clustering, select an encoding scheme, and enable or disable WiseGuide categories.

### **Fast Search and Transfer:**

Fast Search & Transfer (FAST) produced AlltheWeb's and Lycos' search engine and database. Overture acquired the web search unit of 1:\ST in February 2003.

Fast Search and Transfer launched their Fast search engine at [www.alltheweb.com](http://www.alltheweb.com) in 1999. The first major expansion occurred in January 2000 when their database appeared on the Lycos website. Fast began with 80 million URLs and expanded to 200 million by August 1999 and 300 million by January 2000. In June of 2002, they exceeded 2 billion. The search engine intends to index the entire indexable public web.

The FAST Search interface consists of a navigation bar, a search field, and a few links at the bottom of the page. On none of the website's pages is

there much advertising. The Advanced Search interface is unique in that it gives the user more possibilities.

### **Excite:**

This search engine provides two search options: concept and keyword. Frequently, there are no substantial variations in the outcomes of two distinct search types. The lack of Boolean searching makes it difficult to identify specific information or a topic. A user can pick between a directory search (similar to Yahoo!) or a keyword search on Excite.

The entire database is analyzed and updated on a weekly basis by spiders with specialized goals. One is dispatched to the What's New sites in order to construct a database of newly-acquired URLs.

A second request is subsequently sent to return the page's content to the Excite database.

The results of a search cannot be bookmarked. URLs do not appear in the results. It is user-friendly and a fantastic starting point for current themes.

### **Check your Progress**

1) What is a Robot or a Spider?

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2) Give a detailed explanation of Search Engine Evolution.

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3) What is Google?

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## **3.4 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS**

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- A search engine is a tool for discovering, categorizing, and storing information on multiple Internet domains.
- The Archie, created in 1990 by Alan Emtage was the first search engine to index and search files on the FrP server.

- Search Engines search their own databases, which contain the keywords or complete text of online sites that were previously selected and gathered from billions of web pages located on servers across the globe.
- There are multiple categories in Search Engines.
- Directories are the Internet's Yellow Pages that contain data that has been supplied by their indexers or users who submit entries.
- Google, MSN, Wise Nut are some important Search Engines to remember.

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### 3.5 QUESTIONS

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1. Define Search Engines in brief.
2. Give a detailed answer on the History of Search Engines.
3. Which are the Important Search Engines to remember? Write about any 2.
4. Write in brief about the Search Engines that search about other Search Engines.
5. What are subject or web directories?

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### 3.6 REFERENCES

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## **UNDERSTANDING NEW MEDIA AND CUSTOMER SERVICE**

### **Unit Structure**

- 4.0 Objective of the study
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 What is New Media?
  - 4.2.1 Difference Between Old and New Media
  - 4.2.2 How Print Organisations Are Learning to Adapt
- 4.3 What is New Media storytelling?
- 4.4 The Emergence of You Tube
- 4.5 Understanding Customer Service
- 4.6 What is Customer Service?
- 4.7 Why is Enhancing the Customer Experience Crucial?
- 4.8 The Need and Importance of Customer Service
- 4.9 Summary
- 4.10 Questions
- 4.11 References

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### **4.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

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- The objective of this unit is to focus and discuss:
- To grasp the characteristics of new media
- To understand the rules of writing for online media
- To begin writing online content
- Explaining the meaning of customer service;
- Understanding your role in providing superior customer service
- Describe the importance of customer service; and
- Correlate selling and customer service.

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### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

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We've covered numerous areas of creative writing as well as how to practice and perfect it. As a result of the emergence of the new media, the profession of creative writing has become more alluring and offers more options. It is usually referred to as digital media, and it is crucial for all of us to comprehend it so that we can adapt to the shifting media landscape.



We must continually invent and improvise since we are working with a new medium that is expanding each day. The medium is dynamic and will continue to evolve; thus, we must likewise rise to the occasion. The new media as we refer to them today are not really novel. In India, it has existed since the late 1990s. As print and television battle to maintain their existence and relevance, the new media are advancing and becoming the medium of the future. It is so active that alterations constantly punctuate its expansion. Therefore, it is essential to remain connected, acquire new technological skills, and be comfortable with the medium.

The new medium carries tremendous potential for aspiring authors of all ages because it creates new opportunities. One of them is YouTube, which has enabled several young people to exhibit their ability and originality while also monetizing their work. There are opportunities for all types of writers in the new media. It could include works of fiction, poetry, drama, nonfiction, personal essays, and blogs. The immensity of the Internet is overwhelming, with millions of websites offering every piece of information imaginable. Writing for the new media is not a difficult task. So, unwind. It is fairly easy.

One only needs to comprehend the fundamentals and then practice the skill until it can be performed quickly. Writing on the Internet necessitates a significant deal of speed, as websites want to be the first to break news. It also needs that you describe your tale in the simplest terms possible so that everyone can understand it. As readers can be from any region of the world, everything must be clarified. They may be unfamiliar with the context or the terminology you are employing.

You must also learn how to create concise text, as online users typically want concise information and do not want to sift through hundreds of words to find it. Writing for the new medium must differ from writing for television or print. It is a style that will continue to evolve. It will be livelier and more participatory.

It will integrate text, images, and sound into its narratives. As the audience is diverse, so too will be the storytelling. This introduces us to the world of the multimedia journalist, who wears many hats when working for the new media, which has led to the exciting convergence of various channels.

When the internet did not exist a few decades ago, this was unimaginable. How will you present the story? This is just as important as determining your article's focus. Once you have worked on the structure of your feature article or story, give it a title that contains keywords that can be detected by a search engine, write an interesting introduction, give the piece sub-headings, and incorporate illustrations, graphics, and videos, and you can be certain that your writing will attract readers' attention.

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## 4.2 WHAT IS NEW MEDIA?

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What comes to mind when you hear the words "new media"? Regarding the transmission and processing of information, one considers the Internet

and everything that may be accomplished through its use. The print editions of newspapers and periodicals were static representations, whereas the new media is dynamic, fast-moving, highly informative, interactive, and able to incorporate graphic imagery and moving images.

The new media consists of websites, digital material, online news outlets, blogs, vlogs, streaming audio and video, online communities, social media, and virtual reality. It is a situation in which change is the norm, as technology advances and produces new possibilities and devices.

New media employs digital computer technologies to deliver and share content.

Due to their vast and immediate reach, new media have transformed the world into a global village. Using reader feedback, new media can modify their material to better suit their audience or gauge the direction of ideas and issues. Year after year, evolving technologies will impact the future of new media.

This digital revolution indicates the revolution of publishing due to its capacity and capability to store huge quantities of data, as well as its ease of retrieval and sharing of content.

The internet enabled information consumers to double as its producers and distributors. Previously, only a select few had the means to accomplish it. Now, you may do it from the comfort of your own home while challenging the monopoly that prior media houses held.

#### **4.2.1 Difference Between Old and New Media:**

When we refer to old media, we are basically talking about mass media most of the time. We are thinking of print, television and radio. While the print media reigned, consumers were ready to wait for early morning to get the news and patiently read it. Now, the span of patience to wait has disappeared and consumers would rather have their menu of news, current affairs and entertainment immediately. They want it as it happens.

While mass media was not interactive, the new media is vigorously interactive.

Mass media users were seen as mostly passive, but new media users are actively seen processing information as never before with speed and innovation. It is because of this that it is mopping up so much of traction as they see how creative producers of the new media are turning the world of information into one that does not cease to surprise. In terms of speed and amount of data churned out on a single issue, the new media attempts to beat print, television and radio all through the day.

Within seconds, the new media can throw up thousands of pages of information on a subject from different corners of the world. Large amounts of information can be stored and archived. It can even be hyperlinked so that it helps consumers understand more and see the larger picture in all its dimensions.

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The old traditional media which is essentially print, television and radio are battling to stay alive and relevant. If print and television have to survive, both will have to provide superior content as ultimately the consumer is going to go where there is quality. New media on the other hand, is reaching out to millions of new consumers everyday, with content that keeps them glued, as internet penetration increases all over the world. Using social media, news reporters and media organizations can now crowdsource information. It can obtain both information and video from inaccessible or difficult-to-reach regions where it is tough for reporters to travel. Nonetheless, crowdsourced information must be validated to verify its credibility.

Journalists and communicators can now interact with their audiences using Chats, Facebook posts, Twitter, Instagram, and Google Hangout, among other internet platforms. It is essential for the digital journalist to comprehend what the medium is capable of, its limitations, and how it may be utilized most effectively to disseminate information. They must also comprehend the economics of operating an online business, including how to attract visitors, keep them interested, and encourage them to return for more material and interaction. They must comprehend the metrics for measuring visitor engagement and then sell that information to advertisers to generate cash.

#### **4.2.2 How Print Organisations Are Learning to Adapt:**

Initial responses to the flood of new media by print organizations were inadequate. Additionally, they launched their websites and posted their whole newspaper online. It failed because readers were not prepared to read it. Also, it failed to attract advertising. It then occurred to print organizations that news management on the web must be handled differently. They began writing differently for the internet. As the treatment was unique, many of them employed specialized web teams. The narratives were shorter and more concise. In addition, there were opportunities for readers to connect with the author and express their opinions.

Print publications were likewise aware that the economics of digital news were distinct. They became interested in the visitors to their websites, the amount of time they spent on stories, and the types of content that readers preferred and disliked. This information was used to promote the website to advertisers who desired to know the number of visitors the site received.

In order to create a more robust and sustainable revenue model, print organizations began investing in research to influence these KPIs. They had no option as print revenues were declining and online revenues were increasing, while the advertising pie remained relatively unchanged.

The trend in print is toward shorter articles, similar to the new media. It also provides longer versions of news stories on its website, whereas the shorter version is printed in the newspaper. This strategy also helps improve website visitors.

Recognizing that the newspaper and the internet are different mediums that must be treated differently, the website would frequently include stories that are not in the newspaper.

Print companies have recognised the value of incorporating multimedia material into their web sites. Therefore, it is not surprising that news portals operated by newspapers and magazines publish films to explain the tale. By adapting to television and the Internet, print media sources are vying to remain relevant and retain the reader who has an abundance of options. As media convergence is the new reality, it is up to print organizations to satisfy the news appetite of customers who desire both legitimacy and quality in the era of information technology.

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### **4.3 WHAT IS NEW MEDIA STORYTELLING?**

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A few decades ago, grandparents narrated experiences, situations, and happenings through oral storytelling. The written media informed them with words. It was visually told on television. With the advent of the internet, storytelling became much more captivating. The modern media moghuls realized that they had access to a global audience that could view their content whenever they desired. Not only did the number of the audience rise, but the way in which stories were now told with the click of a mouse was also novel.

You had images, but the enchantment of video and the accompanying sound gave you a fresh perspective on how stories were delivered. It was discovered that conversational approaches, storytelling, and chatty language function particularly well on the web.

If we found them appealing, we may share them with our friends or others who needed to see them. New media storytelling enabled us to tell tales in a way that had previously been unachievable with the printed word: in a way that is engaging and participatory.

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### **4.4 THE EMERGENCE OF YOU TUBE**

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Prior to 2005, people who wished to interact with large audiences through multimedia had to go through traditional media gatekeepers such as publishers, television stations, and the film industry. Instantaneously, YouTube made it possible for anybody to reach a global audience, motivating talented individuals to utilize a number of new multimedia composition tools.

Almost everyone with web access on a computer or mobile device may now create multimedia communications, ranging from movies resembling film and television to entirely new forms of communication.

Additionally, grandparents are now using social media to communicate.

If they can accomplish it, so can anyone. It essentially means that we all have the potential to become storytellers in new media.

Prior to the emergence of new media, our options for sharing personal tales were restricted to oral or written communication. In fact, it worked effectively for tales that were previously primarily told through words. Both approaches enticed the audience

### **Check your Progress**

1) What is the difference between New Media and Old Media?

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2) What is News Media Storytelling?

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## **4.5**

### **UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE**

#### **Introduction:**

Service, also known as Customer Service "As firms see the benefits of maintaining customer relationships through good support, it has become a crucial business issue. Whether in a small customer service department or a large call center, the necessity of cultivating a valued relationship with customers is crucial for sustaining the long-term growth of a firm. If you do not provide customer service that makes your product 'better' than the identical thing given by the competition, even the best product in the world will remain on the shelf and collect dust. Customer service is the lifeblood of any retail establishment.

#### **Customer service is a retailer's lifeblood:**

When we discuss customer service, we also discuss Standard Customer Service and Excellent Customer Service. Excellent customer service requires providing clients with what they desire. This is simple to state yet complex to comprehend and oftentimes challenging to execute! Great Client Service involves customer pleasure, both with the services offered and with the manner in which they are provided.

Client service is the fulfillment of the customer's requirements and expectations, as stated by the customer.

"Meeting the wants and expectations of the customer" implies that you are aware of what your customers want and what they anticipate, and you consistently offer it. And to determine what your customers desire, you must ask them!

Realizing the significance of customer service, the worldwide retailing magazine 'Journal of Retailing' published a special issue titled 'Competing Through Service' in 2007. According to the journal, the special issue was published because those that utilize service to develop strong customer relationships would drive competitiveness, enhance customer loyalty, and increase the efficiency of market activities.

As obvious as it may appear, many businesses launch customer service initiatives without ever consulting with their clients. "As defined by the customer" is a crucial phrase since it implies that if the consumer does not view you as providing excellent customer service, you are not. Here, the customer is the judge. Regardless of how brilliant your internal records indicate you are, the only voice worth listening to is that of the client. Therefore, in order to have a great customer service endeavor, you must know what your customers want, regularly give it to them, and solicit their feedback.

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## 4.6 WHAT IS CUSTOMER SERVICE?

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Customer service is a set of activities aimed to increase client satisfaction, which is the perception that a product or service has met the customer's expectations. Customer service entails providing each customer with a positive and memorable experience. Customers are satisfied when their expectations are met or exceeded. When customers see that the service falls short of their expectations, they are unhappy. Thus, customer service could entail:

- Taking care of the demands of customers
- Going above and beyond what is expected
- Integrity and value are added to every customer engagement.
- Being at one's best with every client

Customer service, as defined by Lalonde and Zinszer, is "those activities that occur at the interface between the customer and the company that enhance or facilitate the sale and use of the company's products or services."

According to Zeithaml and Bitner, customer service is the service that a firm provides to support its core product. Customer service typically entails answering inquiries, accepting orders, resolving billing issues, addressing complaints, and even scheduling maintenance or repairs. Customer service can occur in-person (such as when a retail salesperson helps a customer locate an item or answers a question) or by telephone or the internet.

Numerous businesses staff their customer care call centers around-the-clock. Typically, customer service is free of charge. Providing quality customer service is vital to establishing and maintaining customer relationships.



Customer service that contributes to shops' impressive sales figures is more nuanced than the simple "How may I assist you?" of the past. Today's retailers must respond to client needs on multiple levels, including making the store an enticing destination, routinely refilling shelves, and carrying the appropriate assortment of products. Simultaneously, training for customer service employees on store floors has grown in importance and intensity.

World-class customer service providers believe that customer service is not a department, but rather a concept - a way of life - that should be implemented by all workers at every level of the organization, and that their people are what distinguish them from the competitors. It requires a thousand concrete, minute activities undertaken by every member of a business in order to maintain client satisfaction. Good customer service is predicated on customer retention.

### **My Role:**

As a salesperson, what am I responsible for? Am I truly significant? Consider the following inquiries.

- Does the client recognise the Store Manager?
- Is the consumer familiar with the Floor Manager?
- Is the customer familiar with the Category Head?

### **In that instance:**

- with whom does the customer contact exclusively?
- Who has the ability to impact the customer's opinion of the store?
- Who can determine whether the customer will return?

### **You, as the salesperson, have direct touch with the customer:**

- I represent the organization.
- I am the store's public face.
- I represent the product/brand in public.

### **A few stark facts about the clients:**

- It costs 10 times more to attract a new customer than to keep an existing one.
- A typical disappointed consumer will tell eight to ten individuals about his issue.
- If you successfully handle a complaint, seven out of ten dissatisfied consumers will return for future business.

- If you handle a problem immediately, 95% of customers will do business with you again.

In order to enhance productivity and obtain an edge over the competition, a business must provide exceptional customer service.

### **Excellent and poor customer service:**

Good customer service has the following effects on customers:

#### **Excellent customer service:**

- Creates a favorable impression of you and the store.
- Exceeds and meets consumer requirements
- Creates repeat and loyal consumers
- Gains more clients
- Resulting in profits
- Promotional activity
- Positive repute

#### **Poor Customer Care:**

- Leaves a poor impression of you and the store
- Not even meeting the most fundamental consumer requirements
- Creates apathetic and non-returning customers
- Customer Support
- Losses clients
- Results in loss
- adverse publicity
- Negative impression

How will you make a customer feel good if you don't feel good about your work as the service provider? How can you make someone else feel exceptional if you do not believe that you are unique?

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## **4.7 WHY IS ENHANCING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE CRUCIAL?**

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Every day, we have interactions with people and businesses that result in experiences. We visit the coffee shop, fill up our gas tanks, and contact our bank to transfer payments, among other activities. Our experiences leave us with both physical and psychological traces. The physical impressions are a result of the events of the encounter. Emotional

impressions result from how we feel about the people and services we encounter. This is referred to as "customer experience."

**Customer Loyalty** is heavily influenced by the Customer Experience. Building long-term commitment requires loyalty. People remember the experiences they have had, particularly the very good and very unpleasant ones, and they share these memories with their friends and co-workers. Companies that prioritize client loyalty have a significant competitive edge over those that do not. Customer retention generates revenues, brand loyalty, and new customer demand.

### **Criteria that contribute to good customer service**

- **An Attentive Listening:** The salesperson must be able to concentrate on what the customer is explaining, not on what is easiest for him to comprehend.
- **A Positive Attitude:** Maintaining a positive outlook facilitates efficient client service. A salesperson should be able to generate an upbeat and optimistic environment around himself.
- **Effective and transparent communication** requires employing basic language, avoiding technical words, and speaking the customer's language.
- **Instilling confidence in customers:** In order to instill trust in the customer that he has knowledge and knows what he's talking about, the salesperson must have a thorough understanding of the product and all relevant facts.
- **Make the consumer feel important:** While talking with the customer, the agent's focus should not be diverted to anything else.
- **A Capability to calm ruffled feathers:** The salesperson must be able to handle any disagreements that may arise throughout the interaction.

### **Limitations on client service:**

- **Customers are an integral element of the salesperson's job and not an extension.** The salesperson must recognise that customer service is more essential than product sales.
- **Laziness:** Avoiding the customer out of laziness will not improve the interaction.
- **Poor communication skills:** A lack of effective communication skills leads to consumer confusion and hinders the ability to make for the customer.
- **Ineffective time management:** Customer's dislike having to wait too long for service.
- **Poor time management causes customers to wait needlessly extended periods of time, resulting in customer loss.**

- Customers anticipate that you have a thorough understanding of the thing you are selling. If the consumer does not receive answers to his inquiries, he may be unable to purchase the product, resulting in the loss of a customer.

