

A STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE AND OFFLINE MARKETING

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Abstract—Marketing is an important activity for every business because it connects organisations with their customers and helps them communicate information about products and services. Changes in technology have considerably influenced the way businesses promote their products. At present, organisations use digital platforms as well as traditional methods to communicate with consumers. Online marketing provides businesses with opportunities to reach customers through social media, websites, online advertisements, search engines and other digital platforms. Offline marketing continues to use media such as newspapers, television, radio, brochures, banners, exhibitions and personal selling.

This study examines the effectiveness of online and offline marketing from the consumers' point of view. Primary information was collected through a structured questionnaire using Google Forms. The study considers consumer awareness, exposure to advertisements, trust, purchasing behaviour, cost-effectiveness and preferences regarding online and offline marketing. The findings show that respondents have considerable awareness of both forms of marketing. A large proportion of respondents use social media regularly and have made purchases after seeing online advertisements. At the same time, traditional advertising continues to have a degree of credibility among consumers. The responses also indicate that the effectiveness of a marketing method depends on factors such as age, location, product characteristics, convenience and customer preference. The study therefore suggests that businesses need not depend exclusively on either online or offline marketing. A combination of both approaches can help organisations communicate with different groups of customers more effectively.

Keywords: Online Marketing, Offline Marketing, Digital Marketing, Consumer Awareness, Customer Engagement, Marketing Effectiveness.

1. Introduction

Marketing is closely connected with the growth and survival of a business. It enables a business organisation to communicate with existing and potential customers, introduce products, create awareness and encourage purchases. The methods used for marketing have changed considerably with developments in information and communication technology. Although digital platforms have become increasingly important, traditional marketing methods have not disappeared. Many businesses continue to use both approaches depending on their products, customers and market conditions.

Offline marketing represents the conventional methods used to communicate with customers without depending primarily on the Internet. Newspapers, magazines, television, radio, posters, banners, brochures, exhibitions, trade fairs, direct selling and personal selling are some common examples. Such methods can be particularly useful when businesses want to establish direct contact with customers or reach people in local and rural markets. Personal interaction can also give customers an opportunity to ask questions, examine products and develop confidence in the seller.

Online marketing has developed rapidly along with the growth of Internet use and social media. Businesses now promote their products through social networking sites, websites, search engines, email, online advertisements, influencer activities and digital content. One important advantage of online marketing is the ability to communicate with a large number of people without being restricted to a particular geographical area. Businesses can also interact with customers quickly and obtain information about the response to their promotional activities.

However, the effectiveness of a marketing method cannot be judged only by its reach. A method that works well for one group of customers may not have the same effect on another group. Age, location, nature of the product, purchasing habits, affordability, trust and convenience can influence how customers respond to advertisements.

The present study was undertaken to understand how consumers view online and offline marketing and to compare the two approaches on selected aspects. Particular attention is given to awareness, exposure, trust, purchasing decisions and perceptions regarding cost-effectiveness. The study also considers whether businesses should use one method or combine both methods.

2. Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To understand the effectiveness of online marketing in reaching customers.
2. To examine the effectiveness of traditional offline marketing methods.
3. To compare online and offline marketing with respect to customer awareness, reach, engagement and purchasing decisions.
4. To identify the factors that influence consumers' preferences for online and offline marketing.
5. To understand the major advantages and limitations associated with both forms of marketing.

3. Research Methodology

The study follows a survey-based research approach. Primary information was obtained from respondents through a structured questionnaire prepared using Google Forms. The questions were designed to obtain information about consumers' awareness of online and offline marketing, their exposure to advertisements, trust in advertisements, purchasing behaviour and their preferences for different marketing methods.

3.1 Sources of Data

Primary Data:

Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire circulated through Google Forms. The questionnaire included questions relating to awareness, advertisement exposure, trust, purchasing decisions, cost-effectiveness and preferences.

Secondary Data:

Secondary information was referred to from books, research-related publications, journals, articles and other relevant sources dealing with marketing and research methodology.

3.2 Sampling

The study used convenience sampling for selecting respondents. The respondents belonged to different age groups and backgrounds. The responses collected through the questionnaire were used for analysing consumer perceptions regarding online and offline marketing.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire containing demographic and multiple-choice questions was used for collecting the primary information. An open-ended question was also included to obtain respondents' personal views regarding which marketing method they considered more suitable and the reasons for their preference.

3.4 Data Analysis

The collected responses were examined using percentage analysis. Tables and charts were used to make the results easier to understand. The responses to the open-ended question were reviewed separately to identify the common opinions expressed by the respondents.

4. Scope of the Study

The study considers major forms of online marketing, including social media marketing, search engine marketing, websites, email marketing and digital advertising. It also considers offline promotional methods such as newspapers, television, radio, brochures, banners, personal selling and exhibitions.

The study mainly focuses on consumer perceptions rather than measuring the financial performance of individual businesses. It attempts to understand which methods consumers notice, trust and consider useful when making purchasing decisions.

