



SOCIAL MEDIA – A UNIQUE LEAF OF COMMERCE IN PRESENT ERA

Dr. Pawan Kumar
(M.Com, M.Phil, Ph.D.)
Associate Professor in Commerce
PMN College, Rajpura

Ms. Loveleena Mukheja
Assistant Professor in Computer Science
PMN College, Rajpura

ABSTRACT

Social media has entered everywhere, whether he is individual or an artificial person, poor or rich, in urban area or rural area, public sector or private sector. It has become a very powerful and interactive tool in the hands of individuals, non-govt. organization and government organizations. Big, medium, or small organizations are using the means of social media to penetrate in the client's sites in order to gain response from them.

INRODUCTION

Social media has entered everywhere, whether he is individual or an artificial person, poor or rich, in urban area or rural area, public sector or private sector. It has become a very powerful and interactive tool in the hands of individuals, non-govt. organization and government organizations. Big, medium, or small organizations are using the means of social media to penetrate in the client's sites in order to gain response from them.

Amul Milk (the Gujrat Co-operative Milk Marketing federation Ltd.) entered into agreement with India Railways through discussions on twitter in initial stage. Amul send a proposal on authorized Twitter handle of India Railways around two months back for supply of milk in Delhi through refrigerated Parcel Van. Indian Railways responded the query in a very interested way. Railways replied that Indian Railways will feel utterly butterfly pleasure to supply taste of India to every Indian. Milk train was started from Gujrat to New Delhi from 11/11/2017. So transportation problem of commerce was solved by Amul India through social media. In this way, many corporate are using social sites in order to perform their business activities.

Meaning of Commerce in Context of modern world

Though commerce helps in removing obstacles in trade since countries, but now due to advent of electronic transactions, automated vending machines and social media it has broadened its definition. Traditional meaning of commerce no doubt have important relevance in present era. Followings are some of the traditional definitions of commerce.

According to Whitehead, "Commerce is distribution and exchange of all surplus goods produced in the fields, mines, forests and factories of earth so that they reach the final consumer in the right place and the right conditions at the right time in the right quantity".

Whitehead stressed about the goods produced to be provided to the consumers at appropriate place with proper quality and at right time. Commerce activities are those activities that are related to sending of goods to consumer for ultimate use with exchange with ownership. This definition also indicates about goods produced should be more than one's own requirement so that surplus products can be sold to customers.

According to James Stephenson, "Commerce embraces all those processes, which help to break the barriers between producers and consumers. It is sum total of those processes, which are engaged in removal of hindrances of person (trade), place (transportation and Insurance), and time (warehousing) in the exchange (banking) of commodities."

The aim of commerce under of this definition is to provide goods to consumers from producers after removing the hindrances come on the way. Trade, transportation, warehousing, and banking activities are helpful in distributing the goods to consumers.

According to businessdictionary.com definition of commerce is, "Exchange of goods and services from money or in kind, usually on a scale large enough to require transportation from place or across city, state or national boundaries."

Businessdictionary.com includes services also along with goods while defining the commerce. As per this definition, goods and services can be exchanged either through money or in kind. It indicates that barter system is also a part of commerce activity. Commerce activities can be performed within city or state. International, trade also becomes the part of commerce activity as per definition of business dictionary com.

So commerce is helping in removal of hindrance of person, place, time in order to provide goods and services form producer to find consumers. It covers local, state and international trade.

With the advent of computers, mobile phones, internet, net banking the scenario of commerce activities are changed drastically. Commerce transactions have gained momentum and transparency in modern business world. A new concept of commerce, popularly know e-commerce have taken birth with the combination of computers, internet, net banking in last 10 years. Commercial transactions are done through on-line computer system.

Central Government has framed appropriate laws in order to facilitate commerce activities through on-line transaction.

Definition of e-Commerce

“E-commerce is the buying and selling of goods and services, or the transmitting of funds or data, over an electronic network, primarily the internet. These business transactions occur either as business-to-business, business- to- consumer, consumer- to- consumer or consumer- to-business¹.”

Internet is the primary source for performing commerce activities like trading the goods and services and transfer of funds and / or data as per above definition. The transaction may occur between b2 b or b2 c or c2c etc.