### **Customer Service is and Attitude:**

To be devoted, you must be able to comprehend the significance of your actions. Ensure that you continue to cultivate and maintain a positive attitude towards your profession.

Let us examine a variety of life perspectives as reflected in people's views regarding their jobs and their level of dedication to them.

### **Individual and Double Bagger:**

A person who places clients' groceries into bags in a supermarket is referred to as "Bagger." Many supermarkets have a bagger stationed behind the payment register. They remove the groceries from the pay register and place them in bags.

To become a "Bagger," little or no education is required. At first glance, the position may not provide many opportunities for growth. However, like all other tasks, bagging can be performed in various ways with varying outcomes, depending on the bagger's outlook on life.

Different attitudes toward your employment are possible. You have the option of being a "Single Bagger" or a "Double Bagger."

**Solitary Baggers:** Single baggers are those who limit their own and others' development.

Single baggers have a pessimistic outlook on their employment, coworkers, and surrounding environment. They lack dedication and have decided that their working hours are not a rewarding and worthwhile aspect of their lives.

Single baggers use only one bag - hence the term - and are unconcerned with the bag's security. The items are thrown into the bag at random, beginning with grapes and potato chips and possibly ending with a bottle of tomato ketchup.

This "tricky" operation is completed with little difficulty and effort. Frequently accompanied by signs, moans, groans, and other unmistakable expressions of discontent. Single baggers feel victimized by their conditions and moan about the pitiful salary, the lack of breaks, the horrible drought from the door, and the bleak future prospects. Their body language exposes their lack of commitment rather clearly. Their eyes are dark, their mouths are drooping, and their bodies are moving in slow motion.

If their co-worker at the cash register says, "Hurry up! Can't you see we have a lengthy line?" The single bagger looks at his colleague with a blank

expression, shrugs his shoulders, and exclaims, "Well, what do you expect? I only have two hands!"

That is why single baggers are so unique. They only have two hands; thus they cannot accomplish much with their life!

### **Double Baggers:**

Double baggers are someone who both improve themselves and help others improve.

Double baggers, like single baggers, have two hands, but they use both of them effectively. Double baggers have a good outlook on life and are devoted to both their professional and personal lives. They typically aim for the finest in life.

Double baggers seal the bag with an additional bag, hence the name. They organize and pack the groceries carefully and effectively. And they still have the time and energy to greet clients with a grin and a nice comment. They may even take the time to walk customers to their cars and help them load their purchases while expressing gratitude for their patronage. "We look forward to seeing you again soon!" The double baggers are accountable for their own life. They recognise that absolute dedication to their task is rewarded.

They encounter happier consumers, and they receive attention and praise from their peers and superiors. In this way, double baggers improve their own morale and sense of well-being, as well as their outlook on the future.

Double baggers have an optimistic outlook on life, are deeply committed, and take ownership of their accomplishments. They neither have the time nor the desire for negative criticism or complaint. They spend their time generating positive outcomes and fostering positive relationships.

The double bagger mentality prevents many confrontations between individuals at home and at work and contributes to the resolution of the majority of difficulties.

Single baggers and double baggers are present everywhere in society, not just in supermarkets, but also in homes, public and private institutions.

There are single bagger and double bagger sales, personnel, attorneys, waiters, managing directors, secretaries, guests, course participants, customers, parents, and spouses, among others.

Individual baggers may be captives of their own attitudes. They have reached a standstill. They lack the strength to continue. When-late, which occurs frequently, a solitary bagger blames the weather, traffic, shortage of parking spaces, and everyone else.

You can have the best product, the most effective marketing strategy, and the best location. But nothing else counts if your contact personnel do not deliver on their promises.

- Your client service should be great.
- Giving customers the idea that they are your top priority by making them feel unique.
- Providing each consumer with a great experience so that they would be eager to return in the future.
- Respecting each customer individually.
- Anticipating and exceeding customer expectations, and providing them with a memento to remember you by.

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## **4.8 THE NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE**

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Customer service is the most important aspect in a company's success. If you want to attract and retain clients, you must provide superior customer service than your competition.

Remember that client retention, loyalty, and repurchase generate the biggest revenues, not new customer acquisitions.

The majority of customer service is based on common sense. Provide them with what they desire and ensure their satisfaction. If you merely handle client complaints, issue refunds, and smile at them, you are offering only a small portion of outstanding customer service.

Customer service also involves going the extra mile for the client, doing all necessary to satisfy the customer, and making judgments that are in the customer's best interest.

That does not imply that you should give the customer the store for free. However, you must recognise when and how frequently the customer is correct. When consumers attempt to take advantage of you or behave in a disruptive or aggressive manner, they are in the wrong. Customers may not always be right, but they are always the ones that matter. This is the sole point you must remember.

Customer satisfaction pays. Redesigning or changing the service delivery system inside an organization may necessitate the expenditure of funds on staff training programmes and other expenses. Still, customer service always pays off in the long run, and it pays off most in the form of long-term customer retention.

While enhanced customer service remains a top priority for businesses, the means to achieve it can vary from one to the next. Some retailers acquire and store client contact information only for use in mass-marketing efforts.

Others monitor their customers' purchase history to gain a deeper understanding of their customers' purchasing patterns and to adapt marketing messaging to a chosen group of customers. Others utilize one-

of-a-kind value-added services to create a one-of-a-kind purchasing experience that distinguishes them from their competitors. Nevertheless, the recognition of clients as the reason retailers are in business and the corresponding emphasis on keeping customers satisfied continue to be the focus of successful retailers in the present.

### **Check your Progress**

1) What is Customer Service?

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2) Write in brief the Role of a Salesperson.

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3) Write the difference between an Individual & a Double Bagger.

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## **4.9 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS**

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- The new media consists of websites, digital material, online news outlets, blogs, vlogs, streaming audio and video, online communities, social media, and virtual reality.
- It is a situation in which change is the norm, as technology advances and produces new possibilities and devices.
- Customer service is the lifeblood of any retail establishment.
- There is a growing gap between the Old Media and the New Media
- Single baggers are those who limit their own and others' development and Double baggers are someone who both improve themselves and help others improve.
- If you want to attract and retain clients, you must provide superior customer service than your competition.

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## **4.10 QUESTIONS**

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1. Discuss New Media. Explain the difference between Old and New Media.



2. Explain what you understand by New Media Storytelling?
3. What do you understand about customer service?
4. What do you understand about the terms 'single bagger' and 'double bagger'? Explain with examples.
5. Discuss the importance of customer service for a retailing organization.

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## **CSR AND NEW MEDIA, CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

### **Unit Structure**

- 5.0 Objective of the study
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
  - 5.2.1 Definition of CSR
  - 5.2.2 History of CSR
  - 5.2.3 Emergence of CSR
  - 5.2.4 Emergence of CSR in India
- 5.3 Public Relations Crisis Management
  - 5.3.1 What is Public Relations crisis management?
  - 5.3.2 When should PR disasters be addressed?
  - 5.3.3 Seven steps for handling a Public Relations Crisis.
  - 5.3.4 Analysis of a PR crisis
  - 5.3.5 Tools for PR crisis management
- 5.4 Summary
- 5.5 Questions
- 5.6 References

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### **5.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

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- Define the term ‘CSR and stakeholders’;
- Trace the history of CSR;
- Understand the benefits of CSR;
- Discuss the various publics of CSR; and
- Comprehend the interrelation between CSR and Corporate Governance

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### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Corporations do not operate independently. In addition to their staff and customers, they also interact with other businesses, the government, and local authorities. All of these constituents are stakeholders, not shareholders. A stakeholder is an individual or group that is not directly involved with a business, but who may be influenced by it in the future.

Businesses today recognise the importance of community relations and environmental sustainability. In addition to working directly on the

product or service for profit, businesses can also opt to focus on issues (social, environmental, and developmental) relating to the product or service they sell. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes provide a forum for businesses to improve their reputation in the eyes of their stakeholders.

In this Unit, we will examine CSR and its relationship to business in depth. We will also examine the function of stakeholders and how a corporation meets its obligations to them.

## **5.2 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)**

You may be unfamiliar with the term "Corporate Social Responsibility" or have a hazy concept of what it comprises. In this section, let's attempt to obtain an understanding of its specific meaning. We will define the word and then examine its theory. Let us also consider why it is advantageous and what the benefits are for a corporation to engage in socially responsible behavior. The phrase will henceforth be abbreviated as CSR.

### **5.2.1 Definition of CSR:**

CSR is a mechanism for corporations that ensures businesses' social responsibility. This includes the public's financial, legal, and unrestricted expectations of a corporation. It is a sound business principle to achieve sustainable growth by offering financial, social, and environmental advantages to all stakeholders.

It is common practice for corporations to accept social responsibility and act on it through various CSR activities. CSR attempts to have a beneficial impact on a variety of social concerns pertaining to customers, internal publics, society, and any other public-sector stakeholders. It is a means of giving back to the community from which you operate and profit.

CSR is the management of a business in a manner that is legal, moral, and satisfies commercial and social expectations.

It is a corporate strategy that promotes social development by offering financial and social assistance to the general public. CSR is a concept with numerous definitions and implementations.

### **Let's examine some of the most important definitions of the phrase:**

CSR is defined by **Howard Bowen** as "the responsibility of businessmen to pursue those policies, make those judgments, and follow those courses of action that are beneficial in terms of our society's goals and values."

"The social responsibility of business covers the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given time," according to Archie B. Carroll.

According to the **UNIDO**, corporate social responsibility is a management concept in which businesses integrate social and environmental issues into their company operations and relationships with its stakeholders. CSR is

commonly viewed as the means through which a business strikes a balance between economic, environmental, and social imperatives.

Similar to any other concept, CSR is an emerging phrase. Previously, it was referred to as any extracurricular activity that was not an economic, technical, or legal requirement. Now, CSR is more accurately defined as a strong feeling of social responsibility towards the general public.

In India, Section 135 of the Company Act was amended in 2013, making it mandatory for corporations to spend at least 2% of their average net income on CSR for the three fiscal years immediately preceding or succeeding. However, not all corporations are subject to this regulation. This Act applies to corporations with a net value of Rs 5 billion or more, a turnover of Rs 10 billion or more, or a net profit of Rs 50 million or more in a single financial year.

As stated previously, corporations with earnings must allocate 2% of their average net profit to CSR efforts. This action was taken to ensure that hugely profitable corporations take CSR seriously and are held accountable if they do not.

Diverse corporations employ diverse methods to undertake their CSR efforts. The most prevalent CSR activities include educational and health promotion initiatives.

An internal foundation in which staff members participate as volunteers is also a key activity since it creates a great deal of media interest. Programs addressing themes such as homosexual rights, the eradication of elephantiasis illness, and cleft palate are utilized less frequently due to the specificity of their intended audience. It restricts the reach of a CSR effort to a certain region or community.

Let's examine one example: The TATA group engages in numerous CSR initiatives in a variety of fields. Some initiatives focus on community development, while others aim to enhance the lives of the poor. Through numerous NGOs, the group participates in empowerment initiatives for women, rural community development, and other prosperity programmes. In addition, they make grants and donations to numerous educational institutes.

TATA is also involved in healthcare activities such as immunization and AIDS awareness. Climate change, sports, the construction of hospitals, educational institutions, and sports academies, etc., are a few additional areas in which TATA supports through its CSR activities. Under the CSR umbrella, a variety of programmes and activities can be carried out at different levels.

### **Advantages of CSR:**

CSR is becoming an inherent component of modern corporate culture. It is far more than a law or requirement. It animates the alleged biological entity known as "corporation." A corporation maintains its overall growth

and favorable reputation through CSR. CSR provides several benefits both outside and internally.

When discussing the external benefits of CSR on a broad scale, it can offer short-term employment possibilities through various community-based activities, such as the construction of a local park or sports center. Plantations and cultivation programmes are highly valued in regions where the plantation is less impacted by certain climatic conditions or is negatively affected by them. Recycling is also well-received by the general people because it benefits the environment and garbage management.

Internal benefits are intended for internal audiences, such as employees. In addition to attracting and retaining the greatest talent in the business, corporate social responsibility gives employees a sense of purpose while performing their usual duties. CSR also contributes to business sustainability, competitive advantage, and simpler compliance with legal requirements.

**To better comprehend the benefits of CSR, let's examine what else it offers:**

### **1) Public Image:**

Companies that demonstrate a commitment to diverse CSR activities are viewed as more humane than those who do not. However, remember that performing CSR initiatives is not sufficient. Corporate entities must ensure that the public recognises them before their image may improve. It is that straightforward. Everyone would desire to associate with someone with a positive reputation. If given the option, the client will choose to purchase from someone who also serves society. A corporation can develop a positive image through establishing ties with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) through financial contributions, staff volunteerism, and product/service donations, and making the public aware of their participation. In a nutshell, well-planned CSR initiatives enhance a company's public image and its relationship with its customers.

### **2) Media Exposure:**

If you want a response from the public, you must make them aware of your efforts.

The CSR activity will not attain its full potential if no one is aware of the efforts a company is putting into its CSR activities. CSR can be a wonderful media platform for a corporation. Strategically managed CSR efforts result in extensive media attention and robust media relations.

We are all aware that news stories produce a more favorable impression than commercials.

Once in the spotlight, however, the company must anticipate that the media will scrutinize all of its previous and future endeavors. In summary,

a well-planned CSR programme is the key to positive media coverage and portrayal.

### **3) Employee Retention:**

Every employee desires to work for a business with an ethical conscience. It is conducive to morale and general development. It is encouraging for an employee to be connected with a brand that is known for its dedication to society and strong values. And satisfied personnel lead to improved performance.

Additionally, it helps retain personnel in today's competitive environment. Specifically, CSR aids in acquiring and maintaining the industry's top employees.

### **4) Recruit and Retain Investors:**

Investors are the individuals that inject capital into a company; without them, no one can prosper. Donors are interested in how their cash is being utilized. Investors are interested in a solid business plan, profits, and a long-term CSR strategy. They recognise that profit is not the only factor that matters in business over the long term. When a company associates itself with a cause and encourages its employees to participate in its activities, it inspires the investor to go the extra mile and establish future relationships.

Investors are more inclined to invest in corporations that maintain a promise to their employees and customers and engage in CSR efforts with societal impact. This indicates that the investor is more attentive to socially responsible corporations.

### **5) Community Assistance:**

In addition to the internal and external public, the community plays a crucial role in any corporate organization. Even after completing all legal requirements, businesses recognise that it will be difficult to function without community support.

A suitable illustration would be the TATA Nano plant in Singur, West Bengal.

Tata established a facility in Singur to produce their nanotechnology marvel. The State government's enactment of agricultural laws pursuant to the Land Acquisition Act generated debate. This prompted farmers, opposition, and social activists to protest. Protesting farmers attacked and exerted great pressure on the entire enterprise. Mamata Banerjee started the "Save Farmland" movement in support of the demonstrators. In October 2008, despite the assistance of the state government, Tata was compelled to relocate the whole activities of the Plant to Sanand, Gujarat.

### **5.2.2 History of CSR:**

### 5.2.3 Emergence of CSR:

The industrial revolution ushered in mass manufacturing, necessitating the need for enterprises to attract and retain labor. Then, businesses took care of their employees in order to boost output and maximize profits. This could be a corporate choice for enhancing output or a suggestion for stakeholder wellbeing. At the time, there was no precise distinction between welfare and gains.

Beginning in the 1800s, philanthropy began to emerge. However, it was impossible to distinguish between the individual master's desire to do good and the owner's profit-generating business choice. The company's enterprises accomplished a great deal of excellent work. Nonetheless, it was never defined as social duty or philanthropy. It was frequently viewed as a religious or employee-friendly act. The majority of the activities were supporting the arts, constructing religious structures, donating to educational institutions, etc.

Many scholars believe that CSR as it exists today began to take shape in the 1950s.

Before and after the 1950s, Patrick Murphy classified CSR into four eras:

Everything prior to the 1950s is considered "philanthropic."

This period, from 1953 to 1967, is known as the "consciousness era" because firms began to recognise their broad social duty.

1968-1973 is regarded as the 'issue' era. Here, businesses began identifying concerns they wish to address. Problems such as discrimination, global warming, and poverty, etc.

1978 to the 1980s mark the end of the responsiveness period. And during and after this time period, businesses began to view CSR programmes as a serious management responsibility.

However, it is difficult to specify precise times for the aforementioned classifications; Patrick's explanation is convenient and generally consistent.

If we discuss the modern version of CSR as we know it, Howard Bowen will receive credit for Corporate Social Responsibility. In 1953, he released the book *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman*, which addressed social responsibility and posed numerous pertinent concerns (SR). Relevant is the question of what responsibilities towards society businesspeople can legitimately be asked to assume.

He was the first to attempt to define CSR or SR, which had been extensively used previously. Bowman said that business is gaining power and playing a greater role in decision-making, and that with power comes social responsibility. He also stated that CSR is not a panacea for all societal issues. It can only guide firms to act appropriately in the future.



His definition serves as the foundation for the majority of Morden's definitions of CSR.

This work brought so much to the simplification of the CSR concept that some consider Howard Bowman the father of CSR.

However, this entire era was characterized by more talk than action. This was the moment when corporations began to embrace the concept of CSR.

In the 1980s and 1990s, there were legitimate attempts to compel corporations to implement CSR programmes. Efforts were made to streamline the entire procedure and increase corporate accountability. At the 1992 Earth Conference, 48 corporations came forward voluntarily to demonstrate their commitment to the environment. This action was performed to boost volunteerism for social reasons.

Though it wasn't until much later that corporations began to see the importance of CSR as an image-building exercise. In 1995, when a large corporation was accused of destroying the environment and was forced to take severe measures to cover it up, many corporations began to realize that they must maintain their reputation, and that CSR may play a crucial role in gaining public trust.

In terms of prominence, CSR has achieved its top in the present day. Corporations comprehended the significance of CSR not only for the benefit of stakeholders, but also for long-term company survival.

#### **5.2.4 Emergence of CSR in India:**

India is the nation whose legislation made CSR mandatory for corporations. The 2013 Company Act was enacted to make this possible.

However, the desire and activity of CSR are not new to India, and the country has a history of charity. CSR has developed in terms of definition, breadth, and reach as the Indian economy and its corporations have grown.

It originated as firms' charitable or philanthropic effort. Rather than well-planned CSR action, religion or tradition were the primary motivating factors. Donations to temples and food for the poor dominated the charitable giving trend. It was more about assisting only when necessary, as opposed to often. And the majority of philanthropic or charitable activities were motivated by caste, religion, or political ideology.

During the 19th century, when large corporations such as TATA and Birla were founded, the need and intention for social improvement and business expansion were keenly recognised.

During the liberation fight, Indian enterprises were urged to demonstrate their support for society. By proposing the notion of "Trusteeship," Mahatma Gandhi attempted to sway corporations in this direction. He wished to put an end to the Indian businessmen' vision of ruthless new capitalism. Gandhi Ji proposed as a socioeconomic concept that company owners and wealthy persons should entrust other trusts with the care of the

public. To improve society, he desired the wealthier people share their wealth with the needy. In such measures, the Marxist approach to socialism was predominant.