5. Limitations of the Study

The findings of the study should be considered in the context of the respondents included in the survey. The sample size and geographical coverage may limit the extent to which the findings can be generalised to all consumers. In addition, the responses represent individual perceptions, which can change over time as technology, markets and consumer behaviour develop.

6. Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings

6.1 Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

The age-wise responses show that the largest group of respondents belongs to the 18–25 age category, accounting for **42.4%** of the sample. Respondents between 26 and 35 years account for **24.2%**, while those between 36 and 50 years represent **21.2%**. Respondents below 18 years constitute **9.1%**, and only **3%** belong to the highest age category.

The distribution therefore shows that the survey contains a relatively large proportion of young respondents. This is important while interpreting the findings related to social media and online marketing because younger consumers may have greater exposure to digital platforms.

6.2 Awareness of Online Marketing

The survey indicates that **75.8%** of respondents are aware of online marketing, while **24.2%** reported that they were not aware of it.

This result indicates that online marketing is familiar to a substantial majority of the respondents. The finding is consistent with the growing presence of digital platforms in everyday life. However, the responses also show that online marketing is not equally familiar to everyone, suggesting that businesses should consider differences in customers' digital awareness when designing their promotional activities.

6.3 Awareness of Offline Marketing

Awareness of offline marketing is also relatively high. **84.8%** of the respondents stated that they were aware of the term offline marketing, whereas **15.2%** were not aware of it.

The result shows that traditional marketing remains familiar to consumers even though digital marketing has become increasingly prominent. Offline promotional activities continue to form part of consumers' everyday exposure to advertising.

6.4 Exposure to Online and Offline Marketing

When respondents were asked which type of marketing they notice more frequently, **57.6%** indicated that they notice both online and offline marketing. Online marketing alone was noticed by **21.2%**, while another **21.2%** reported greater notice of offline marketing.

The responses are significant because they show that consumers are not exposed exclusively to one form of marketing. Both forms continue to be present in the consumer environment. This provides support for businesses that use a combination of promotional methods rather than depending entirely on a single channel.

6.5 Use of Social Media

The survey shows that **93.9%** of respondents use social media daily, whereas **6.1%** do not use it daily.

This high level of social media usage demonstrates the importance of digital platforms as a means of communicating with consumers. For businesses targeting consumers who are active on social media, these platforms can provide opportunities to introduce products, share information and maintain communication with customers.

6.6 Purchases Influenced by Online Advertisements

According to the survey, **75.8%** of respondents have purchased products after seeing online advertisements, while **24.2%** have not.

This finding indicates that online advertising can have a meaningful connection with consumer purchasing behaviour. However, seeing an advertisement does not necessarily mean that every consumer will make a purchase. Other factors, including trust, price, product quality and individual requirements, can also influence the final decision.

6.7 Trust in Online Advertisements

The responses reveal an important concern regarding online advertising. **63.6%** of respondents stated that they do not trust online advertisements, whereas **36.4%** expressed trust.

The result suggests that online advertising has considerable reach but that reach does not automatically create consumer confidence. Businesses using digital advertising need to provide reliable information and maintain transparency in their promotional communication. Building credibility may be particularly important when customers cannot physically examine the product before purchasing.

6.8 Trust in Newspaper and Television Advertisements

The responses regarding traditional advertising present a different picture. **66.7%** of respondents stated that they sometimes trust advertisements appearing in newspapers or television, while **33.3%** expressed trust in them.

No respondents indicated complete distrust of these traditional advertising channels in the responses recorded for this question. This suggests that newspapers and television continue to retain a degree of credibility among the surveyed consumers.

6.9 Influence on Purchasing Decisions

The responses indicate that both online and offline marketing influence purchasing decisions. **54.5%** of respondents stated that both methods influence them. When considered individually, offline marketing showed greater influence than online marketing.

The finding indicates that traditional marketing should not be considered irrelevant merely because digital marketing is growing. Consumers can respond to different forms of communication depending on their circumstances. Therefore, businesses may benefit from using digital communication together with traditional promotional activities.

6.10 Perception of the Cost-effectiveness of Online Marketing

When respondents were asked about the cost-effectiveness of online marketing, **48.5%** were uncertain, **39.4%** considered it cost-effective and **12.1%** did not consider it cost-effective.

The responses show that online marketing is often associated with lower costs, but consumers do not have a uniform opinion about its cost-effectiveness. The perception may depend on the type of campaign, the platform used and the results obtained from the promotional activity.

6.11 Perception of the Cost of Offline Marketing

The respondents expressed mixed views about the cost of offline marketing. **36.4%** considered offline marketing expensive, while another **36.4%** did not consider it expensive. A further **27.3%** were uncertain.

This almost evenly divided response indicates that there is no common perception among the respondents regarding the cost of offline marketing. The actual cost can vary considerably depending on whether a business uses newspapers, television, banners, exhibitions, personal selling or other traditional methods.