“E-commerce is a transaction of buying and selling on-line. Electronic commerce draws on technologies such as mobile commerce, electronic fund transfer, supply chain management, internet marketing, online transaction processing, electronic data interchange (EDI), inventory management system and automated data collection systems².”

Above definition covers, broader aspects of e-commerce as it involves not only buying & selling through internet but also do supply chain management, inventory management system, automated data collection systems and mobile commerce.

Online shopping is done on e-commerce sites. Various business organizations have created their websites for this purpose. Amazon started its business through on-line book-shipping in 1995. Smart mobile phones have given boost to e-commerce activities now-a-days.

M-Commerce (Mobile Commerce)

Mobile commerce is basically part of e-commerce. When buying of goods and services is done through mobile network (i.e. wireless connectivity) it is called M-commerce. The concept of M-commerce was started by keving Duffery with the launch of Global Mobile Commerce Forum in 1997.

"M-Commerce, also called m-commerce or mcommerce, can be defined as the sales of goods and services via mobile devices. The term a mobile device refers to mobile phone and tablets but also to smart devices like smart watches as a part of e-commerce³.

Social Commerce

Social media sites like Twitter, Facebook and are used in order to perform buying and selling activities. These social media sites become via media for on line commercial transactions. It is new form of electronic commerce.

"A form of electronic commerce which uses social networks to assist in the buying and selling of products. This type of commerce utilizes users ratings, referrals, online communities and social advertising to facilitate on line shopping⁴."

Features of e-commerce

- E-commerce activities can be done through internet. Internet is available everywhere in the world. So transactions can be done through internet anytime and from any place.
- Technologies used for e-commerce activities have universal standards. So all over the world, technologies help in performing same process and sequences in e-commerce activities. All it leads to cost reduction of business.

- Various types of means of sales promotions and advertisement can be used through electronic commerce. It can be through audio, animation, bill board, video etc.
- Images shown in the website can be zoomed in order to in-depth view of product.
- Two-way communication is possible simultaneously between business and consumers.
- Various apps designed by the business firms for the convenience of clients. These apps are very helpful in doing business transactions.
-

Meaning of Commerce under Modern Concept

It is well known fact that every business organization wants to expand its market. As the development of technologies takes place, the business organization applies these technologies as a tool for expansion of their business. So internet, smart phones, websites, net banking specified apps, GPS etc are used in buying and selling of goods and services. Role of electronic form of transactions bring revolution in commerce and related activities. Social media is now become another powerful source to expand commercial activities in present world. Meaning of commerce can be defined in the following way in modern era.

"Commerce is the process of exchange of products and/ or services from producer or service providers to end users (customers) through trade, transportation, banking, insurance, ware housing, e-transactions, e-stores, net banking and automated vending machines. It aims the winning of customers by following different price strategy and using the power of social media."

Components of Commerce

Commerce is significant part of business and industry. It is linking producer and consumer through various means. Electronic channels of communications are used in order to speed up commercial activities and broaden the base. Following are the main components of commerce.

S.No.	Components of Commerce	S.No.	Components of Commerce
1.	Trade	2.	Websites
3.	Transportation	4.	Online Live chat
5.	Warehousing	6.	Information Density

7.	Insurance	8.	Track and Analysis
9.	Banking	10.	Net banking
11.	Advertisement	12.	Digital Transaction
13.	Client Relationship Management	14.	Social Media
15.	Communication	16.	Private Social Messaging

Therefore, it is very important for a person who wants to venture new business, to take care of above-mentioned points.

Social Media

Social Media (SM) has become very effective tool to express opinions, share photos, view and videos in common masses of society. The individuals, NGOs, corporates and political parties, recognize the power of SM very well. Even farmers organization, All India Kisan Sangharsh Co-ordination Committee (AIKSCC) is using SM tools like Facebook and twitter to plead the cause of farmers. SM media operates through internet by creating websites. It is apps based function which installed on smart phone, tablet.

Meaning of Social Media

The concept of SM is defined as under:

Social : Refers to interacting with other people by sharing information with them and receiving information from them.

Media : Refers to an instrument of communication, like the internet (while T.V., Radio and newspapers are examples of more traditional forms of media)⁵.

Social Media : Social Media are web based communication tools that enable people to interact with each other by both sharing and consuming information.