Gandhi's principles motivated many enterprises to contribute to the nation's social and economic progress. Significant contributions were made in support of Gandhi's thoughts regarding Nai Talim, Dalit Empowerment, and women's empowerment, among others.

After independence, when India embraced the concepts of mixed economy and formed Public Service Undertakings (PSU), the private sector was not at the forefront of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The introduction of new labor and environmental legislation set the tone for corporate social responsibility in India. The establishment of the PSUs was motivated by a need for efficient allocation of resources. Nonetheless, they were only partially beneficial with regard to CSR. This swung the pendulum in favor of private and privately controlled corporations taking more CSR measures.

In the 1990s, businesses gained the bravery to explore beyond standard CSR efforts. They had begun to view it as a managerial procedure.

They began to view CSR as a sustainable corporate strategy. Globalization and economic liberalization fostered this way of thinking and CSR.

India occupies a key place in emerging business markets, and each year has witnessed the emergence of numerous new enterprises.

Indian-origin enterprises and MNCs performed a substantial amount of socially responsible activities. However, the majority of events and initiatives were merely for show and did not reflect the actual spirit of CSR. Some did it solely for public relations and media coverage. CSR in India had not yet developed to its full potential.

### Check your Progress

1) Define the period between 1968-73 concerning CSR

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2) Who is referred to as the father of CSR?

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## 5.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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### 5.3.1 What is Public Relations crisis management?

It is the process of preparing an organization for a major event that threatens the organization, its reputation, stakeholders, or the general public.

Public relations professionals play a vital part in crisis communication.

During a crisis, the main goal of a PR department would be to inform all interested parties about the current situation, potential risks, and planned actions. A well-prepared crisis plan should contain the first type of message that will be sent out to the world.

This generic message should restore trust in your organization and give you some time to investigate the issue at hand.

The public relations and marketing team is the first line of defense for your company. Whether you leave the crisis unscathed depends mainly on how well you handle Public Relations crisis management.

### 5.3.2 When should PR disasters be addressed?

First, you must understand when and how to react.

Therefore, let's begin with "when"

Not every negative remark becomes a Public Relations crisis that could harm your brand's reputation and necessitates the attention of the CEO. When a corporate mishap becomes widespread in the press, the true magnitude of the situation becomes apparent.

To evaluate the severity of the possible PR crisis, you can employ a triage strategy. Early evaluation of the issue will allow you to control the situation and avoid wasting money on unneeded initiatives.

You must assign the appropriate hue to every circumstance you deem dangerous: green, orange, or red.

#### **Green tag:**

Green indicates circumstances where no immediate action is required from your company. For instance, a problem affecting one of your competitors does not always damage your business.

However, there is a possibility that it will affect your business in some way. Monitor the situation attentively and, if necessary, dispatch your crisis response team.

Examine the Google search results closely. If your company is trending in the media, you can change the tag from green to orange.

### **Orange tag:**

The orange label is for situations that have the potential to harm your business and erode consumer confidence in your brand.

Consider one bad review among hundreds of positive ones. You should keep an eye on the situation, but you should not yet call in your PR crisis team.

### **Red Tag (Identifier):**

Red indicates the need for prompt and decisive action. Your company's reputation and income are in imminent danger, and you must contact your PR response team immediately.

Code red refers to scenarios that may harm your brand's reputation or disrupt supply chains. These types of crises may have a negative impact on your company's bottom line.

Typically, the most severe sorts of crises involve an executive scandal or some form of sexual harassment. You wish to address this type of PR issue expeditiously. Ideally, before your audience and the media catch wind of a scandal.

Consider that events can rapidly deteriorate from code green to orange or even red within a few hours. Therefore, it is vital to regularly check the situation.

### **How to prepare for a public relations crisis?**

- There is both bad news and good news.
- There is a strong likelihood that a crisis will strike your business at some point.
- The good news is that you can establish a crisis communications plan for your company and limit the harm.

Surely you already have a great public relations strategy. But what about the strategy that can assist you manage public relations crises? Having a comprehensive Public Relations crisis strategy in place helps ensure that your personnel know what to do in a crisis situation.

### **Here are the considerations you must make when building your crisis plan!**

#### **Monitor media coverage of your brand:**

We live in a constantly online environment. Social media enables everyone to publish reviews and thoughts.

Almost certainly, the problem will commence on communication channels that you do not control. This is the worst-case situation because your audience will identify the crisis before your public relations staff.

Unnoticed PR problems can swiftly snowball and impact your company's bottom line.

To avoid an online crisis from escalating, you must be aware of what people are saying about your brand or product.

Due to the expansion of internet platforms, it is impossible to follow every online reference of your brand.

### **5.3.3 Seven steps for handling a Public Relations Crisis:**

Not only is it vital to have a crisis communication plan in place, but it is also crucial to know how to respond when a crisis actually occurs. If you have doubts about the most effective ways to address a PR issue, we have compiled a list of seven actions to assist you.

These are our finest methods. Adhere to them, and you will have the situation under control.

#### **1. Categorize the issues and do not overreact:**

Not every negative comment about a brand represents a public relations blunder. However, you should still reply to negative statements.

Simply avoid involving your CEO when responding to poor Google reviews.

Consider the effect of the crisis on your company's overall performance and reputation.

Some problems will resolve themselves. Reacting to a bad message can generate momentum and refocus your audience's attention on an issue.

Sometimes, in terms of reputation management, inaction is the best course of action.

#### **2. Act quickly:**

Once you realize you are facing a PR problem, you must act immediately.

The passage of time is of the essence.

The sooner you address the issue, the more likely it is that you can control the narrative and reduce the harm.

People anticipate a rapid answer. There will be no time to formulate a thoughtful response.

Therefore, you should prepare some generic responses that you can publish immediately or twitch slightly.

Consider the social media networks that will benefit your business. You can make a statement on the Facebook page of your company, write an article or blog post, or create a video.

Determine an effective communication channel for your consumers and other stakeholders.

The objective is to make it appear as though you have the situation under control. Later in the procedure, there will be opportunity for more thorough explanations.

### **3. Identify the emergency reaction team:**

Your personnel must be trained so they know what to do and how to behave.

It is essential to identify the appropriate personnel and explicitly outline their roles. If they do not know who should undertake particular jobs, even the best team will be clueless.

Typically, your customer service or social media team will be the first to respond.

Customer service is permitted to speak directly with customers. They can identify any public relations difficulties before they reach a wider audience, such as the press.

On one of the social media channels, an unfavorable view that has the potential to go viral may arise. If one of your communication specialists identifies the issue, there is still time to defend your organization's reputation.

If the crisis escalates, you will need a trustworthy, comprehensive staff. You should add various organization members, such as:

- Chief Executive Officer with legal expertise
- Person in charge of communicating with the media
- Person accountable for communicating with other interested parties
- Person accountable for customer communication
- Someone with technical expertise

The team will work on the message you wish to convey, handle press releases, and strive not to lose your consumers' trust.

This will guarantee that your crisis communications efforts operate effectively and that everyone is in the appropriate location.

### **4. Assess the emergency situation:**

The skilled employees must evaluate the PR mishap situation and take appropriate action.

Each PR issue requires a unique approach and response.

The first activity of a PR crisis response team should therefore be damage assessment and management.

The team should pick an acceptable reaction to a PR issue based on its severity and potential consequences.

After deciding what to do, the team should immediately begin mitigating the effects of a crisis.

### **5. Create the concluding action plan:**

You have the necessary holding statements to buy you some time. Now is the time to draft the final action plan.

Your reaction will depend on the industry you operate in. There are, however, general principles that you must observe.

For starters, be honest. Attempting to minimize the damage is understandable, but denying the problem, shifting blame, or omitting details will only exacerbate the situation.

Owning your mistakes will demonstrate that your organization is mature and prepared to rectify the damage.

### **6. Cooperate with influential people:**

When your brand, product, or service is under scrutiny, you should seek out individuals who can vouch for it.

This is why you should consider influential figures and prominent public figures who could advocate your brand during and after the crisis.

The key to a successful influencer campaign is selecting the ideal partner. The most relevant influencers are likely already discussing your brand.

A media monitoring tool will assist you in locating the most effective influencers to assist you in handling a PR crisis.

After logging in, navigate to the Analysis tab. There, you will find two tables containing the most popular and active public profiles.

Obviously, you must still vet the names. Examine the sort of content they post, the level of interaction under their postings, and the social media sites on which they are active. Choose the ideal influencer to promote your brand based on the analysis.

#### **5.3.4 Analysis of a PR crisis:**

The final stage is just as crucial as the preceding ones. Remember that you can learn a great deal from your errors.

Therefore, it is crucial to assess the Public Relations crisis management strategy.

What performed well? What components failed? What can you do better?



Now is the time to review your crisis response team's performance. Do the members require extra instruction? Should you switch up the team's roles? Add new individuals?

Examine the response to the PR messages you have issued. Could they be improved in any way? Use alternative distribution channels? Modify the tone? The language?

Performing a thorough evaluation of PR crisis management will provide the necessary insight into the PR crisis strategy.

### **5.3.5 Tools for PR crisis management:**

Once you are aware of what to do before, during, and after a crisis, you may choose to determine which tools could assist you in managing the problem.

In addition to the media monitoring tool discussed previously, you should conduct research and have a PR crisis management toolset in place.

First, you need a technology that facilitates communication with your personnel. Slack is recommended since it enables you to conduct calls, create specialized channels, and share files in a secure environment.

As you can never predict when a crisis will occur, you should have other communication channels with your PR crisis response team. Phone numbers and email addresses should be kept in a separate file. Make careful to frequently update the information.

How can a crisis response team avoid public relations mishaps?

Each PR professional desires to preserve a positive brand reputation. But in light of the preceding information, you likely have one question: Is it possible to completely avert a PR crisis?

Unfortunately, this is not possible. You are dependent on others, including your suppliers, vendors, staff, and unforeseeable occurrences.

However, it is always possible to plan for a PR catastrophe. It is not a simple assignment because you never know what will occur or how long the situation will last.

When resolving a public relations issue, you should always anticipate the unexpected.

### **Check your Progress**

1) Explain the role of PR in Crisis Management.

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## 2) What are the steps in Crisis Management?

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## 3) Define the three color Tags

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## 5.4 SUMMARY KEY POINTS

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- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes provide a forum for businesses to improve their reputation in the eyes of their stakeholders.
- CSR is the management of a business in a manner that is legal, moral, and satisfies commercial and social expectations.
- A corporation can develop a positive image through establishing ties with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) through financial contributions, staff volunteerism, and product/service donations, and making the public aware of their participation. In a nutshell, well-planned CSR initiatives enhance a company's public image and its relationship with its customers.
- India is the nation whose legislation made CSR mandatory for corporations. The 2013 Company Act was enacted to make this possible
- In Crisis Management, one must assign the appropriate hue to every circumstance one deems dangerous in green, orange, or red.
- Public relations professionals play a vital part in crisis communication

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## 5.5 QUESTIONS

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1. Discuss CSR and state the advantages of CSR.
2. Explain the emergence of CSR in India.
3. Discuss the history of CSR.
4. What is Public Relations crisis management? When should PR disasters be addressed?
5. State the seven steps for handling a Public Relations Crisis.

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## CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES

### Unit Structure

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Types of Advocacies
- 6.3 Success Formula for an Effective Campaign and Advocacy Programme
- 6.4 Follow Up Action
- 6.5 Summary
- 6.6 Questions
- 6.7 References

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### 6.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

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- The pre-requisites;
- The strategies to be followed; and
- The procedures to be adopted for launching Campaign and Advocacy Programmes, both for creating awareness and influencing;
- The public i.e., the consumer in general;
- The opinion makers, such as the media and other influential public men; and
- The policy makers, such as the parliamentarians, legislators, municipal and other public bodies, as also various administrative authorities, in respect of various consumer issues, in order to ensure effective intervention in the realm of consumer protection, by bringing about;
- Change in policy, where required, or;
- Change in existing legislations, or enacting of new legislations, or;
- Change in existing procedures, rules and regulation & or;
- Effective implementation of existing laws, procedures and systems.

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### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

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#### Definition of Campaign and Advocacy:

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary Campaign is "a structured course of action for a particular aim, especially to arouse public attention".

Advocacy means "to gain support through arguments and other ways for a cause policy set." We can also focus upon what Dr. Nirmala S. Pandit, Executive Director of National Centre for Advocacy Studies (NACS), Pune has to say about the subject:

Advocacy is an act of giving support to a cause. A lawyer advocates his clients' interest in the court. By persuasion he seeks to convince the judge of the clients' point of view. This aids in resolving the issue between his client and his opponent. This technique of solving, a disagreement or a problem has come to be known as advocacy. (Nirmala S. Pandit, *Advocacy: A Tool for Social Change*, Consumer Network, Vol. 2, No. 4, December. 1995, New Delhi)

### **Campaign and Advocacy: An Explanation:**

Thus, Campaign and Advocacy together in regard to Consumer Movement, indicate identification of various consumer related concerns that deserve attention. This might be either in terms of change or continuation or initiation of a structured course of action (campaign) for influencing and getting public support. Both among consumer groups for whom the charges in issue are considered significant as also effectively convincing the policy makers and the authorities responsible to bring about and implement the necessary adjustments through such a plan (advocacy) (advocacy).

Campaign and Advocacy are thus a means to an end, involving mobilizing men, resources and information and identification of proponents, (i.e. those who are known to be in support of the issues in question), opponents (individuals or groups who are known to be not in favor of the proposals) and the fence sitters (neutrals who have not yet made up their mind either in support or against the proposal) and drawing up of a clear time bound plan of action best suited to obtain the desired objectives of influencing the policy makers and the authorities concerned to bring about the required change

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## **6.2 TYPES OF ADVOCACIES**

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Today, advocacy is no longer relegated to attorneys alone.

There are two sorts of advocacy: (i) private advocacy and (ii) public advocacy. When a person - it may be anyone - seeks to solve a problem in a non-violent manner through negotiation, persuasion, persistence, and by convincing the opposing side, they are performing advocacy, and when the benefit is an individual, the advocacy effort is called "Private Advocacy." On the other hand, when efforts are made for the benefit of a larger audience, the phrase "Public Advocacy" may be used.

It should also be noted that distinguishing between public and private advocacy in real life can be quite challenging. In fact, private lobbying activities have spawned public advocacy campaigns on several occasions.

## **Essentials/pre-requisites of a Campaign and Advocacy Programme:**

### **Steps Involved in a Campaign and Advocacy Programme**

Before initiating a campaign and advocacy programme, the first stage is to identify and clarify the precise topic or themes of consumer concern, including any associated sub-topics or sub-issues. This can be determined by:

- Interacting with different consumer groups and
- Individual consumers
- Usage of various products and services, as indicated by the results of surveys, etc. undertaken by a variety of organizations and disseminated via a variety of published reports, which may have highlighted problem areas and difficulties requiring correction.
- Contemporary controversies highlighted in the media as a result of existing policies or their absence, or as a result of inadequate or flawed application of existing policy, rules, or procedure.

### **The Second Major Step Involved in a Campaign and Advocacy Programme:**

The second step is to analyze the subject or topic in question so that the particular changes action necessary are obvious, i.e. whether what is required is a change in existing policy or continuance of existing policy as opposed to any proposed change.

- Change in existing law or continuity of existing law as opposed to any planned change to it.
- The adoption of new laws
- Modification of existing rules, regulations, or procedures, or continuation of the status quo, as opposed to any suggested modifications.
- A simple application of the current laws, rules, regulations, procedures, or system

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## **6.3 SUCCESS FORMULA FOR AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMME**

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Rani Jeth Malani, an eminent lawyer and social activist, asserts that for an effective campaign and advocacy programme, selecting the proper problem is the first crucial stage. If this is not clarified, the entire programme is likely to unravel. Moreover, in regards to the crucial subject of a campaign, the breadth of other campaigns and their potential impact (spread) must be determined from the outset.

Ms. Jethmalani also expresses concern on the obstacles that are anticipated to be raised by various vested interests. This necessitates the development

of an adequate framework by consumer advocates and campaigners. The type of suitable homework of which Ms. Jethmalani speaks includes:

- i) Accumulation of all pertinent facts
- ii) Clear formulation of the subject at hand
- iii) Formation of the necessary public opinion and education of the public

Overall, the formula for campaign and advocacy success includes thorough preparation, a suitable plan, and sincerity of purpose. (Rani Jethmalani, Formula for Success: "Campaign "Consumer Network," September 1994, Vol. 1, No. 2)

### **Questions to be Asked and Answers to be Found:**

Before a campaign and advocacy programme can be designed and launched with respect to the specified topics and issue as well as its subtopics, if any, the following questions must be answered and precise answers must be found: -

- What changes are required and why?
- What specific changes are required?
- Exist both short- and long-term solutions? If so, which should be followed, or should both be included in the campaign?
- Does a distinct picture of the timeframe and urgency for addressing the issue?
- Who can be brought together as allies? Who else has an interest in the topic?
- Are there specific groups that must be approached and convinced to join the campaign?
- Who are the proponents and opponents of the issue? Are they distinguishable?
- Who has the authority to resolve the problem or effect the necessary change?
- At what level is action necessary for the campaign to be effective? Is it a problem at the municipal, the state, or the national level?
- Given the required level of action, what is the most effective strategy for addressing the problem?
- What tactics should be implemented? What specific activities must be organized?
- Are the target groups that will be involved and challenged by these actions well-defined and comprehended? Are the sequencing and



timing of the planned actions obvious, well-defined, and understood by all parties involved?

### **Check your Progress**

1) What are the three basic techniques involved in an effective campaign and advocacy programme?

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2) Briefly examine information and publicity as a technique for effective campaign and advocacy programmes.

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### **Strategies of Effective Campaign and Advocacy Programmes**

#### **The Three Basic Techniques Involved in Effective Strategy**

- Developing an effective plan often involves the following three techniques: Information and publicity
- Soliciting support: Techniques to influence people with the authority to enact the necessary reforms, etc., and so ensure the success of the campaign.
- Other Methods

These three strategies do not exclude or replace one another; rather, they are complementary.

#### **Information and Publicity:**

This comprises promoting awareness of the campaign and the issues involved by: \s- Using the mass media, press releases, letters to editors, interviews on T.V. and Radio, Cable TV/Cassettes and other audio-visual aids. Organizing public meetings to be addressed by popular public personalities, celebrities' sad other popular persons, sympathetic to the cause.

- Organizing movable groups to travel widely.
- Involving schools and colleges were thought suitable.
- Preparation and circulation of posters, handbills, stickers etc. and setting up hoardings.

- Associating specialists and professionals as well as relevant scientists, etc. whenever possible in such debates to provide extra weight to the effort.
- Increasing the credibility of the campaign wherever possible by supporting them with publications and declarations from international organizations. such as WHO and other U.N. bodies, as well as National organizations such as the Bureau of Indian Standards, Food Laboratories, Josthing Centres, etc.
- Involving the officials and authorities concerned wherever possible in \s.. Seminars/Workshops/symposium
- Preparing detailed briefing material for Members of Parliament and State Legislatures, Parliamentary Legislative Committees, etc. with a view to successful lobbying through Parliamentary and Legislative processes such as Parliament Questions, standing Committee deliberations, etc.
- Proposing Law Cases and Public Interest Litigation together with considerable publicity for such activity.