6.12 Online Marketing and Young Consumers

A substantial **75.8%** of respondents believe that online marketing is more suitable for young people. **9.1%** did not agree, while **15.2%** were uncertain.

This result is understandable in the context of the high social media usage reported in the survey. It indicates that digital platforms may be particularly useful for businesses whose target market includes younger consumers.

6.13 Offline Marketing in Rural Areas

Regarding rural markets, **57.6%** of respondents believe that offline marketing is more effective in rural areas. **21.2%** did not agree and another **21.2%** were uncertain.

The finding highlights the continued relevance of traditional marketing in areas where direct communication and local relationships may be important. It also suggests that businesses should consider geographical differences before selecting their promotional methods.

6.14 Need for Both Online and Offline Marketing

One of the strongest findings of the survey is that **97%** of respondents believe businesses should use both online and offline marketing methods. Only **3%** disagreed.

This result provides strong support for an integrated approach. Instead of treating online and offline marketing as competing alternatives, businesses can use the strengths of each method. Digital platforms can help reach consumers quickly and across wider geographical areas, while traditional methods can support personal interaction and local visibility.

7. Analysis of Open-ended Responses

The study also considered the opinions expressed by **33 respondents** regarding which marketing method they considered better and why. The responses do not identify one method as universally superior. Instead, the opinions indicate that the choice depends on the product, customer requirements, location, convenience, cost and time.

7.1 Preference for Both Methods

A considerable number of respondents preferred using online and offline marketing together. Their responses suggest that businesses can reach different groups of customers by combining the two approaches. The choice of method, according to these respondents, should depend on the situation and the nature of the business.

7.2 Reasons for Preferring Online Marketing

Some respondents preferred online marketing because they considered it less expensive and more convenient. They also mentioned saving time and reaching customers beyond a particular geographical location. Several responses associated online marketing with younger consumers.

These opinions indicate that convenience and wider reach are important reasons for choosing digital marketing.

7.3 Reasons for Preferring Offline Marketing

Some respondents preferred offline marketing because it allows customers to interact directly with sellers and examine products physically. The ability to touch and see a product, negotiate prices and develop local trust were among the reasons expressed.

These responses demonstrate that personal contact continues to have value, particularly for consumers who prefer physical interaction before making a purchase.

7.4 Influence of Product and Situation

Some respondents indicated that the preferred marketing method depends on the product being purchased. Online marketing may be convenient when customers need to save time or make a quick purchase. On the other hand, customers may prefer offline marketing when they want to inspect the product personally before purchasing it.

This suggests that marketing effectiveness should be viewed in relation to customer needs rather than by assuming that one method is always superior.

8. Major Findings of the Study

The important findings of the study can be summarised as follows:

1. A majority of respondents are aware of both online and offline marketing.
2. The 18–25 age group represents the largest proportion of respondents in the survey.
3. Social media usage is very high among the respondents, with 93.9% reporting daily use.
4. A substantial proportion of respondents have purchased products after seeing online advertisements.
5. Trust in online advertisements is comparatively low among the surveyed respondents.

6. Traditional advertising through newspapers and television continues to have a degree of credibility.
7. More than half of the respondents are influenced by both online and offline marketing when making purchasing decisions.
8. Respondents have mixed opinions regarding the cost-effectiveness of both forms of marketing.
9. Online marketing is viewed as particularly suitable for younger consumers.
10. Offline marketing is considered useful for rural markets by a majority of respondents.
11. The open-ended responses show that convenience, cost, time, product characteristics and customer requirements influence marketing preferences.
12. The strongest overall finding is that **97%** of respondents support the use of both online and offline marketing methods by businesses.

9. Conclusion

The study shows that online and offline marketing continue to have an important place in the marketing environment. Neither approach can be considered suitable for every business or every consumer. Online marketing offers advantages such as convenience, wider reach and strong interaction through digital platforms. The survey also shows that social media has become an important part of consumers' daily lives, particularly among younger respondents.

At the same time, offline marketing continues to provide benefits that digital communication cannot completely replace. Personal interaction, physical examination of products, negotiation and local trust were some of the reasons mentioned by respondents in favour of traditional marketing. The findings relating to newspapers, television and rural markets also demonstrate that conventional marketing channels remain relevant.

An important concern identified by the study is the relatively low level of trust in online advertisements. Although many respondents have purchased products after seeing online advertisements, a majority still reported that they do not trust such advertisements. This indicates that businesses should pay attention not only to reaching consumers but also to developing credibility and providing dependable information.

The overall responses strongly support a combination of both approaches. The fact that 97% of respondents believe businesses should adopt both online and offline marketing suggests that an integrated strategy may be more appropriate than choosing one method exclusively.

Therefore, businesses should select their marketing mix according to their target customers, product characteristics, geographical market, budget and objectives. Online marketing can be used to reach digitally active and younger consumers, while offline marketing can continue to support local markets and customers who value personal interaction. By combining the strengths of both methods, businesses may be able to communicate with a wider range of consumers and respond more effectively to their changing preferences.

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