The broad definition of SM is given by businessdictionary.com as under:

"Primarily internet or cellular phone based application and tools to share information among people. Social Media includes popular networking websites, like Facebook and Twitter, as well as book marking sites like Raddit. It involves blogging and forums and any aspect of an interactive presence which allows individuals the ability to engage in conversations with one another, often as a discussion over a particular blog post, news articles, or event⁶."

SM is used as sharing information, videos, through internet based websites and applications by using smart phones and tablets. It is very informative and interacting mode of spreading contents in the form of written messages, photos, videos, or voice messages.

Features of Social Media

1. Most of the social sites allow user to open their own-accounts for social interaction.
2. Various groups can be formed for forwarding messages for specific purposes.
3. Users of social media can upload their personal profile as per their own customized pattern.
4. All sites are internet-based applications.
5. In these sites, various types of information can be shared like text-messages, photo, video, or link to any website.
6. Users of social media can send notification regarding messages.
7. There are options to use button of like or comment on certain aspects of messages. These options are sometime very helpful in making judgment or doing research.
8. There is another important feature of review, rate, or vote on particular information.

Types of Social media

There are hundreds of social media sites operating world over. All these sites are functioning with specific objectives. Some SM sites are operating all over the world but some sites are restricted to some countries only, like social sites in China, specific sites in America and Japan. It is very difficult to categorize them on the basis of content sharing or functioning. Followings are some of the important SM sites, which are most popular.

Facebook	Pinterest	Perisope	Wordpress	Snap Fish
Twitter	Google +	Whatsapp	Blogger	Reverbnation
Linkedin	Vnie	Wikipedia	Hootsuite	Cafemom
You Tube	Tumblr	Rediit	WECHAT	
Instagram	Google +	Vimeo	Skype	
Snapchat	Fliker	Polyvore	Foursquare	

The purpose of all above sites are to provide user a common base or platform to connect with people or likeminded groups. All sites are operated through internet and with the use of

smart phone. Smart phones are penetrating in markets due multiple functions and uses. So, various applications of social media are downloaded on mobile phone in order to use them.

Social Media as a Tool of Commerce to Remove Hindrances of Growth of Business

The waves of new advanced information technology and latest versions of smart phones bring revolution in exchange of information from one source to another through internet, websites and application networks. There are numerous social Media (SM) sites, which are presently used for sharing various types of information through text, videos, graphics, and voice.

Most of the people having smart phones are browsing on phones throughout the day. After observing the importance and penetration capabilities of SM, many corporate and NGOs have developed their internet based on line portals / websites in order approach prospective customers. SM provides various ways to understand customers' behavior. Social Media is low cost method of expanding business within short period.

Facebook, twitter, pinterest officially empower Smartphone users to buy items through mobile applications. Social messages are forwarded through web-based social networking with people or groups for growth. WECHAT, QC chat, whatsapp and massager have broad net works and are used for sending messages in the various people and groups.

Most of the people do not visit on social media sites with intention of search or purchase of goods or services. SM is just a medium of attracting people for product or services by building relationship. Corporate or retailers are sharing information and then establishing trust at the time of sale of their respective products. Following strategies can be used as a tool by corporate in order to enhance their customer relations and sales:

1. Fix target regarding number of visitors on website and follower of company's products.
2. Staff of the company should monitor the traffic of messages and pin point the social media sites for further growth.
3. Company should understand the needs of customers through nature of posts by them. Company must try to interact with customers as per their expectations.
4. Efforts should be made to determine the ratio of conversion of visitors of websites to actual customers. It will give clear direction to employees for achieving targets.
5. A detailed report of various on sites should be prepared based on data received from various posts on websites.

6. Companies must share true and correct particulars and content of their products to prospective customers.
7. Companies should post brief and attractive explanation and features of product in order to reach out larger audience.
8. Reviews posted by customer experiences lead to product assessment, which is very helpful for firm to take decision. So customer reviews should be properly tracked and posted on sites.
9. Posts should track and monitored on daily basis from SM sites. Well-qualified staff should be appointed for that very purpose. Quick response must be given to prospective customers about their queries.
10. Company can use the services of any brand ambassador who has mass following. This will lead to business growth very fast.
11. The concept of 'live chat' can be introduced in order to win the customer confidence. Specific trained personnel can be engaged for that very purpose.
12. Marketing automation tools should be applied in order to post upgraded contents of products regularly on SM sites. This will provide fresh look about company's products and services. All this will increase customer traffic on website of the company.
13. Hostages should be used in order to organize content regularly and promote interactions regularly.