### **Soliciting Support:**

Strategic planning is the essence of obtaining support from all possible sources for the success of any campaign, especially if it is a struggle-oriented movement. This support must be solicited from:

The general public

Key social groups

Issue-related organizations

This can be accomplished most effectively by:

Identifying all possible factors likely to be concerned with the issues involved in the campaign, both directly and indirectly, including individuals and/or groups

- Who are known to be in favor
- Who are known to be opposed
- Who are known to be on the fence and undecided.
- Preparing briefly, papers best suited for each. group in the form of easily readable pamphlets, etc. containing all information regarding the issues involved in the campaign, covering factual, legal as well as technical and political aspects if any.
- Proper timing in approaching the media or the judiciary or in using other tools of advocacy and campaign.

- Networking with all like minded individuals and groups as also responsive journalists and community leaders and other activists and involving them effectively in the campaign by making full use of their respective strengths.

### **Other Methods:**

- Signature campaign
- Letter writing campaign, which must be a coordinated effort to convey expressions of concern over the issues at hand to Newspapers, Government officials, MPs, MLAs, etc.
- Telephone campaign
- Arranging meetings and public hearings and speaking before committees, etc.
- Organizing peaceful demonstrations, processions, picketing, etc. with the use of suitable banners and billboards.
- Through boycotts and other forms of solidarity expression.

### **Influencing the Powerful:**

This requires identifying those who are in a position to change the situation and address the problem or issue at hand by being able to deal with and make decisions regarding the numerous difficulties involved in the advocacy/campaign programme.

- These influential people may be: - professional organizations
- Business communities.
- Diverse decision-making authority at various organizational levels

Members of Congress, MLAs, or other elected officials

Among the tactics that can be used to influence them are: - providing them with brief memoranda, policy papers, etc. that address the core problems of the campaign advocacy plan.

- Initiating legal proceedings or Public Interest Litigation.
- Presenting legislative draughts, revisions to existing laws, etc. Conducting a workshop/seminar/symposium for the purpose of hammering out the specifics and involving as many influential persons as possible, such as lawyers, doctors, politicians, etc.

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## **6.4 FOLLOW UP ACTION**

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No campaign and advocacy programme can be deemed successful and have accomplished its mission unless appropriate follow-up actions are taken.

### Follow up to a Successful Campaign:

If the campaign has been successful and the relevant authorities have decided to take necessary action to resolve the campaign's difficulties, then

- It is crucial for all parties involved, including the campaign's major actors, to know.
- Ensure that the measures employed are sufficient to cover all aspects of the campaign's topic/issues, including any subtopics/sub issues.
- That the changes are adopted in spirit as well as in text, and that they have actually percolated to the level where the initial problems arose, which was the campaign's starting point and objective.
- Ensure not only the real changes brought about by the campaign but also the services of the individual groups involved in the campaign receive proper visibility.

### Follow up Action in Case of Failure:

If the specific Campaign and Advocacy Programme launched by a group ends without successful redress of the campaign's issues, then it is important to:

- To recommit resources to the subject by the same or other groups, if the concerns involved are still relevant and significant.
- To conduct a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opposition, and threats) to determine the reasons for the program's failure and to relaunch the campaign and advocacy programme with fresh enthusiasm.

### Check your Progress

1) What are the Three Basic Techniques Involved in Effective Strategy?

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2) Give a few Questions to be Asked and Answers to be Found.

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3) Write a note on Follow Up Action

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## 6.5 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

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- Advocacy means "to gain support through arguments and other ways for a cause policy set."
- When a person - it may be anyone - seeks to solve a problem in a non-violent manner through negotiation, persuasion, persistence, and by convincing the opposing side, they are performing advocacy, and when the benefit is an individual, the advocacy effort is called "Private Advocacy."
- When efforts are made for the benefit of a larger audience, the phrase "Public Advocacy" may be used.
- Change in existing law or continuity of existing law as opposed to any planned change to it.
- Developing an effective plan often involves the following three techniques: - Information and publicity
- Strategic planning is the essence of obtaining support from all possible sources for the success of any campaign, especially if it is a struggle-oriented movement.
- No campaign and advocacy programme can be deemed successful and have accomplished its mission unless appropriate follow-up actions are taken.
- To conduct a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opposition, and threats) to determine the reasons for the program's failure and to relaunch the campaign and advocacy programme with fresh enthusiasm.

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## 6.6 QUESTIONS

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1. What are the different types of advocacies?
2. Explain in your own words what you understand by campaign and advocacy.
3. Briefly consider the steps to be taken into account before a campaign and advocacy programme can be launched.
4. Examine the follow up action to be taken in case of an effective campaign and advocacy programme.
5. What is the follow up action to be taken in case a campaign and advocacy programme fails?

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## 6.7 REFERENCES

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- Publications of the Consumer Coordination Council (CCC), New Delhi.
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## **VISUAL, VIRAL, GUERRILLA AND SPIN MARKETING**

### **Unit Structure**

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Visual Marketing
  - 7.2.1 Importance of Visual Marketing
  - 7.2.2 Types of Visual Marketing
- 7.3 Viral Marketing
  - 7.3.1 Phases of Viral Advertising
- 7.4 Various Viral Mechanisms
  - 7.4.1 Examples of Viral Marketing
  - 7.4.2 Viral Marketing Characteristics
  - 7.4.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Viral Marketing
- 7.5 What Is Guerrilla Marketing?
  - 7.5.1 The History of Guerrilla Marketing
  - 7.5.2 How Big Businesses Are Using Guerrilla Marketing
  - 7.5.3 How Small Businesses Are Using Guerrilla Marketing
- 7.6 Spin Marketing
- 7.7 Summary
- 7.8 Questions
- 7.9 References

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### **7.0 OBJECTIVES**

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- To understand the concept and importance of visual marketing in modern-day advertising.
- To identify the different types of visual marketing and their impact on brand recognition and recall.
- To understand why visual marketing is crucial in brand promotion and public relations.
- To identify the different types of visual marketing and their unique characteristics.
- To understand the concept and benefits of viral marketing.
- To identify the various viral mechanisms and strategies used in viral marketing campaigns.

- To learn about the different phases involved in creating a successful viral marketing campaign.
- To understand the concept and history of guerrilla marketing.
- To learn about the different types of guerrilla marketing and their unique characteristics.
- To examine case studies of successful guerrilla marketing campaigns across different industries.
- To understand the concept and history of spin marketing.
- To identify the different types of spin marketing and their unique characteristics.

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## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

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Modern advertising and marketing strategies rely heavily on visual marketing, viral marketing, guerrilla marketing, and spin marketing. With the development of digital technologies, visual marketing has become increasingly important for establishing an emotional connection with the audience, spreading important messages, and establishing brand recognition. On the other hand, viral marketing has gained popularity due to its capacity to rapidly generate buzz and word-of-mouth publicity for brands. Guerrilla marketing, a form of unconventional marketing, is well-known for its unconventional and low-cost strategy for increasing brand engagement and awareness. Finally, spin marketing presents a one-sided or biased perspective on a product or service in order to alter public perception.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an in-depth analysis of Spin, Guerrilla, Viral, and Visual Marketing. The section starts by characterizing every idea and investigating its set of experiences, development, and importance in contemporary showcasing methodologies. After that, it looks at successful case studies of visual marketing campaigns and delves into the various types and characteristics of visual marketing. The section likewise gives an outline of the different systems and stages engaged with viral advertising, alongside contextual investigations of effective viral promoting efforts.

After that, case studies of successful guerrilla marketing campaigns used by both big and small businesses are examined in the chapter to learn more about guerrilla marketing and the distinctive approach it takes to advertising. Ultimately, the section talks about the idea of twist showcasing, its significance in molding public discernment, and gives contextual analyses of effective twist advertising efforts. Toward the finish of this part, perusers will have a far reaching comprehension of Visual Showcasing, Viral, Guerrilla, and Twist Promoting, their advantages, and how to plan and execute effective missions.



Visual marketing is a type of marketing that promotes a product, service, or brand through a variety of visual media like photos, videos, and graphics. The aim of visual marketing is to produce visually appealing material that engages the target audience and successfully communicates the intended message.

A variety of venues, including social media sites, websites, email marketing, advertising, and other digital or print media, can be used to perform visual marketing. Based on the idea that the human brain processes visual information more quickly than other types of information, visual marketing can be more successful in grabbing and holding the audience's attention.

Additionally, good emotions, an emotional connection with the audience, and improved brand identification and recall can all be achieved through visual marketing. A thorough awareness of the target audience, their tastes, and the intended message are necessary for effective visual marketing.

### 7.2.1 Importance of Visual Marketing:

In order to effectively communicate critical messages to the audience, build a strong visual identity for a business, and improve the overall PR strategy, visual marketing is a crucial component of public relations (PR). The following are some reasons why PR should prioritise visual marketing:

**Draws attention:** It might be difficult for companies to stand out in the sea of material being shared across numerous channels. By using captivating images and films that may capture the audience's interest, visual marketing can aid in drawing attention.

**Establishes emotional ties:** Visual marketing can assist in establishing an emotional ties with the audience. Brands may engage their audience more deeply and foster loyalty and trust by employing images and films that make people feel good.

**Brand identity is reinforced:** By using consistent graphics across all channels, visual marketing helps support brand identity. This might make the audience feel more at home and make it simpler for them to recognise the brand.

**Enhances storytelling:** By employing images and videos to support the brand's message, visual marketing may boost storytelling. This can assist the audience recall the important details and make the story more fascinating and captivating.

**Engagement is raised by promoting audience interaction with the material using visual marketing.** Brands can boost engagement and create a

community around their product by using interactive visuals like videos, polls, and quizzes.

In general, visual marketing is a crucial component of PR since it can support firms in effectively communicating their message, standing out in a crowded market, and building strong connections with their audience.

### **7.2.2 Types of Visual Marketing:**

The following are some of the popular forms of graphic marketing:

#### **Images:**

One of the most well-liked methods of visual marketing is the use of images. They can be used to highlight goods, services, or the personality of a business on social media, websites, and other digital channels. Photographs, drawings, and infographics are all examples of images.

Another well-liked type of visual marketing is video. They can be employed to convey a narrative, show off a product, or highlight the character of a company. Videos can be disseminated via email marketing, websites, and social media.

#### **Infographics:**

Infographics, which combine text and images, are used to convey complicated information in a clear and interesting manner. They can be used to display facts, figures, or the message of a particular brand.

#### **GIFs:**

GIFs are brief, animated visuals that can be used to express humour, emotion, or the character of a company. They can be disseminated via websites, messaging services, and social media.

#### **Memes:**

Online memes are amusing photos or movies that are shared. They can be utilised to playfully interact with the audience or to spread a brand's message.

User-generated content is material produced by users that highlights the goods or services of a brand. This can be done through images, videos, or social media posts that show off a company's goods in genuine settings.

These are just a few illustrations of the various visual marketing strategies that businesses can employ to advertise their goods and services. The secret is to select the visual marketing strategy that is best suited to the brand's message and target market.

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## **7.3 VIRAL MARKETING**

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Viral marketing is an emerging concept that allows for the compulsive watching of frightening or informative content. It could be a video clip, a

TV commercial, a cartoon film, a hilarious picture, a poem, a song, a political statement, or a news story that captures the attention of millions of individuals overnight.

It is generally so engaging that individuals want to share it with as many others as possible. Utilizing the network effect of the Internet, viral marketing can effectively reach a huge number of individuals in a short period of time. Success typically generates excitement. Word-of-mouth and word-of-mouse are the two types of viral marketing.

Both rely on networks of people to disseminate information. It is quite similar to viral fever, which can be transmitted from person to person. The goal is to affect a large number of people simultaneously. Viral marketing is utilized in all aspects of life, including the political arena, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi's campaign uses the Internet extensively and engages in a discourse with the public every Sunday via radio.

Blogs provide businesses with valuable information into what consumers believe and promote through their blogs. For advertisers, customer attitudes on blogs and other social networking sites provide a far more accurate gauge of the instant impact of commercials than any typical market research recall poll could.

Justin Kirby (2003) of viral marketing specialists DMC ([www.dmc.co.uk](http://www.dmc.co.uk)) claimed that three factors are necessary for viral campaigns to be successful:

1. Creative content is the viral agent. The message must be original and captivating for it to spread like wildfire.
2. Identifying websites, blogs, or individuals to send email to in order to initiate the virus' propagation.
3. Monitoring the effect and calculating the return on investment for the expense of producing the viral agent and seeding.

### 7.3.1 Phases of Viral Advertising:

As previously said, Viral Marketing is also known as "word of mouth," "media leverage," and "network marketing." The three primary viral marketing tactics are:

**Promoting valuable goods or services:** "Free" is the most alluring term in a marketer's lexicon. "Cheap" and "Inexpensive" are also attention-getters, but "Free" is more likely to make your marketing efforts go viral and spread faster.

In addition to delivering product information, these phrases are frequently used by viral marketers. This may not result in immediate riches, but it will guarantee profits "soon or possibly for the rest of their life." Attracting interest generates valuable email addresses, advertising income, and e-commerce sales potential.

### **Transmittable:**

Viral marketing ensures that your marketing communications are easily transmissible and replicable: email, website, graphics, software download. This type of marketing is most effective on the Internet because it is simple, inexpensive, and quick from the marketer's perspective. The digital message must be concise and simple to deliver. The classic example is "Get your free, private email at <http://www.hotmail.com/>" at the end of every email message.

Utilizes existing social communication networks - given that there are so many social media possibilities on the Internet, it is simpler for marketers to make their marketing messages go viral. Everyone must simply forward the message to eight to twelve people on their social network, the majority of whom are their friends, family, or acquaintances, for it to go viral.

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## **7.4 VARIOUS VIRAL MECHANISMS**

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There are numerous forms of e-mail virus transmission mechanisms, some of which are given here.

In this instance, e-mails are employed to propagate the message. It is an email including a link to a website or an attachment, such as a video. At the end of a commercial email, there is no harm in asking the initial receiver to send the message to interested friends or coworkers. The message must be innovative and engaging for individuals to want to share it with others. Even if only one out of one hundred responses forwards the email, it contributes to the development of a vast network. Additionally, word-of-mouth helps increase knowledge of the email message.

Web-facilitated viral (email prompt) - in this instance, the e-mail comprises a link/graphic to a web page with 'e-mail a friend' or 'email a colleague' A web form is used to capture the email address and, sometimes, an optional message to which the email should be forwarded. The corporation then sends the buddy or colleague a separate message.

Web-facilitated viral (web prompt) - in this scenario, a web page, such as a product catalog or white paper, that provides a link/graphic to "email a colleague" or a friend. Again, an online form is utilized to collect data, followed by the transmission of an email.

Incentivized viral is a separate form because email addresses are not given voluntarily.

This is what is required for viral to truly take off. By offering an incentive for supplying the address of another person, we can significantly increase referrals. With the correct offer, this can significantly increase the response rate. The reward is made available by email or a website. In this instance, there is a risk of violating privacy regulations because the recipient's agreement may not be voluntarily granted. Typically, only one subsequent email from the brand is permitted. Therefore, you should consult with attorneys if you are considering this.

Web-link viral- online viral isn't just restricted to email. Individual links in discussion group posts or blogs are also included in this category. In either case, it is essential to seed the campaign with as many online and offline mentions of the viral agent as possible.

In conclusion, viral approaches build traffic through the use of e-mail (virtual word-of-mouth) or actual word-of-mouth to disseminate the information from one person to the next.

#### **7.4.1 Examples of Viral Marketing:**

Hotmail, the 1996-launched, free web-based email service that contained an embedded advertising and direct link urging receivers to join up for an account in users' outgoing messages, is usually cited as an early example of viral marketing. This strategy led to the most rapid growth at the time among user-based media companies.

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge is another instance that highlights the diversity of viral marketing. The ice bucket challenge existed prior to The ALS Association's use of it to raise awareness and funds. However, the widespread transmission of ALS Ice Bucket movies on social media generated a worldwide phenomenon that dramatically enhanced ALS awareness.

#### **7.4.2 Viral Marketing Characteristics:**

All examples of viral marketing, whether intentional or unintentional, share three characteristics: the message, the messenger, and the setting. Each component must be utilized for a viral marketing campaign to be successful. Any business size can launch viral marketing initiatives, which can stand alone or be integrated into a bigger traditional effort.

These campaigns may employ many technologies (e.g., films, games, photos, email, text messaging, and free products) to appeal to the emotions of users or viewers, increase awareness of a noble cause, and make the content easier to consume and spread. Influencers who have a huge network of followers are frequently utilized in viral marketing.

Using social networks as a "force multiplier," viral marketing is faster and less expensive than traditional marketing initiatives. Since it can attract so much traffic in a short amount of time, it can also garner notice from the mainstream media. As messages are edited, misunderstood, deemed spam, or called out for missing the mark, social media can also lead viral marketing campaigns to backfire. Success in viral marketing can often be difficult to quantify.

#### **7.4.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of Viral Marketing:**

Viral marketing enables businesses to advertise their products more effectively by reaching people who would not normally be targeted by their conventional marketing initiatives. This increased reach permits the organization to access new areas and perhaps grow its customer base.

When executed creatively, businesses can generate viral responses. In reaction to McDonald's claim that their burgers do not decay, Burger King shared photographs of a month-old, moldy Whopper to generate publicity. Burger King states that it employs only fresh ingredients and no preservatives, which should provide customers with a superior and healthier product. Its unappetizing-appearing burger was a visual substantiation of this assertion.

Traditional advertising initiatives are much more expensive than viral marketing campaigns. When consumers share their favorable experiences with a company's products and services with others, advertising is virtually free.

Because the Internet enables content to be shared fast and readily, viral marketing can also result in exponential development. However, it is vital to highlight that the speed and ease with which content is shared depends heavily on whether the organization utilizes the appropriate technologies.

Occasionally, viral marketing generates an unintended response. Consumers prefer to share negative news more frequently than positive news, and studies indicate that negative news elicits a stronger emotional response. Negative word-of-mouth may be detrimental to business and often difficult to overcome.

It is difficult to verify if a lead or sale occurred from viral marketing, making it tough to assess its impact. And there is no agreement among firms over how to evaluate its success.

Customers will likely not share if they fear the viral campaign would risk their privacy and security. As a result, the company's marketing aim is unsuccessful, and its reputation may suffer. Future viral marketing strategies may be negatively impacted by earlier failures.

**Pros:**

- Wider reach
- Faster and exponential growth
- Lower costs

**Cons:**

- Negative word-of-mouth
- Hard to measure
- Low virality

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## 7.5 WHAT IS GUERRILLA MARKETING?

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Guerrilla Marketing is a form of advertising that emphasizes innovative, low-cost marketing strategies that produce maximum results.



In his 1984 book "Guerrilla Advertising," Jay Conrad Levinson invented the phrase guerrilla marketing. The word guerrilla marketing was derived from guerrilla warfare, a sort of irregular warfare involving the employment of small-scale tactics by armed individuals. A significant number of these strategies incorporate ambushes, sabotage, raids, and elements of surprise. Similar to guerrilla warfare, guerrilla marketing employs similar strategies in the marketing sector.

This unorthodox advertising approach largely relies on unconventional marketing strategies, high levels of enthusiasm, and creativity. Guerrilla Marketing involves surprising the consumer, leaving an indelible impression, and generating an abundance of social chatter. It is believed that guerrilla marketing leaves a considerably more lasting effect on consumers than conventional advertising and marketing. This is because the majority of guerrilla marketing efforts try to connect with consumers on a more intimate and memorable basis.



### **Guerrilla marketing:**

This is frequently the most cost-effective way for small firms to reach a wide audience. It is also utilized by large corporations to complement ongoing mainstream media campaigns in grassroots campaigns. Individuals have employed this marketing strategy to find employment or additional employment.

(Image source: <http://www.creativeguerrillamarketing.com>)

### **7.5.1 The History of Guerrilla Marketing:**

In 4000 B.C., the ancient Egyptians employed papyrus to create sales messages and wall posters. What we now refer to as traditional advertising and marketing grew gradually over the ages, but did not truly take off until the early 1900s.

During this time, the primary objective of commercials was to inform consumers about the product or service, rather than to entertain and engage them.

In 1960, campaigns focused on spending heavily on advertising in various mass media platforms, including radio and print.

Not until the late 1980s and early 1990s did advertising messages begin to appear on cable television. During this time, the most notable innovator was MTV, which aimed at encouraging viewers to tune in for the advertising message rather than as a by-product of the featured programme.

Agencies struggled to leave a lasting impact on consumers, while consumers had become weary of being advertised to. The moment has come for a change.

In 1984, Jay Conrad Levinson coined the phrase "guerrilla marketing" in his book "Guerrilla Marketing."

Levinson's previous positions include Senior Vice President at J. Walter Thompson, Creative Director and Board Member at Leo Burnett Advertising, and Creative Director and Board Member at Leo Burnett Advertising. In his work, Levinson presents novel approaches to and countermeasures against conventional types of advertising.

The objective of guerrilla marketing was to employ innovative advertising strategies on a limited budget. During this time, radio, television, and print media were on the rise, but consumers grew weary. Levinson argues that campaigns must be surprising, original, controversial, and intelligent. It must generate buzz.

Small firms shifted their mindsets and adopted an entirely new marketing strategy. The concept of guerrilla marketing continues to evolve and expand in a natural manner.

### 7.5.2 How Big Businesses Are Using Guerrilla Marketing:



**Guerrilla Advertising** was originally intended for tiny enterprises with little resources, but this did not prevent large corporations from adopting the same philosophy.



(Image Source: <http://www.creativeguerrillamarketing.com>)

Larger corporations have been supplementing their advertising campaigns with unorthodox marketing strategies. Some marketers claim that the use of guerrilla marketing strategies by large corporations is not authentic guerrilla marketing. Higher corporations have significantly larger budgets, and their brands are typically well-established.

Using guerrilla marketing techniques is also significantly riskier for a large company. In certain situations, their guerrilla antics may fail and become a public relations disaster. Smaller firms do not face as much risk because the majority of people will simply dismiss it as another unsuccessful gimmick.

One such instance was the infamous 2007 Boston Bomb Scare that Turner Broadcasting caused on January 31, 2007. What began as a guerrilla marketing operation to promote a new film starring the Cartoon Network show Aqua Teen Hunger Force evolved into a citywide bomb threat.



(Image Source: <http://www.creativeguerrillamarketing.com>)

Turner Broadcasting, with the assistance of the guerrilla marketing firm Interference, Inc., installed battery-powered LED signs mimicking the 'Mooninite' character on the animated television programme. The LED signs were positioned throughout Boston, Massachusetts, and its environs.

The incident cost Turner Broadcasting and Interference, Inc. \$2 million as a result of the campaign. The campaign drew both positive and negative reviews.

"No one could have anticipated that the Lite-Brite cartoon character would cause a bomb panic. After removing the emotion, the campaign was extremely innovative. That is what will be remembered. Many of the clients we work with want guerrilla marketing campaigns with an air of mystery, but they do not fully get what this term entails.

Ewen may transform this experience into something the industry can learn from by advising on its significance. He should be speaking to industry groups about this topic." Donna Sokolsky, San Francisco Co-Founder of Spark PR

Evidently, many businesses have learned from their prior successes and mistakes. Coca-Cola is a prominent brand that has been performing exceptionally well.

The Coca-Cola Company created the "Happiness Machine" film with the assistance of an interactive marketing agency in January 2010. In the video, a Coca-Cola vending machine dispensed much more than simply cool beverages. Using five deliberately positioned hidden cameras, the film was shot at St. John's University in Queens, New York. The responses of the students were entirely unplanned.

The video has received over 4.5 million views on YouTube since going viral. It earned the coveted CLIO Gold Interactive Award in May 2010. The film was most successful in Brazil, Mexico, Japan, and Russia.



(Image Source: <http://www.creativeguerrillamarketing.com>)

Coca-Cola chose to continue the 'Happiness' theme by producing several more videos with the same concept after seeing the video's astounding ROI.



(Image Source: <http://www.creativeguerrillamarketing.com>)

Red Bull and Austrian extreme athlete Felix Baumgartner established a world record for the highest skydiving leap on October 14, 2012. The Red Bull Stratos was an effort to send Baumgartner into the stratosphere at an altitude of over 138,100 feet. Baumgartner broke the speed of sound after jumping from a helium-filled balloon at an estimated speed of 833.9 mph (1,342.8 km/h). It took 9:09 minutes to return to Earth, with 4:22 of that time spent in freefall.

Moreover, Red Bull garnered much-deserved recognition for this spectacular stunt. On the same day, they also smashed social media records by achieving over 8 million concurrent YouTube views. The team was able to accomplish this through the efforts of their social media team. By visiting the Red Bull Stratos website, users could watch the jump LIVE, keep up with the action on Twitter, and communicate with others on Facebook.

### **7.5.3 How Small Businesses Are Using Guerrilla Marketing:**

One of the most well-known examples is the film *The Blair Witch Project*, which was marketed through guerrilla marketing. *The Blair Witch Project* is a 1999 American psychological horror film produced with a small budget and a camera by five graduates of the University of Central Florida Film Program. The trio launched an Internet campaign to disseminate false reports about "the Blair Witch."

The trio designed a website dedicated to the Blair Witch to bolster the case for this fake forest-dwelling ghost. They utilized the slogan „Everything you’ve heard is true“; In October of 1994, while filming a documentary in the woods near Burkittsville, Maryland, three student filmmakers vanished. After a year, their footage was discovered.



(Image Source: <https://blog.blcklst.com/essential-sundance-movies-kathy-charles-on-the-blair-witch-project-5be221384159>)

In April 1998, Bravo aired the preview, which garnered considerable attention. The producer of the Bravo show *Split/Screen* requested that the team create an independent website because Blair Witch comments were

dominating the show's official website and message board. People were interested in this before the film was even completed.

"That's how everything got started. The website opened in the summer of 1998 and in November, we found out we were accepted into Sundance Film Festival. We had a great deal of buzz leading up to Sundance. It was not due to our expenditures. Because we already had fans who hadn't even seen the film. It was eye-opening, according to The Blair Witch Project co-creator Mike Monello.

The Blair Witch Project's worldwide total was \$248,639,010.

### **Check your Progress**

1) What is guerrilla marketing, and how has it evolved over time?

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2) What are the key characteristics of successful viral marketing campaigns?

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3) What is Visual Marketing?

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## **7.6 SPIN MARKETING**

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In the contexts of public relations (PR), business, and journalism, spin is the selective construction of facts and the manipulation of nuances to support a certain narrative perspective.

Spinning is an example of propaganda. To spin anything is to transmit it in a manner that alters the likelihood that people will see it in a certain way. As a result, spin is deliberately deceptive and can create the opposite image of what would otherwise occur. False statements cannot be called spin. However, in the process, inconvenient but relevant truths are frequently suppressed and less significant but true elements are accentuated.

Spin has long been utilized for business reputation management and product marketing. Using cloud washing, for instance, vendors associate their products with the cloud movement, even though the reason may be

nothing more than the fact that a portion of the product relies on the Internet. Similarly, greenwashing is done to give the impression that a product or firm is more ecologically friendly than it actually is.

This usage of spin is derived from its association with storytelling, as in "spinning a yarn." This term was originally recorded in 1812 as a sailor's idiom for narrating a narrative while executing a task such as yarn-spinning or twisting.

When relationships became the primary focus of public relations activities, spin (i.e., making something appear better than it is) became detrimental to long-term public relations objectives. And this is because spin damages the most fundamental and healthy relationship ingredient: trust.

Spin can take many different forms. On one extreme of the scale is lying, whether by commission (saying it outright) or omission (deliberately omitting crucial information). Exaggeration, on the other hand, involves making a product or service appear better than it actually is. Whether it involves lying or exaggeration – or something in between – spin hinders an organization's efforts to develop meaningful relationships by destroying trust.

Notably, the trend toward connection building does not diminish the profession's reliance on persuasion. Professionals in public relations devote a great deal of work to persuading a business's numerous stakeholders that the organization is deserving of a connection. This is accomplished by demonstrating the organization's responsiveness to stakeholder requirements. This requires adapting policies, views, and goods to the needs of stakeholders.

Public relations practitioners have always understood the significance of senior management influence. Beginning in the 1970s, more and more public relations practitioners began to define themselves as "businesspeople first and communicators second." Consequently, public relations grew more focused on defining quantifiable targets associated with company objectives and providing a tangible ROI (return on investment). Ultimately, if firms were to invest in public relations initiatives, they deserved to know what "return" they could anticipate.

Did the organization's reputation improve as a result of the public relations activities? If yes, then how? Did it boost sales? How can you tell? The necessity to "show outcomes" has spurred numerous developments in public relations measurement, most notably in social media, where corporations are still evaluating the value of interaction.

The emphasis on business strategy increased the number of public relations experts in senior management, where they could provide feedback prior to the formulation of policies or the creation of products. As a result, public relations became more effective as proactive PR initiatives replaced reactive ones.



With proactive public relations, firms may plan and implement plans and tactics on their own timetable, as opposed to being forced to respond to a PR problem. In these reactionary situations, companies will be most tempted to spin the truth in order to make things appear better than they actually are. Although it is hard to completely avoid reactive public relations, many PR issues can be avoided with proactive planning.

Initially, in the early 20th century, public relations were primarily concerned with media relations and publicity. As a result, the majority of practitioners were former journalists who comprehended news and how to build an effective media story.

However, public relations is now much more expansive. Public relations professionals also work in employee relations, investor relations, community relations, public affairs, lobbying, and social media, among others. As the scope of the profession has grown, so too has the skill set required for success.

Writing is the primary talent required of public relations professionals. However, employers also seek for research capabilities, interpersonal communication skills, media and cultural literacy, critical thinking skills, and business expertise (i.e., what makes businesses more effective).

Currently, integrated marketing communications (IMC) or integrated strategic communications (ICS) mix advertising, marketing, and public relations. Under these integrated models, public relations collaborate more closely with advertising and marketing to develop consistent messaging and tactics and gain cost savings.

Presently, public relations are practiced globally. In reality, some of the profession's most rapid expansion is occurring overseas, particularly in developing nations and growing markets. Wherever or whenever public support is crucial to the success of an organization, public relations will be valued.

**Below are the principles of Spin Advertising:**

**It's not our job to put a clean shirt on a dirty body:**

Many believe that this is the primary responsibility of a public relations professional: to make something look better than it truly is. Using excitement, deception, diversion, and perhaps plain lies, the practitioner employs "spin" to put a positive spin on a person or thing that is fundamentally negative.

While spin may be effective in the short-term, it is counterproductive to achieving long-term public relations objectives. If our goal is to establish and maintain relationships, then spin undermines the most crucial element of a strong relationship: trust. Once gone, it is extremely difficult to recover that trust. Consequently, the relationship is in peril at that point. If your audience has the option to be in a relationship with you or not (for

instance, if there are equivalent items or services on the market), it may choose to end the connection.

Even if the public chose to remain loyal, a loss of trust will be costly.

Stephen Covey and Rebecca Merrill claim that trust is swift in their book titled *The Speed of Trust*. In other words, when you have a trustworthy business relationship with the public, you do not need to spend a tremendous deal of time analyzing every piece of information. (Read the citation on the slide)

As in all aspects of life, trust in business is an important commodity. Practitioners of public relations can assist firms in developing superior products, policies, and services and in communicating more effectively with all of their audiences. They may ensure that their publics are "heard" and that, as much as possible, everything the organization does is in their publics' best interests.

### **Practicing public relations proactively, whenever possible:**

Freedictionary.com defines "proactive" as "managing a situation by forcing something to occur rather than waiting to respond to it after it occurs." Public relations are more effective when they are planned, deliberate, and managed. Reactive public relations place an organization on the defensive and foster an atmosphere conducive to spin.

In order to maintain proactive public relations, organizations must continuously monitor multiple surroundings, evaluate connections, and identify and track concerns that may affect the organization. Research demonstrates that early action might have prevented the majority of organizational catastrophes. The objectives of "issues tracking" are to avoid difficulties and seize opportunities.

In terms of relationship management, firms should regularly replenish their "reservoir of goodwill" or "emotional bank account." Both of these analogies refer to handling relationships proactively and deliberately. If the reservoir of goodwill is filled, something will remain in times of drought (a crisis with a specific stakeholder or stakeholders). Similarly, for the emotional bank account. Even if there is a large withdrawal (i.e., a crisis), you will still have something left if it is full.

### **Never refuse an opportunity to tell your side of the story:**

This is among the most frequent public relations mistakes. Someone else will tell your side of the story if you don't: a former (angry) employee, competitor, victim, or disgruntled neighbor. If the media is producing a story, a quote is required. Let it come from you, and not from these individuals.

When the news is negative, numerous organizations refuse to speak with the media.

They instead respond with "no comment." However, "no comment" signifies "guilty" to the public. It also signifies "we're not cooperating."

By delivering your side of the story (particularly in a negative circumstance), a public relations specialist can assist "frame" the tale in the best possible light – without, of course, making a negative situation appear better than it is (i.e., spin).

In reality, however, there are typically numerous legitimate "frames" that might be applied to the same circumstance. Typically, the media will choose the most dramatic frame since it makes for a more compelling story. Your responsibility as a PR professional is to ensure that the frame is fair and truthful, and if required, to recommend an alternative frame that more correctly reflects the situation's reality.

All of this necessitates that the organization collaborates and assists the media in obtaining a story. Understanding a journalist's job, from what they need to when they need it, is essential for developing positive connections with the media.

### **Be a bridge, not a barrier:**

There are at least two distinct approaches to public relations, and they are diametrically opposed. One technique to practice public relations is to serve as a barrier between an organization and its public. This type of public relations employs unidirectional communication, does not listen to stakeholders in any meaningful sense, disregards the media, and employs spin to enable a company to avoid taking responsibility. If the organization wishes to preserve ties with its stakeholders, "barrier" public relations are ineffective, at least in the long run.

Short term, a barrier can be effective. But as soon as the stakeholders realize they have been lied to, misled, or just ignored, they will leave (i.e., utilize a different product or service) or complain if they are unable to leave (i.e., neighbors near a factory, etc.).

Long-term, however, being an obstruction is counterproductive to corporate objectives.

Moreover, in today's environment, when transparency is becoming increasingly vital, barrier public relations are ineffective.

Much more effectively (and ethically) practice public relations by serving as a link between an organization and its publics. Practitioners who view themselves as bridges engage in two-way communication with the organization's stakeholders, engage in transparent discourse via social media, and respond positively to the demands of journalists.

There is no need for more spin doctors in the world. However, it requires bridge-builders who can facilitate discourse, promote mutual understanding, and establish cooperative, mutually beneficial connections.



### Check your Progress:

1) What are some examples of viral marketing mechanisms?

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2) Define Spin Marketing

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3) Brief the History of Guerilla Marketing.

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## 7.7 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

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- Viral marketing is an emerging concept that allows for the compulsive watching of frightening or informative content.
- Any business size can launch viral marketing initiatives, which can stand alone or be integrated into a bigger traditional effort.
- Viral marketing characteristics include a focus on creating shareable content, leveraging the power of social networks, and encouraging user participation.
- Big businesses are using guerrilla marketing tactics to stand out in a crowded market, often by leveraging technology and social media to create unique experiences for consumers.
- Spin marketing is a controversial marketing technique that involves manipulating the message to influence public opinion.

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## 7.8 QUESTIONS

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1. Discuss Visual Marketing and its Types
2. Discuss Viral Marketing and explain its characteristics.
3. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of Viral Marketing.
4. Write in brief the History of Guerrilla Marketing.

5. What is spin, and why is it counter-productive to long-term public relations goals?
6. What does spin destroy in a relationship?

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## **UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA AND BUSINESS**

### **Unit Structure**

- 8.0 Objective of the study
- 8.1 Introduction
  - 8.1.2 The Impact of Social Media
- 8.2 AIDA Enters the Internet Era
- 8.3 Variations of Social Media
- 8.4 Management of brand perception
- 8.5 Online Communities
- 8.6 Community Building Principles
- 8.7 Virtual universes
- 8.8 What is Social Media Marketing?
- 8.9 Customer support
- 8.10 Social Media Marketing Plan:
  - 8.10.1 Improving communication and connection with crucial audiences
- 8.11 Social Media Marketing Suggestions:
- 8.12 Plan of Action for Social Media Marketing
- 8.13 Social Media Objectives for the 20th Century:
- 8.15 Tools for Social Media Marketing
- 8.16 Summary
- 8.17 Questions
- 8.18 References

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### **8.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

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- Define social media and Business
- Identify some aspects of social Media marketing
- Discussion and analyzing Business through Social Media Marketing

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### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Engaging clients via social media affords them the opportunity to communicate with the brand online.

Customers can be attracted to company-owned websites by allowing them to download and contribute material, personalize web pages, and engage in one-on-one communication. All of these opportunities can be multiplied with the use of social media.

## **Social Media are characterized as:**

"A phrase used to characterize internet media that is built on dialogue and interaction between individuals. It can take the shape of Internet forums, web logs, social blogs, micro-blogging, wikis, podcasts, images, videos, ratings, and social bookmarking. Blogs, image sharing, vlogs, wall postings, e-mail, instant messaging, music sharing, crowdsourcing, and Voice over IP, to mention a few, are examples of technologies." "

Social media can also be defined as an internet-enabled technology that enables individuals or organizations to share, generate, or exchange information, professional interests, and/or images/videos with virtual communities and/or networks. The content is developed not as a corporate monologue, but as a discussion, with all participants able to contribute content and discuss, amend, and rate each other's contributions. Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, LinkedIn, and other well-known social media platforms thrive on the number of likes, shares, and tweets a person or business receives.

### **8.1.2 The Impact of Social Media:**

Social media may be the greatest significant change to marketing since the subject was recognised as a separate discipline. Before the advent of social media, marketers had complete control over all marketing messages that reached the public. However, marketers no longer have control over the brand; it is greatly influenced by the opinions of consumers and others on social media. US television executive Don S. Hewitt (2006) famously remarked, "the businessman simply wants two things said about his company: what he pays his public relations and advertising professionals to say, and nothing else."