Business organizations are using SM channels in order to boost their business. Marketing, logistics companies, insurance, banking companies are now very active on social media network to expand their business.

Drawbacks of SM in Commerce

Following are the drawbacks of using Social Media platforms for promotion and sales of products and services :-

1. **Less Effective Advertisements** : - Advertisements on social media do not attract the visitors of the sites. The advertisements are running side by side. Some visitors feel disturbed. Whereas advertisements on radio, T.V., signboards and magazine attracts the viewers directly without any distraction.

2. **Long process of transactions and dealing** :- Business activities provide two way communication channel between the buyer and seller. If an enquiry is sought by the customer then some officials has to monitor network, respond to enquiry and post product description. It may be long process and all depends upon the response of prospective customer. So it is difficult to convert prospective customer into customer through social media sites.
3. **Negative Reviews of the Product** :- Unsatisfied customers may damage image of company through posting of negative comment about the review products of the company.
4. **Delayed Returns** :- Marketing through social media concept involves long term investment with uncertain return. Website visitors may not take keen interest in the product due to many reasons. In case of traditional sales methods, a firm may get good results because of targeted customers.
5. **Intrusion in Privacy** :- Social Media sites are used by common people or group of people for social purposes. Any type of commercial activity may hurt the feeling of visitors of the sites. They may feel that marketing and advertising is instructive to their privacy.
6. **No idea of type of Audience** :- It is not possible for the company to judge about the types of audience responding about its products. Company can attract awful and negative aptitude audience, which may harm the reputation of company.
7. **Wrong message posted mistakenly may go viral** :- If any wrong message of the product is posted on social media site like on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, it may go viral. Then it is not possible for the company to reverse the things.
8. **Hacking of sites** :- Company's website can be hacked by the hackers which may damage the goodwill of the company. International renowned Taxi Service Company Uber had admitted that hackers stole personal data of 5.7 crore riders and drivers in last year. Uber's Chief Executive Dara Khosrowshahi said that outsiders broken into a cloud-based server used by the company for data and downloaded a significant amount of information.⁷
9. **Low Internet Speed** :- Low Internet Speed in India is another obstacle in way of social media sites. India's mobile internet download speed was 9.80 mbps in November 2017 as

per speed Test Global Index of Ookla Company. India stood at 109th spot globally in internet download speed. Whereas Norway gained number one position with 62.66 mbps download speed in the world.⁸

No doubt that there are so many drawbacks in the use of social media in commercial activities. Problems can be sorted out with proper planning, trained staff and maintain customer data base.

Social media plays very important role in the life of an individual, growth of business, NGOs and spreading the messages of Central Government and State Governments. Public Institutions and Public sector undertakings are also very active on Social Media sites now-a-days. Indian Oil Corporation has planned for booking of gas cylinder for its customers through Facebook and Twitter. There will be option of "Book now" on Facebook page of Indian Oil Corporation.

If companies want to stay ahead of their competitions, it is very essential for them to use social media sites and networks. Assessing the importance of social media many companies have increased their spending on social media sites in India. The companies have spent about Rs. 7800 Crore on digital advertisement in year ending 2016. This spending was increased to Rs. 9800 Crore in year ending 2017. It will grow around Rs. 13000 Crore in the year of 2018 as per survey of Association of Chamber of Commerce and Industry, India and KPMG.⁹

Companies cannot afford to avoid social media platforms now. With the advent of latest technologies like improved smart phones, 4G Internet services, social analytics and content publishing tools, new strategies must be developed by corporate to use social media sites. Corporate can convert more visitors of sites of loyal customers within short span of time.

REFERENCES :

1. searchcio.Techarget.com.vertical Industries > internet technologies.
2. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-commerce>.
3. https://www.ecommercewiki.org/mobile-commerce/mobile_commerce_basic/what-is-mobile-commerce
4. www.busienssdictionary.com/definition/social.commercehtml.
5. <https://www.lifewise.com/whatis-social-media-explaining-the-big-tend-3486616>
6. www.businessdictionary.com/definition/socialmedia.html

7. The Tribune dated 23/11/2017 p. 18
8. The Punjab Kesri 12/12/2017 p. 9
9. The Punjab Kesri, 21/11/2017 p. 9