This age has now gone. In the past, an unhappy client could only share his experience with friends and acquaintances, or submit a letter to a newspaper or magazine, but their effect was limited. Now, the Internet and social media enable a single unsatisfied client to instantly reach hundreds, thousands, or even millions of people. These recipients can then forward the word to untold other masses of people, causing it to become instantly infectious. Whether marketers—or, more precisely, the organization—perceive this loss of control as an opportunity or a threat will likely decide that organization's success in this new marketing climate. There are both benefits and drawbacks to social media marketing:

### **Advantages of Social Media**

- **Enhance the consumer's experience** in multiple ways; it not only allows them to voice their opinion, but also gives them the impression that the company takes their opinions and input seriously.
- **Brand awareness:** As consumers peruse the firm's websites, they learn a great deal about the company and its products and services, which has genuine value if they read posts from other customers.

- **Serves as its own marketing tool:** CGC promotes the company's products and/or services through favorable reviews from other consumers and users, generating positive word-of-mouth.
- **Information distribution:** social media marketing can also be used to promote the diffusion of a positive image of a brand, product, or organization's message.
- **Relationship marketing:** it can assist marketers in establishing long-lasting, healthy relationships with their customers by addressing their complaints instantly.

### **Disadvantages of Social Media:**

The corporations have lost control to the extent that they have no say over what is being discussed by their clients on numerous social media sites. Whatever is mentioned can either be beneficial or detrimental to the firm.

- False views can drive away other consumers - A negative comment can alter other customers' perceptions of a company's goods or service.
- Manipulation of facts; inappropriate language, spam comments, and insults are examples of common scenarios that can harm a company's reputation.
- Immediate dissemination of information - the bad message spreads like wildfire to tens of thousands of people at once, culminating in a catastrophic loss. It becomes extremely challenging for the business to recover from this loss.

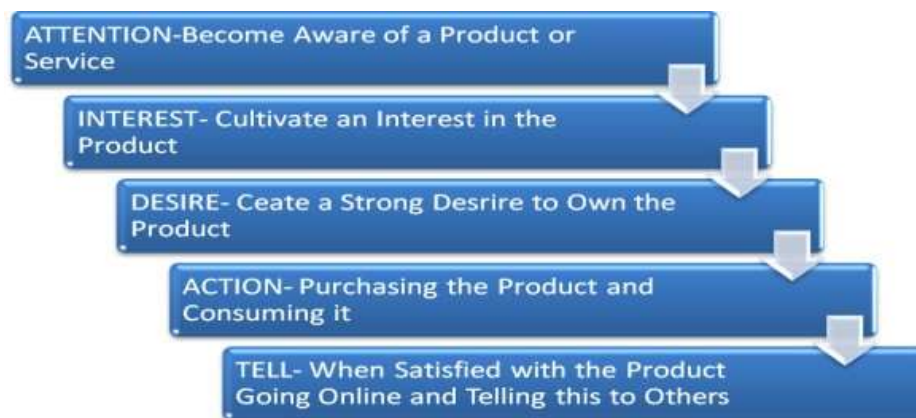
Therefore, it is undeniable that customers interact with brands and participate in marketing on a scale that most marketers did not consider a decade ago.

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## **8.2 AIDA ENTERS THE INTERNET ERA**

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In social media marketing, the AIDA model outlined in traditional marketing has been expanded. In the original model, the action, which is typically a purchase, is the culmination of the sequence of events. In social media marketing, however, the following characteristics should be added: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action, and Tell (AIDAT), where the letter T signifies that customers should be encouraged to "tell someone about it."



Source: Alan Charles Worth, Internet Marketing-A Practical Approach, (Butterworth- Heinemann: Oxford, UK, 2009)

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## 8.3 VARIATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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The use of social media by various businesses is now widespread. As consumers conduct brand research online and learn about items from other customers via various social networking sites, it becomes crucial for businesses to be visible on these platforms. Utilization of Facebook, Instagram, and SnapChat by the majority of businesses is a highly effective strategy. In addition to this, marketers also frequently use the following social media platforms: The social media choices are really valuable for raising brand awareness and generating buzz, but they may also be efficient for generating sales when clients read about the brand and make purchases on the business's website or offline.

Therefore, marketers must be very clear on the objectives they wish to achieve through social media networks and choose a medium accordingly. Some of the most popular social media platforms are discussed here.

### **Social media and e-mail:**

Typically, marketers include "follow us" buttons in their emails so that recipients can click on them and be directed to their Facebook, Twitter, or other social media profiles. Although this strategy is somewhat effective in generating online inquiries and debates, the majority of the time these emails get up in SPAM filters and are never seen by customers and prospects. Consequently, some marketers favor social media campaigns over email campaigns.

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## 8.4 MANAGEMENT OF BRAND PERCEPTION

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Brand perception is the picture formed by people online about a brand, website, or individual. This is the image that people have built, not what the firm wants people to believe. This has been possible as a result of consumers freely expressing their opinions on numerous social networking platforms. Consequently, it becomes essential for businesses to watch various social networks and interact inside them in order to preserve their brand name.

There are numerous instances of brand failures as a result of customers posting poor evaluations on social networking sites. Companies must proactively manage their online brand image and become genuine participants in online conversations about them.

Whenever a company makes a mistake, it must apologize, report the corrective efforts done, and engage in online communication with bloggers and others discussing the problem. It is now about sincerity, openness, consistency, and two-way communication with clients.

### **Additional Social Media for Business:**

There are numerous additional commercial applications for social media. Businesses post videos to YouTube before embedding them on their websites. Small firms create promotional videos with a superimposed phone number and distribute them online. The business uploads images to Flickr and imports the photo stream into the blog. It helps them diversify the photographs on their blog. Wikipedia is also a significant platform for disseminating information to large audiences. Yahoo and Google are other resources for product reviews and other essential information.

Social bookmarking platforms allow users to share and comment on their favorite pages online. Online forums, often known as bulletin boards, are locations where users can publish e-mails on particular topics for other users to read. Online gaming generates vast groups with shared interests. Finally, marketers are able to acquire advertising space, develop programmes, and put them on numerous social networks.

### **Online social networks and communities:**

As previously noted, social media is a significant phenomenon that is here to stay. Today, the majority of businesses choose to announce their products and services via social media before broadcast and print media. This medium's advertising expenditure is expanding daily. Everyone, whether they are company leaders, professionals, college graduates, or housewives, is too active in social media and spreading the word; thus, it is crucial to grasp the two most important types of social media: social networks and online communities.

In his book *Marketing to the Social Web*, Larry Weber (2007) defines social networks as "members-based communities that enable users to join one another based on mutual interests and by invitation." E-communities, on the other hand, are "websites where individuals congregate around a similar interest and frequently incorporate professional material."

### **Social Systems:**

According to Wikipedia, these are "social structures consisting of nodes (generally individuals or organizations) that are connected by one or more specific types of interdependencies, such as values, visions, idea, financial exchange, friends, kinship, dislike, conflict, trade, web links;. Disease transmission (epidemiology), or airline routes" (2008). They are founded



on the concept of six degrees of separation, which states that each person is connected to every other person in the network by up to six persons.

It only requires introductions from those in between you and him. There are both commercial and personal social networks, but the lines are blurring as corporations move to where consumers congregate. Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Google groups, etc. are examples.

Today, marketers leverage social networks through creating profiles and pages, advertising on user pages, and supplying network users with tools like games and virtual postcards. Starbucks has the largest corporate Facebook page with over 8 million admirers who have interacted with the brand and discussed its value.

This is beneficial for brand development, gaining customer perspectives, and enhancing Google's reputation and credibility with additional information. Facebook has emerged as a significant social networking medium for individuals of all ages. On Facebook sites, they express their thoughts openly, review products, and create discussions on a variety of significant problems. Twitter and other social networking sites are gaining importance in allowing people to express themselves.

Therefore, it is essential for marketers to regularly monitor these social networking sites and take precautions to guarantee that nothing unfavorable is said about their brand online.

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## 8.5 ONLINE COMMUNITIES

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The primary distinction between social networks and online communities is that communities are composed of individuals from various backgrounds and races. Sociologically speaking, these groups are the most intriguing to research because they are individuals who have likely never met before, but who share similar interests and live in the same community. There are two significant factors that draw individuals together:

**The notion of making a contribution to the community:**

**The self-serving motivation for donating to these communities:**

Wikipedia, YouTube, Instagram, and Zomato are examples of Online Communities that possess a more complex "deep-seated" and "overlying" structure. People in pursuit of different information about Napoleon Bonaparte or our Prime Minister Narendra Modi will use Wikipedia's search engines. Those who find peace in creating films of themselves or other things will be delighted to join the YouTube community. Before dining at a restaurant or cafe, those who desire a general overview of the establishment will read reviews given by strangers on Zomato.

In short, the beginning of the relationship is the primary distinction between the two phrases.



In the case of social networks, it can be conducted offline, whereas it would be conducted online for online communities. A social network connects individuals with their peers, whereas a community enables its members to connect with those who share their interests and viewpoints. A social network consists of a large number of individuals with no common interests, whereas communities are composed of individuals with shared passions. Social networks often govern the member/user experience, whereas communities offer a more adaptable atmosphere.

## 8.6 COMMUNITY BUILDING PRINCIPLES

As marketers compete with other pages, organizations, and events for visitor attention, developing a successful online community is not a simple undertaking.

Larry Weber (2007) proposed a seven-step approach for building a strong community, as shown in figure below:



Before launching a social media community, it is essential for marketers to study and visit social media hangouts for Internet users discussing issues of interest to the company's industry.

- **Identify** Internet users who are interested in discussing the industry and recruit them to join the new social media platform.
- **Evaluate** platforms and determine if the format should be a blog, vertical search site, pure online community, or social network.
- **Engage** encourage community members to converse and submit content.
- **Identify** criteria that will be used to evaluate the success of the endeavor. For instance, the number of comments posted on the blog or visitors to their Facebook page.

- **Develop strategies** for advertising and generating buzz in social media and using reputation aggregators in order to attract users to the new community.
- **Utilize** the stats to continually enhance the community.

It is essential for businesses to obtain permission before using profile information in social network ads and to be real, honest, and transparent in all their postings; otherwise, they will be discovered and the social media will be flooded with negative discourse.

### **Check your Progress**

1) What are Online Communities?

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2) What are the Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Media?

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## **8.7 VIRTUAL UNIVERSES**

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Before discussing how virtual worlds assist marketers, it is necessary to define what a virtual world is. "A virtual world is a computer-based online community created and shared by users in order for them to connect in a custom-built, simulated reality." Although some may disagree, virtual worlds are essentially online games played in 3-D environments in which players create virtual characters, or avatars, and use them to interact with other residents of the virtual world.

Opened to the public in 2003 as a futuristic version of Earth, Second Life ([www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com)) is perhaps the most well-known and often visited example. It is free to become a basic resident of Second Life; all you have to do is register, download some software, create an avatar, give it a name, and select its physical look. Once there, you can explore, read the Second Life newspaper, watch the Second Life television station, and visit museums and theaters.

A dialogue window at the bottom of the screen enables residents to converse with one another. There are also tech-savvy citizens who are virtual entrepreneurs, selling land or goods they've made to other members to earn real money. Once the real tax has been paid on the virtual currency, it may be converted to real currency and used in the real world.

Even while there is evidence of some successful usage of virtual worlds as a marketing medium, the possibility seems limited. However, the most popular branded virtual worlds are those aimed at children. Fashion doll manufacturers The two most prominent virtual worlds for girls are Barbie ([www.barbie-girls.com](http://www.barbie-girls.com)) and Bratz ([www.be-bratz.com](http://www.be-bratz.com)).

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## 8.8 WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING?

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Social media marketing (SMM) is a sort of internet marketing that entails developing and sharing content on social media networks to meet marketing and branding objectives. In addition to paid social media advertising, social media marketing includes posting text and image updates, videos, and other content that increases audience interaction.

- The objective of social media marketing is to create content that users will share with their social network in order to improve brand visibility and expand customer reach.
- Social media optimization is one of the essential components of SMM (SMO). Similar to search engine optimization (SEO), social media optimization (SMO) is a strategy for attracting new and distinct users to a website. SMO can be accomplished in two ways: either by providing social media linkages to information, such as RSS feeds and sharing buttons, or by promoting activity via social media by updating statuses, tweets, or blog entries.
- SMM enables a business to receive direct feedback from clients (and future customers) and to appear more approachable. The participatory aspects of social media allow customers to ask inquiries or voice concerns and feel as though they are being heard. Social customer relationship management is the term for this part of SMM (social CRM).
- SMM became more prevalent as websites like Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, and YouTube gained in popularity. As a result, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has revised its regulations to cover SMM. If a firm or its advertising agency offers a blogger or other online commenter with free products or other incentives in order to generate positive buzz for a product, the online comments will be considered endorsements under the law. Both the blogger and the company will be held accountable for ensuring that the incentives are disclosed in a clear and conspicuous manner, that the blogger's posts do not contain any misleading or unsubstantiated claims, and that they otherwise adhere to the FTC's rules regarding unfair or deceptive advertising.

Social media marketing (SMM) refers to tactics that target social networks and applications in order to increase brand awareness and promote specific items. Establishing a social media presence on major platforms; Creating shareable content and advertorials; Soliciting customer input throughout the campaign via surveys and sweepstakes;

Social media marketing is viewed as a more targeted kind of advertising and is therefore regarded to be highly effective at building brand recognition.

Social media marketing may be a fun and efficient approach to connect with customers on a more personal level.

Social engagement is facilitated through social media networks. It is a forum for the exchange and discussion of information among humans. Text, audio, video, photos, podcasts, and other forms of multimedia communication may be included in social media. Social media sites are just a collection of unique and user-friendly websites.

Social Media Marketing is a term with a wide scope. It is a strategy for constructing a business using many social media networks. For example, movies and blogs that promote your business.

People typically assume that when someone mentions social media marketing, they are referring to Facebook and Twitter. However, social media networks also provide powerful marketing tools that can increase website traffic and boost online notoriety.

Social media marketing possesses numerous attributes. For a successful marketing strategy, you must consider the following SMM qualities.

#### **Participation:**

Everyone is encouraged to contribute and provide feedback through social media. Social media include real-time distribution of ideas during online conversations. It attempts to bridge the gap between businesses and their audiences. With all of the new social media outlets, individuals like this process of engagement.

#### **Openness:**

Success in social media needs honesty, integrity, and genuineness. Within your SMM (social media marketing) plan, you should establish a trustworthy relationship with your clients. A single false or unfavorable review can ruin your internet reputation.

#### **Develop relationships:**

Social media is a two-way route of communication. It demands both company and customer participation. As a business owner, it is crucial to establish strong relationships with your target audience. Real individuals engage in online discourse using various social media technologies in real time. You have the opportunity to communicate with your target audience and can respond to their questions. Responding to clients' inquiries is an effective means of fostering relationships with them.

#### **Reliability:**

For your profile to be credible, you must continually demonstrate your online presence.

Effective social media marketers frequently visit their targeted websites. Additionally, they engage new people and advertise their products. They communicate with their target audience frequently.

### **Develop communities:**

Social media sites enable for the rapid formation of communities, hence facilitating more effective communication. Communities share interests, such as a passion for photography, a political topic, or a beloved television programme. These communities provide insight about your target audience. Additionally, you can help other communities that you deem beneficial to your business.

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## **8.9 CUSTOMER SUPPORT**

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It is crucial to provide excellent customer service. The purpose of social media networks is to aid one another. It is not just about promotion, but also about offering value to your customers.

### **Avoid spamming:**

Don't place all of your emphasis on boosting your links. Additionally, contribute insightful content about your business. Repeatedly sending the same message to your community constitutes spam and may upset your customers.

Social media marketing is the most effective marketing channel for small businesses. A successful social media marketing plan expands your business and increases website traffic. Social media marketing is the ideal marketing technique since it allows you to simultaneously advertise your business and establish relationships.

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## **8.10 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLAN:**

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Before we begin building social media marketing strategies, we will analyze your business's objectives. Starting a social media marketing campaign without a social plan is like going through a forest without a map; you may have fun, but you're likely to get lost.

Consider the following questions when determining your social media marketing objectives:

- What goals do you hope to accomplish with social media marketing?
- Who is your intended market?
- Where does your target audience congregate, and how do they utilize social media?
- With social media marketing, what message do you wish to convey to your audience?

- Social media marketing can assist with a variety of objectives, including:

### **8.10.1 Improving communication and connection with crucial audiences:**

The larger and more involved your audience is on social media networks, the simpler it will be to meet all of your other marketing objectives.

The development of messages and material that individual users will share with their friends, family, and co-workers is a major tactic employed in social media marketing. This technique relies on word-of-mouth and offers numerous advantages.

Initially, it expands the message's reach to networks and users that a social media manager might not otherwise be able to access.

Second, shared content that is sent by someone the recipient knows and trusts bears an implicit endorsement.

Social media marketing can be advantageous, but it can also provide challenges that businesses may not have faced earlier. For instance, a firm must respond to a viral video stating that its product causes people to grow ill, regardless of whether the claim is accurate or untrue. Even if a business is able to clarify its message, consumers may be less inclined to purchase from it in the future.

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## **8.11 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING SUGGESTIONS**

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Here are a few social media marketing tips to get your social media campaigns off the ground.

### **Social Media Content Planning:**

It is vital to develop a social media marketing strategy.

**Consider keyword research** and competition analysis while generating content ideas for your target audience.

### **Superior Social Content:**

Similar to other aspects of internet marketing, content reigns supreme in social media marketing. Ensure that you write frequently and provide truly valuable content that your ideal clients will find useful and engaging. Social media photos, movies, infographics, how-to instructions, and other forms of material can be shared on social networks.

### **A Reliable Brand Image:**

Utilizing social media for marketing allows your company to present its brand image across a number of social media channels. Despite the fact that each platform has its own environment and voice, your company's essential brand, whether it be friendly, amusing, or trustworthy, should remain consistent.

### **Utilizing Social Media to Promote Content:**

Social media marketing is the ideal medium for distributing your greatest website and blog material to your audience. Once you've built a dedicated social media following, you'll be able to upload all your fresh content and ensure that your followers can find it immediately. Additionally, excellent blog content will help you gain more followers. Content marketing and social media marketing have an unexpected mutual benefit.

### **Sharing Curated Links:**

Although utilizing social media for marketing is a terrific method to utilize your own unique, original content to garner followers, admirers, and devotees, it's also a chance to connect to external publications. If you believe that other sources offer outstanding, valuable content that your target audience would like, don't hesitate to connect to them. Curating and connecting to external sites increases credibility and trust, and you may even receive links in exchange.

### **Competitor Monitoring:**

Competitors can supply valuable data for keyword research and other social media marketing insights, so it's always crucial to keep an eye on them. If your competitors are utilizing a social media marketing channel or strategy that appears to be effective for them, you may choose to use the same approach, but improve upon it.

### **Measuring Success with Analytics:**

Without collecting data, you cannot determine the success of your social media marketing initiatives. Google Analytics is an excellent social media marketing tool that may help you measure your most successful social media marketing efforts and evaluate which ones should be abandoned. Attach tracking tags to your social media marketing initiatives in order to monitor them effectively. And be sure to utilize the metrics provided by each social site to have a deeper understanding of which of your social material performs best with your audience.

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## **8.12 PLAN OF ACTION FOR SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING**

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Listed below are a few steps to take in developing a plan of action for social media marketing.

### **Create social media marketing objectives that address your greatest obstacles.**

- The first stage in developing any plan is to determine your objectives. Social media marketing is not as simple as turning on a switch and walking away. Instead, planning for social media should be compared to creating a beloved cuisine.



- For this reason, establishing objectives is crucial to the initial phase of any social media plan. However, it is best to create goals that you know you can achieve. It is ridiculous to expect one million new Instagram followers in 2018. With attainable objectives, you are more likely to stick to the original plan and continue to tackle new obstacles as old ones are overcome.
- This is the same reason why brands should not include every available social media outlet in their present marketing strategy. Based on your brand's objectives, select the channels with the greatest significance. Avoid complicating a plan with an excessive number of targets and objectives. Simplicity can get you very far.
- Additionally, remember to outline your social media objectives. Not only is it essential to establish a baseline for where you are, but it also increases your chances of reaching your goals.

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## 8.13 SOCIAL MEDIA OBJECTIVES FOR THE 20TH CENTURY

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Setting objectives is fundamental to any marketing and commercial strategy. Social networking is no different. With a variety of social abilities, it might be challenging to identify just what your goals should be. Consider the following common social media objectives for guidance:

### **Raise brand awareness:**

To build genuine and long-lasting brand awareness, avoid sending an abundance of promotional messages. Focus instead on relevant content and a strong brand personality across your social networks.

### **Increased sales quality:**

Without monitoring or listening for specific keywords, phrases, or hashtags, it is practically hard to sift through your social channels. Through more efficient social media targeting, you may more quickly reach your core audience.

### **Increase in-store sales:**

Some shops rely on social media marketing to increase in-store sales. Is your brand's social media presence sufficient to reward visitors?

### **Step 1 : Notifying customers of the happenings in your stores**

### **Boost ROI:**

There is no social media brand that does not wish to increase its return on investment. But on social media, this objective is specific to conducting a comprehensive audit of your channels and ensuring that labor costs, advertising expenses, and design remain on track.



### **Develop a devoted following:**

Does your brand promote user-generated content? Your followers respond positively without prompting? Creating a positive brand persona on social media requires time and work to achieve this stage.

### **Increased awareness of the industry:**

What are your competitors doing that appears to be successful? What techniques do they employ to increase engagement and/or sales? Having a pulse on the industry could help you better your efforts and learn from those that are succeeding.

## **Step 2: Conduct Audience Research on Social Media**

79% of Americans use Facebook; but, are your customers actively connecting with your brand there? Understanding your audience is crucial to determine who purchases your products, which age group is the most difficult to sell to, and what income level comprises the majority of your repeat consumers. In social media, it is equally important to understand your audience.

Your brand should begin by analyzing the demographics of your most valuable social channels. As previously stated, you should have a specific objective in mind for your social media marketing approach.

Therefore, you must investigate the channels that correlate most closely with your objectives.

## **Step 3: Determine Your Most Valuable Metrics**

While identifying your targeted social media metrics may be the most critical phase in a strategy, it is also the step when most businesses wander off course. It's important to take a step back and examine the social metrics related with your overall objectives, as it's easy to become fixated on the number of followers and likes.

**Large audiences and appealing content are wonderful, but here are some other metrics you may want to seek in 2018:**

- **Reach:** The reach of a post is the number of unique users that saw it. How far is your social content spreading? Does it actually reach the feeds of users?
- **Clicks:** The number of times your content, company name, or logo was clicked. Clicks on links are essential for determining how people progress through your marketing funnel.

It is crucial to monitor clicks per campaign in order to determine what drives people's curiosity or motivates them to purchase.

- **Engagement:** The ratio of overall social interactions to total impressions.

Regarding engagement, it is necessary to determine who interacted and if the ratio of those who did to your entire audience is satisfactory. This provides insight into how your audience perceives you and their readiness to engage.

- **Hashtag performance:** which hashtags did you utilize the most on your own account? Which hashtags have been most frequently associated with your brand? Or which hashtags generated the most interaction?
- **Sentiment:** This metric measures how users felt about your content, brand, or hashtag. Customers found your recent marketing offensive? What emotions do individuals associate with your campaign's hashtag? It is always preferable to look deeper and determine what individuals are saying.
- **Organic and paid likes:** These likes, which are more than just basic Likes, are distinguished by paid or organic content. For networks like Facebook, it is far more difficult for organic engagement to establish traction, which is why many brands utilize Facebook Ads. However, gaining organic Instagram likes is not as challenging.

#### Step 4: Analyze Your Social Rival Landscape

Before you begin developing content (we promise we're almost there! ), it is highly advisable to research your rivals. This is the first step in the content production process because evaluating what makes your competition successful often yields novel perspectives on content. Again, we will continue to believe that you should not take the ideas of your competitors, but rather learn and build from their successes and failures. How do you locate this information? Identifying who your competitors are is the initial step.

A simple Google search is the most efficient technique to locate competition. Check who appears when you search for your most valuable keywords, phrases, and industry terms.

Here you can view post text, image, and video breakdowns to determine what your competitors are doing to generate the greatest interaction. After examining the competitive study, you will have a better understanding of what your potential customers desire.

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### 8.14 CREATE AND CURATE COMPELLING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

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Did someone say they were satisfied? Social media content is crucial to your marketing plan, no exaggeration. However, it is best to complete the preceding steps prior to content preparation (we got you, blog skippers!) so that you may begin developing more successful themes.

We recommend beginning by developing content that aligns with your brand's identity. Without a comprehensive strategy, you should avoid doing things like reaching out to your unpopular populations.

It is vital to strike the ideal balance between relevant material and excessive promotion. In fact, 46% of consumers believe they will stop following a brand if it sends too many promotional messages. In addition, 41% of users say they would unfollow a brand that shared an excessive amount of useless content.

### **Video Content or Bust:**

What role does video play in your social media marketing strategy? Extremely—nearly ninety percent of online customers believe that product videos aid their shopping decisions. In addition, 37 percent of viewers watch an average internet video from beginning to end.

These statistics should strengthen your case for investing in social media video content.

Brands can communicate with users via Instagram Stories, Facebook Live, and other real-time platforms.

### **Create Content Theme:**

Creating visual material on a daily basis is one of the most difficult obstacles it faces. 36.7% of marketers, as depicted in an infographic by Venngage, cited consistency as their greatest challenge when developing visual content.

This demonstrates the importance of highly-visual material to marketers and the audiences they wish to target. Therefore, developing content themes is an excellent method for separating your content.

Instagram is one of your top mediums for promoting visual themes.

### **Engage Your Audience & Do Not Ignore Them:**

As networks, social media channels are constructed. This indicates that their primary objective is to provide a forum for conversation, discussion, and content sharing. Your brand cannot overlook these fundamental parts of "networking," and it requires effort to guarantee that discussions or engagement opportunities are not neglected.

Simply by being there and conversing with your audience on social media, a brand gains credibility. Therefore, social customer service is crucial for firms seeking to boost audience awareness. All that matters is engagement.

Whether you have one employee or a hundred, assigning teams to certain tasks will help your social media team work smoothly.

### **Publish at the Optimal Times:**

When is your brand available for customer engagement and interaction? You may encounter recommendations to post in the evening. But if your brand is not present to communicate, posting at the optimal time serves no purpose.

Instead, ensuring that your social media or community managers are present and prepared to respond to any product-related queries or complaints whenever you tweet or post. It is wise to identify the optimal times to post on social media, but it is equally important to communicate with followers after posting.

According to our Index, the average reaction time for a brand is approximately 10 hours. Did you know that the majority of social media users feel firms should respond to messages within four hours?

With all the changed algorithms, it is difficult for organic content to reach the majority of your audience. The last thing you want to do is disregard people that communicate with you and miss out on the opportunity to send more leads down your marketing funnel.

### **Monitor Your Efforts and Constantly Improve:**

How successful was your social media marketing strategy? Without constant analysis, you would never know which campaign was more successful. A bird's-eye view of your social media activities provides context.

Now that you've documented your most essential objectives, network preferences, and KPIs, it's time to confirm that you've made the appropriate choices. In social media, it remains difficult to determine whether or not one has made the best decisions.

In fact, 46% of B2B marketers are uncertain as to whether their social strategy generated income for their company. However, marketers are constantly seeking the ideal connection. Engagement is therefore the most widely employed statistic (80%) by marketers.

There is far less room for failure in your social media marketing plan if you focus on fostering long-term relationships.

### **Utilize a Tool to Monitor Success:**

Sprout Social was designed to facilitate social media marketing. Our social media tools provide a comprehensive set of analytics and reporting capabilities to help you determine which posts, messages, and hashtags perform best.

It is simple to integrate additional vital technologies with our dashboard, such as Google Analytics, which allows you to determine which posts generated the most traffic, conversions, and overall revenue.

Social media is one of the best ways for your business to stand out and expand its audience in the modern world. A brand must have an active presence on all major social networks, from Facebook to LinkedIn and beyond, in order to become an industry leader and engage with its potential and existing customers in novel ways.

However, social networking can be daunting if you lack the necessary skills and resources.

Whether it's to generate or reuse content, discover the best approach to engage with your online audience, or build a detailed posting plan, having the appropriate social media management tools is essential to your success. Here are a few of the most effective social media management tools and how they can help you maximize your social presence.

### **1. HootSuite:**

Whether you are a user with many accounts or an agency with hundreds, HootSuite simplifies the process. It is simple to add accounts, schedule posts across all main platforms, and include account managers. In addition, the company offers a comprehensive training platform that teaches not only the tools, but also how to approach social marketing as a whole.

### **2. Hubspot:**

While there are numerous tools available that allow you to monitor and post to social accounts, we advocate platforms like Hubspot that not only allow you to monitor and publish, but also provide closed-loop reporting data. This means you may track deeper down the sales funnel to determine which posts and channels generate genuine leads and sales.

### **3. MeetEdgar:**

There are numerous automated posting and scheduling systems, but what about a system that re-shares evergreen content? MeetEdgar has the greatest impact on traffic by re-sharing your evergreen content automatically.

### **4. TweetDeck:**

TweetDeck has been around for a while, and there's a good reason for that: It's one of the greatest and cheapest (what can beat free?) methods to participate in the Twittersphere. The multi-column style makes it simple to track multiple conversations at once, and content scheduling is a breeze. Twitter is a fast-paced platform, but TweetDeck makes it manageable and even pleasant.

## **5. IFTTT:**

"If This Then That" (IFTTT) is an excellent automation tool that can help you save a great deal of time managing social networking networks, apps, and websites. The instrument can connect these services based on a trigger and an action. Based on the trigger you create, an action will be initiated. For instance, if you write a blog (the trigger), IFTTT will create a tweet automatically (the action).

## **6. Buffer:**

I enjoy using Buffer. It allows you to schedule and manage social media postings across all of the most popular channels, and you can personalize each post separately for each platform it is posted to. Buffer also posts your material at optimal times throughout the day and tracks links so that you can determine which content receives the most engagement.

## **7. Sprout Social:**

Our digital team uses Sprout Social for social media management, enabling team members to monitor social media mentions of clients, communicate with brand champions, schedule material in advance, and employ reporting capabilities to influence future tactics. As the guests of our hotel clients view social media as a virtual concierge, it is crucial for us to have a platform that facilitates real-time contact.

## **8. Canva:**

Canva allows you to make presentations, social media graphics, and a multitude of other things with tens of thousands of attractive templates. It includes everything required to create captivating designs. There are millions of pictures, vectors, and graphics in stock. Additionally, you can add your own images. Canva provides preset filters and extensive photo editing tools for altering images. It provides you with access to thousands of icons, shapes, and objects.

Canva also provides ready-to-use access to hundreds of typefaces suitable for any type of design.

## **9. Adobe Post:**

Adobe Post was developed to provide you with a potent tool for standing out from the competition and engaging your audience with visually appealing posts. It allows you to create great social visuals in seconds. Start quickly with handcrafted, remixable, social-sharing-optimized design templates. Change the size of your text, and beautiful typography will be applied on the fly. A single tap will convert your words and image into professional-looking graphics.

## **10. Bundle Post:**

The software is not free, but there is a free 30-day trial period. Bundle Post is a curation tool that quickly organizes and schedules social media

information. Add hashtags after searching, editing, and scheduling with a browser extension or social media dashboard. Keep your audience engaged and get results.

### Check your Progress

1) What is SMM?

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2) Write a few social media marketing tips.

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3) Mention 5 Tools for Social Media Marketing.

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### 8.16 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- The objective of the study is to explore the impact of social media on business and how it can be leveraged for marketing and customer support.
- Social media has revolutionized the way businesses interact with customers and market their products, enabling them to reach a wider audience and build brand awareness.
- There are various variations of social media platforms, including social networking sites, blogging platforms, and video-sharing sites.
- Managing brand perception on social media is essential, as negative comments and reviews can quickly damage a company's reputation.
- Online communities can be powerful marketing tools, providing a space for customers to connect and engage with each other and the brand.
- Community building principles include fostering a sense of belonging, encouraging user-generated content, and providing value to community members.



- Virtual universes, such as Second Life, provide opportunities for businesses to create immersive brand experiences and interact with customers in a unique way.
- Social media marketing involves using social media platforms to promote products, build brand awareness, and engage with customers.
- Customer support is a crucial aspect of social media marketing, with many customers turning to social media to resolve issues and receive timely responses from brands.
- A social media marketing plan should include goals, target audiences, messaging, content strategy, and metrics for measuring success.
- Suggestions for successful social media marketing include focusing on customer needs, creating engaging and shareable content, and leveraging influencers and user-generated content.
- A plan of action for social media marketing involves identifying key platforms, creating a content calendar, engaging with customers, and monitoring and analyzing results.
- Social media objectives for the 21st century include increasing brand awareness, generating leads, driving traffic to websites, and improving customer satisfaction.
- Tools for social media marketing include social media management platforms, analytics tools, and social listening tools.
- Overall, social media has transformed the way businesses approach marketing and customer support, providing new opportunities for growth and engagement with customers.

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## 8.17 QUESTIONS

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1. What do you understand about ‘Social Media’? State the advantages and disadvantages of Social Media.
2. Discuss the variations of Social Media.
3. Explain ‘Social Media Marketing’ and discuss the key points for a successful Social Media Marketing strategy.
4. Discuss the Social Media Objectives for the 20th Century.
5. State the tools for Social Media Marketing

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## **FUTURE TRENDS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ON GLOBAL PLATFORMS**

### **Unit Structure**

- 9.0 Objective of the study
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Emerging Trends in Public Relations on Global Platforms
- 9.3 What should the objective be instead?
- 9.4 Questions
- 9.6 References

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### **9.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

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- To study the future and emerging trends of Public Relations on Global Platforms

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### **9.1 INTRODUCTION**

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The first decade of the 21st century did not end on a particularly positive note for business in general or for the public relations industry in particular: while PR firms generally outperformed their counterparts in other communications disciplines, they were not immune to the global economic recession of 2009.

However, there are grounds to be positive regarding the future of public relations over the coming decade. Increased transparency, demands from consumers and other stakeholders for greater authenticity, and an emphasis on dialogue and conversation are all trends that play to the strengths of public relations and present an opportunity for the discipline to play a larger role in corporations and other institutions, finally contributing to the extent of its potential.

Traditional public relations have evolved into contemporary public relations. The days of banners, television, and smart marketing advertisements are long gone. The majority of businesses may overlook this evolution if they are not vigilant. Some public relations firms have not fully caught up with the current developments. PR teams in startups struggle to obtain publicity for their organizations. Due to a lack of comprehension of what public relations includes in 2022 and beyond, the majority of businesses face a never-ending battle.

Unquestionably, public relations will continue to influence how businesses launch, expand, seek capital, and advertise their products. There is no debate as to whether public relations and PR firms are relevant. The question in 2022 is what will determine the winning corporations by getting media coverage and the appropriate publicity for their brands.

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## 9.2 EMERGING TRENDS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS ON GLOBAL PLATFORMS

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PR Companies have developed PR services to offer start-ups at the most competitive rates in the industry since we are aware of market shifts. If you are starting a new start-up, you no longer need to worry about the expense of press release creation and delivery. In addition, we offer media kit design services of the highest caliber, so you won't have to spend time searching for a qualified designer to bring your vision to reality. In addition, our skilled writers can create captivating guest pieces for your brand, allowing you to attract media attention and motivate your target audience.

In addition to developing this high-quality content, the specialists at PR companies can assist you in distributing it to your target audience. It can increase your online visibility by submitting your content to reputable start-up directories and media sites, ensuring that your brand appears in relevant search results across many search engines. It can also help you connect with the top journalists in your niche by providing tailored media lists and access to a media database with over one million media contacts. Thus, you can continue to do media outreach for your company even after you have concluded your campaign.

With the emerging, you can forget about purchasing expensive PR packages. You will find budget-friendly, competitive PR packages. There has been a revolution in the PR industry. In this ever-changing business, we are aware that startups occasionally require assistance with their PR. These services were created with startups like yours in mind. Examine our packages and let us know how we may assist you in attaining the recognition you deserve.

We continue to receive inquiries regarding effective PR techniques in the new digital landscape. With our years of experience, we have compiled the following list of developing trends that will influence public relations in 2022:

### 1) Data:

From large data to little data, public relations in the twenty-first century is more dependent on data. Public relations is replete with tales. Important data must be gathered and analyzed in order to develop appealing narratives for the target market. This is primarily due to the advent of the Internet, which has made so much information readily accessible. With so many businesses starting in the time it takes to design a logo and a website, many new enterprises are vying for their own narratives.

It has become increasingly vital for companies to establish their PR strategy using data. Startup teams must grasp the significance of every piece of data they acquire and how to leverage it to generate stories that captivate their audience, media, and target market. Through Google advertising, PR campaigns, Facebook advertising, organic search, and

social media, startups are always collecting data. This information is useless if it is not analyzed to inform the companies' next set of moves and strategies.

## **2) Pitching 2.0:**

In the past, mass emailing was so successful because journalists, authors, and bloggers received so few emails and proposals. After all, back then few individuals had email or internet access. That is no longer the same.

Today, pitching is only effective if you take the time to research the readership and niches of each publication on your press list. You can no longer get away with sending bulk emails since journalists and bloggers receive so many pitches daily. Additionally, they can simply determine when the email was distributed to a million other journalists.

In contemporary public relations, pitches must be thoughtful and supported by research. Start-ups that pitch based on new data are more likely to receive media coverage than those who send emails to promote their launch or a new product feature. The newest trend in pitching is customized pitches. Generic cut-and-paste pitches have not been effective for the most of the last five years. Sending a journalist-readable email pitch is not always simple. With a captivating tale and the proper experience, however, we know that pitching always yields results.

## **3) Statistics:**

Prior to a decade or two ago, relatively few marketers were concerned about figures. Amazing and stunning advertising banners displayed across the street, on building walls, or on television were sufficient to attract the attention of the market.

Today, regardless of how impressive your advertisement is, at some point in your sales funnel, a prospective client will request the supporting data for it. Information overload has made it more difficult for clients to distinguish between real and deceptive information, making it more difficult for them to believe attractive YouTube videos, television advertisements, and street billboards.

To be successful in modern public relations, businesses must embrace numbers and analytics. Tech firms, particularly those who sell themselves using social impact, must conduct research, collect data from prospective and current customers, and then make mathematical sense of this data. Put this into context in terms of website traffic, quantity of leads, etc., and you will receive press coverage with relative ease. Journalists are currently interested in stories supported by carefully analyzed statistics. Therefore, data analytics is essential, as the prospective clients of your business care about the information that has been analyzed and provided as useful metrics.

#### 4) Impact Factors:

Modern public relations cannot be controlled or defined exclusively by the media. The rules are shifting. The globe has become a global village due to the Internet and advancements in technology. Historically, the media defined and controlled brand awareness. However, in the modern world, your neighbor with 100,000 Instagram followers can have a life-changing effect on your brand.

There are numerous powerful persons in the world today whose ideas are held in high regard by many. Bloggers have also become incredibly influential, and those with a solid reputation can serve as a go-to source. When you need to spread the word about your firm, cultivating relationships with these influential individuals is a fantastic place to begin.

It is also accurate to state that brands must be extremely selective when selecting influencers to collaborate with. It is essential to select an influencer whose target audience aligns with yours and whose reputation will not ruin the image of your brand. In addition, when establishing a relationship with an influencer, you should take the time to determine whether they are actually interested in your organization or merely seeking free products. In reality, numerous hotels, restaurants, and resorts throughout the world have banned social media influencers from their properties due to the belief that they can receive free accommodations in exchange for social media posts.

#### 5) Publicity is not the final objective:

Even if businesses pursue exposure, this will not ensure client satisfaction six or seven months later. Companies must realize that in current public relations, publicity alone will not get them very far.

#### Check your Progress

1) What are some Emerging Trends in Public Relations?

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2) Mention 2 trends in PR.

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### 9.3 WHAT SHOULD THE OBJECTIVE BE INSTEAD?

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Today's objective is client happiness. Promotion is only the beginning. If customers are not content with your goods after a few days or weeks, they

will move on unhappy and have nothing but negative things to say about your firm to anyone who inquires.

Companies must ensure that their products or services function flawlessly, not only up to a certain degree. Startups seeking press coverage after building a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) should ensure that the MVP's key component implements the idea and solves the problem it set out to address. In conclusion, publicity is only advantageous when consumer pleasure can be assured. This will ensure that word-of-mouth from existing clients will continue to bring in new clients for many years to come.

## **6) Studying:**

The culture of reading has altered because of our shortened attention spans. As opposed to reading massive amounts of material as they did a decade ago, users now scan articles for pertinent information. Ignoring this change can be a PR team's undoing - it is extremely harmful. You must be able to write in a way that holds the reader's interest. Therefore, effective PR writing is brief and compelling. It is crucial to provide significant information in a few words. Likewise, writing in a conversational style that keeps the reader interested is essential.

Even if the public is reading less, PR professionals who wish to perfect their art must continue to read. To comprehend contemporary public relations, one must read and read and read again. Daily reading time is recommended by the vast majority of authorities. Reading is the only way to understand your topic and what journalists in your area like to write about. Knowing how to connect with a journalist and provide them with the appropriate information can serve as the basis for a long-lasting connection with a media outlet.

Before requesting press coverage, it is vital to understand the market, the readers, the writers, bloggers, and the journalists. When it comes to generating exposure for their companies, PR teams in start-ups that emphasize the value of reading are light years ahead of the competition.

## **7) Content approach:**

Without an effective content strategy, success in today's society is practically impossible. A detailed content generation and marketing strategy sets you different from organizations who are solely focused on product promotion.

Long gone is the notion that only the media can generate publicity. As we've seen previously, influencers and bloggers are crucial to brand exposure. However, more fundamental is social media. Prior to roughly a decade ago, if the media didn't cover your company, it was incredibly difficult to gain market attention. Facebook altered the playing field. Globally, the social network presently boasts more than 1.5 billion users. Then came Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and Google Plus, with over a



billion people per month communicating on these four social media networks.

Prioritizing content production and marketing is the only approach to draw attention on these social networks. The success of this strategy is heavily contingent on your startup having a creative PR team or leader. When you successfully promote your business on social media, even the media will take note. Your material can comprise, among other things, articles, films, infographics, graphics, and audio.

Social media is amazing because it creates a joyful loop: a customer visits your website/company page → finds interesting content → shares it → checks out what you offer → likely makes a purchase and leaves → another customer discovers your content shared on social media → clicks it and visits your website/company page to read it → shares it, and the loop continues.

### **8) Profitability will be crucial:**

Prior to 2018, companies boasted impressive numbers, but they did not generate any revenue. They garnered a great deal of media attention, but the majority of them either secured more funding from investors or died within a few months after depleting their budgets. As a result of all the publicity they had received, many began to question the credibility of newspapers that had reported on the success of these enterprises.

In 2022, we anticipate that media businesses will prioritize money more. In addition to acquiring consumers, will your firm be able to monetize those people and generate a profit?

No one currently lives in a bubble. Investors will be on the lookout for businesses that offer a superior product or service without generating a profit, as well as those who are already profitable but seeking a boost. Without profitability, average firms with average concepts that attract consumers will be lucky to receive meaningful media coverage or investor backing.

### **9) Relationships will determine PR success:**

Relationships are a crucial component of effective public relations, and this is more evident than ever in 2022. No longer can the PR professional at your startup send mass emails and hope for PR attention. Now, the people you are emailing are overwhelmed with messages from hundreds of different brands competing for their attention.

In order for your PR efforts to be effective, you will need to make an effort to create strong, long-term connections with these individuals, whether you are attempting to partner with journalists or with influencers. Taking the effort to get to know the people on your mailing list enables you to customize your approach and communicate with them on a more individual level. If you can send personalized emails that recognise the

recipient as an individual, the recipients of your emails will be more receptive to collaborating with you.

#### **10) Social listening will become increasingly crucial:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that social media is an invaluable source of customer information. Nevertheless, only 51% of marketers do active social listening. Since the pandemic has restricted the majority of the world's population to their couches, there are more individuals online than ever before. Therefore, if a brand wishes to interact with its audience, here is the place to do it.

Many individuals mistake social monitoring with social listening. Social monitoring is the process of monitoring online conversations about your business in order to acquire useful information into the sentiment surrounding your products and services. Social monitoring is essential for effective social listening. In contrast, social listening is an active kind of social monitoring in which a brand representative actively engages in these conversations. Thus, the brand is able to develop favorable, long-lasting relationships with individuals of the target demographic.

It is now more important than ever to develop relationships with your target audience. Rather of seeing them as a means to a goal, take the time to interact with them on social media. Connecting with your audience is mutually beneficial. It helps you understand their needs better. Once you have identified their pain issues, you can design a product that they will actually value.

Creating an interactive online community on your social media platforms also helps your audience feel heard and seen. Those who feel appreciated in this manner are more likely to become paying clients. Similarly, these individuals are more likely to establish brand loyalty and remain your customers for years.

#### **Expensive public relations firms will continue to fail:**

In recent years, businesses have increased their PR budgets allocated to PR services. This is due to the different methods through which corporations may now manage their own PR initiatives without hiring a costly PR agency. Social media is altering the flow of information and enabling new PR outreach techniques for brands. In addition, some PR professionals, such as the staff, are empowering businesses to conduct PR without spending a fortune.

For so many things in 1999, you would have needed a public relations firm. These have since been supplanted by online DIY PR platforms. This means that the space for traditional PR firms to earn more money is shrinking. In spite of this, both PR companies and brands conducting their own PR can capitalize on these trends in order to prosper despite the uncertainties of 2022.

### **11) Public relations will play the primary role in brand development:**

As marketers realize, and many already do, that brand-building in the 21st century entails creating connections with customers rather than merely blasting them with messages, public relations will become the driving force behind brand strategy. Reach and frequency, the two things that advertising has historically delivered more effectively than PR, will become increasingly irrelevant; savvy marketers will be much more interested in engagement, and engagement will rely on all the things PR is good at: informing consumers as opposed to promoting products; gaining trust as opposed to buying time; and developing conversations as opposed to delivering messages.

That doesn't mean public relations professionals won't need to acquire new skills (or for those with long memories, re-learn some old skills, dating back to the early days of the profession). They will need to improve their listening skills because the capacity to convey to management what its major stakeholders anticipate and demand will be just as important, if not more important, than the ability to convey to stakeholders what management wants them to hear. They will need to build technologies that provide unique and significant customer insights, and use research to influence strategy and planning more effectively. In addition, they will need to build superior measures. But if ever there was a time for public relations specialists, both in-house and on the agency side of the business, to take the lead instead of simply supporting the marketing function, this is it.

### **12) Digital agencies will cease to exist:**

There was likely a moment, shortly following the development of the television, when some individuals believed there was an opportunity to establish a PR agency that specializes in television. Clients were unfamiliar with the technology and its regulations, and many experienced PR agencies did not yet know what would and would not work. It wasn't long, though, before clients and agencies were accustomed to the new medium, and it became clear that the most effective campaigns utilized an integrated approach, with a single cohesive strategy implemented across various channels.

Soon, the only companies that specialized in television were production and distribution companies, not agencies. The same will occur, and is already occurring, with digital and social media. Some clients may still come to agencies requesting a "digital" campaign, but that approach already seems quaint and outdated, indicative of a fascination with (and ignorance of) the shiny new toys available to communicators rather than an understanding of how they can be utilized as part of an all-encompassing, multi-media campaign. Two events are occurring. First, customers are recognising that integrated efforts that utilize the power of both new and conventional channels are more effective than those that rely on only one. And second, mainstream public relations firms have quickly realized that their process (telling a story to someone with influence and

credibility and relying on that person to retell the story to a wider audience) and their skill set (building relationships based on dialogue) are just as applicable—if not more applicable—to the new media than they were to the old.

At a minimum, mainstream PR firms are learning digital faster than specialized digital agencies are learning traditional media management. Digital firms will either evolve into creative studios—useful for generating widgets and viral videos—or agencies with a deeper awareness of all media, as opposed to a single medium, will establish strategies.

### **13) At least one major PR firm will regain its independence:**

The preceding decade has proved decisively that independence is not the competitive disadvantage that many observers, including this author, originally believed it to be, and that in certain situations it can be a considerable benefit. At the end of the past decade, when the last of the large independents to sell, Fleishman-Hillard, joined Omnicom, we and many others wondered how Edelman could continue to compete without a wealthy parent to fund an acquisition strategy. The answer, which is now evident, is extremely well. In the past decade, Edelman has outperformed its competitors, not despite but because of its independence. Many of Edelman's rivals now assert that the company's willingness to accept lower profit margins during adverse economic times provides it an unfair advantage.

There's no doubt that Edelman, which is accountable to its managers and has no Wall Street investors to satisfy, has greater flexibility than its holding company-owned competitors to make investment hires, for instance, and that it has the freedom to make an aggressive case for public relations (at the expense of advertising), whereas ad agencies either can't or won't. And life for PR firms linked with advertising agencies will become even more tough over the coming decade, as the advertising industry continues to collapse. At some point, one of the huge holding company-owned firms will understand the importance of independence and put together some form of MBO. Given that public relations is still mostly a people business, it's difficult to imagine a holding company resisting such an endeavor.

### **14) Most leading PR agencies will have advertising departments:**

This may seem counterintuitive, given my predictions about the demise of advertising agencies and the advertising industry in general, but savvy PR professionals will recognise that advertising still has a place in the public relations process as a product or tool, and that as PR becomes more central to brand strategy, it needs as many tools as possible. Equally crucial, the existence of new channels that enable companies to communicate more directly with consumers and other stakeholders means that good public relations professionals have the opportunity to become content creators, and there is no doubt that many advertising professionals have strong content creation skills (as well as impressive storytelling abilities).

Due to the fact that the new communications landscape values credibility as much as it does originality, these talents will be most effective when applied to public relations thinking in service of broader strategic goals.

**15) There will be no separation between public affairs, business reputation management, and marketing communications:**

Prior to this point, we have mostly focused on the changes that affect the public relations agency company, but there will also be substantial changes on the client side. Many organizations continue to delegate responsibility for stakeholder involvement to discrete functions, with many of these tasks reporting to distinct managers. Therefore, public affairs professionals report to legal, employee communications professionals to HR, investor relations professionals to the CFO, consumer PR professionals to marketing, and corporate communicators to practically anywhere.

In terms of brand and reputation management, these differences have never made sense, but in the age of social media, they are so unproductive as to be nonsensical. Employees are ambassadors in the modern world, impacting the business and brand reputation for better or ill. New product releases must also be evaluated from the standpoint of crisis and issues management and public relations, in addition to the typical marketing perspective. Corporate social responsibility is crucial to both the success of a product and the reputation of a company. Someone must be accountable for centrally managing all connections with stakeholders, including regulators and lawmakers, investors, communities, employees, consumers, and the media. I would argue that PR professionals, who are accustomed to working with various stakeholders and complicated multidimensional issues, are best suited for this function. However, in many organizations, astute marketers will acquire stakeholder engagement abilities and assume the helm.

**16) The corporate communications role will cease to exist:**

As the role expands in scope and significance, "corporate communications" will become an inadequate term to represent the function responsible for fostering relationships between institutions and their constituents. For starters, the majority of corporations consider communication as a one-way process, with the communications department tasked with delivering whatever information the organization desires its stakeholders to receive. This approach has always limited the ability of public relations professionals to contribute to the success of their organization; in the modern world, it is simply counterproductive: it disregards the fact that stakeholders, not management, determine what information they require, and it disregards the fact that in a social media environment, listening is more valuable than speaking.

More importantly, it disregards the idea that behavior is more essential than speech in defining reputation and building relationships, that actions speak louder than words. Not only must those responsible for reputation and relationships communicate policy, but they must also shape it.

Corporate communication undervalues the function for this reason. Personally, I don't see anything wrong with the term public relations, so long as it means what it says; nevertheless, public engagement, stakeholder relations, or any variant on this theme could be a suitable substitute for the current terminology.

### **17) Customer service will be integrated into the department of public relations:**

The era of social media has revealed just how much a company's brand and reputation can be affected by the quality of customer service it provides. Once upon a time, a dissatisfied customer would go home and tell six of his closest friends; today, he can blog, Tweet, or post a YouTube video (as companies from Dell to United Airlines do) and tell thousands, many of whom will tell thousands more, creating a community of critics capable of severely damaging the brand. In this climate, whomever is in charge of a company's reputation and its connections with important stakeholders must also be in charge of customer service.

No amount of positive mainstream media pieces can reverse the damage caused by poor customer service and the resulting groundswell of animosity, which means that the PR department's efforts to build a positive reputation can be undone by a few instances of poor customer service. If someone is accountable for the reputation of an organization, he or she must equally be accountable for customer service.

### **18) Competition from management consultants:**

My decade will provide a conclusive answer to the question of whether I was 20 years ahead of my time or just plain wrong when I made this forecast more than two decades ago. As corporate reputation and the relationships upon which it is formed become viewed as vital assets, mainstream management consulting firms will be more interested than ever in delivering advice on how to manage them. It remains to be seen whether they can pose a substantial challenge to established PR firms, but there are various causes for concern. The first is that they will likely target the most lucrative (financially and intellectually) portion of the market, giving high-end strategic consultancy as opposed to on-the-ground execution.

The second is their capacity to attract talent, especially considering that a senior counselor can charge far more for his advice if his business card bears the McKinsey name than if it bears the name of even the best public relations firm. The third is their position as a trusted counsel within the C-suite. Some management consulting organizations may even target high-end PR agencies for acquisition; it is not impossible to envisage future deals similar to FD's acquisition by global consulting powerhouse FTI. PR firms will need to really up their game to combat this danger. (And the good news is that anything PR firms do to prepare for this possibility will benefit their businesses, even if I'm wrong.)



### **19) De-consolidation, or the reduction of worldwide accounts:**

As public relations become increasingly mission-critical, savvy corporations will choose to deal with the best firms available in each country rather than hiring a single worldwide agency to manage their business on a global scale, a strategy that invariably compromises quality for more convenience. The entire "consolidation" trend has been exaggerated: the big multi-country, multi-million dollar assignments generate more media attention and industry buzz, but are almost inevitably followed by disintegration, as country managers—who are accountable for results in their local markets—prefer to work with their own firms rather than one imposed by headquarters, and as companies realize that their most important communications challenges (M&A, crisis, public affairs, etc.) can be handled by a smaller number of firms.

Even the finest of the huge international agencies are not A-plus firms in every market in which they operate (most are not A-plus in even half of the top 10 markets), thus selecting a single global agency necessitates settling for mediocrity in some key markets. If customers place public relations on level with legal counsel, for example, in terms of its contribution to company success, they will become increasingly unwilling to accept this trade-off.

### **20) Relationships will be the yardstick for measuring success:**

By the end of this decade, metrics that emphasize reach and frequency—everything from impressions to opportunities-to-see to advertising equivalency—will appear antiquated and absurd, as clients realize that the real objective of public relations, and the real contribution it can make to their success, is the strength of the relationships it fosters. Some companies are already moving in this direction: Procter & Gamble has discussed measuring the effectiveness of its social media efforts in terms of engagement (an approach that could and should be adopted to all communications, from advertising to traditional PR), and many businesses are utilizing the Net Promoter Score approach developed by Bain & Company's Fred Reichheld, which identifies brand advocates and detractors. This approach or a variation thereof will become mainstream in the public relations industry, resulting in a standardized approach to assessment that focuses on outcomes as opposed to outputs.

### **Check your Progress**

1) What is Content Approach?

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2) Write a note on how Public relations plays the primary role in brand development.

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3) Write about the mention of Digital Agencies.

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## 9.4 SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

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- PR Companies have developed PR services to offer start-ups at the most competitive rates in the industry since we are aware of market shifts.
- From large data to little data, public relations in the twenty-first century is more dependent on data.
- To be successful in modern public relations, businesses must embrace numbers and analytics.
- Today's objective is client happiness. Promotion is only the beginning.
- Social media is amazing because it creates a joyful loop: a customer visits your website/company page → finds interesting content → shares it → checks out what you offer → likely makes a purchase and leaves → another customer discovers your content shared on social media → clicks it and visits your website/company page to read it → shares it, and the loop continues.
- Social monitoring is the process of monitoring online conversations about your business in order to acquire useful information into the sentiment surrounding your products and services.
- The era of social media has revealed just how much a company's brand and reputation can be affected by the quality of customer service it provides.

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## 9.5 QUESTIONS

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1. Write note on the emerging trend in Public Relations on Global Platforms.
2. Discuss 'Content Approach'.
3. Explain 'Public relations will play the primary role in brand development.'

4. Discuss 'Publicity is not the final objective'.
5. Why would most leading PR agencies have advertising departments?  
Explain

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