

ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY : RESHAPING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

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ABSTRACT

Social media has dramatically changed the marketing world in recent years. With businesses investing significant time and money into strategic plans and marketing initiatives, this trend will continue to grow and expand into the near future. Sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Linked In provide a mechanism for individuals to come together based on a variety of factors such as existing friendships, common interests, or work. People have discovered how the use of social networks can facilitate communication and the exchange/sharing of thoughts and ideas. Similarly, other social media like Blogs create a platform to post comment on any event which needs to be publicized also can be utilized as a promotional technique for customer's adoption

as well as for promotions. Now users are acquiring followers & subscribers and directing them to your social networking page. These media has an competitive edge over other popular public media like Television because there is a time gap between social event occurrence and the time it is being broadcasted.

KEYWORD: Social media, social media marketing, growth and benefits of social media, social media marketing strategy, social media marketing in India.

INTRODUCTION

Pharmaceutical marketing, sometimes called medico-marketing or pharmaceutical marketing in some countries, is the business of advertising or otherwise promoting the sale of pharmaceuticals or drugs. There is some evidence that marketing practices can negatively affect both patients and the health care profession. Many countries have measures in place to

limit advertising by pharmaceutical companies. Pharmaceutical company spending on marketing far exceeds that spent on research.

The pharmaceutical market is learning driven and is vigorously reliant on look into and advancement for new medications. The aggressive and innovative changes in the pharmaceutical industry from effective new medication revelations to the imaginative R&D associations and showcasing plans are reshaping the business methodologies of numerous pharmaceutical organizations. Patent laws assume an essential part in empowering the clinical trials and medication revelations. The new WTO decides to infer that Indian pharmaceutical organizations need to change to an item patent administration post-2005 from the as of now winning procedure patent administration.

In the course of recent years, the pharmaceutical business condition has changed essentially, which has changed the market progression. While Multinational pharmaceutical firms enjoy uniting their situations through mergers and acquisitions and key unions, the non-exclusive producers are equipping to meet the openings made by blockbuster drugs going off patent.

Despite the fact that the pharmaceutical business stays a standout amongst the most beneficial and stable enterprises, a few full-scale level factors are impacting basic changes in the industry structure. The central factors are the expanding part of substitutes-non specific pharmaceuticals risk; the danger of new participants rise of bio-pharmaceuticals and genome unrest; expanding purchaser control of third-party payers, government purchasers, and wellbeing support associations, and expanded wellbeing mindfulness among patients and evolving providers improved outsourcing in assembling and R&D. Moreover, changing world socioeconomics (expanding turning gray of the total populace), stringent administrative condition, declining R&D efficiency, overall consistence of General Concurrences on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (Excursions) and development of e-pharmaceuticals is probably going to reshape the business.

People increasingly look at social media applications as an important part of their daily life and more likely to move their 66 interactions to the virtual platforms (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter). This, in turn, positively reflect on their 67 orientations and behaviours toward all kinds of social media technology as reported by Alalwan *et al.* (2016a), Dwivedi *et al.* 68 (2015), Rathore *et al.* (2016), Taylor *et al.* (2011), Zhu and Chen (2015).

Therefore, social media applications have been observed as one of the most efficient and influential implications that have been progressively engaged in most aspects of people's lives (i.e. social life, commercial life, business life, educational sector, political life) (Alalwan et al., 2016a; Algharabat et al., 2017; Abed et al., 2015; Hawkins and Vel, 2013; Hinz et al., 2011; Rathore et al., 2016; Usher et al., 2014; Zeng and Gerritsen, 2014; Zhu and Chen, 2015). Social media has been largely realized as an effective mechanism that contributes to the firms' marketing aims and strategy; especially in the aspects related to customers' involvement, customer relationship management and communication (Filo et al., 2015; Saxena and Khanna, 2013). For instance, from the perspective of the national governing bodies, social media could strategically enhance a two-way communication between firms and customers, and accordingly, attaching customers more with the organizations' brands. This would be in addition to the ability of social media to present the content posted visually, verbally, or textually or using a mix of textual, visual, and verbal content (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013). Over different contexts, firms have been looking forward to utilizing the social media in many aspects of their interaction with customers such as facilitating the information search, interactivity, promotion and enhancing the customers buying behaviors (Zeng and Gerritsen, 2014). Therefore, a variety of interactive practices and mechanisms have been developed by organizations to enhance their brand identity as well as their marketing performance (Leeflang et al., 2014; Filo et al., 2015; Schultz and Peltier, 2013). In fact, a considerable amount of time and resources have been projected over this area in order to attract more customers either in the terms of involvement or in the term of online customer relationship (Filo et al., 2015). Bennett (2013) reported that most business firms (about 93%) worldwide have adopted and engaged such innovative platforms and tools in their process to communicate and serve their customers. In general, social media has been the focus of attention either by practitioners or researchers to know more how such applications could be successfully adopted and implemented. This is due to the necessity to learn more about the main requirements of successful implementation of such technology as well as how much the investment in such applications is feasible (Hutchins, 2014). In this regard, Hutchins (2014) greatly supported the importance of examining the role of social media over different contexts to expand the existing knowledge toward such important issues of social media. In the same line, Pedersen (2014), Knoll (2016), Pegoraro (2014), Rowe (2014) attributed the importance of addressing the related issues of using social media platforms to the innovative nature of these technologies as well as the current state of research over this area is over

initial, exploratory stage which, 95 in turn, required further interest and understanding. As well as, in their recent review study, Filo et al. (2015) debated that 96 despite the fact there is a good number of studies that have examined social media and its applications over different area of 97 interest, there is still an need of proposing a theoretical model covering the most important dimensions that could have 98 either positive or negative influence on the success of implementing such systems.

Indeed, researchers (i.e. Berthon et al., 2012; Dwivedi et al., 2015; Filo et al., 2015; Okazaki and Taylor, 2013) have started 100 paying a special interest in examining and exploring the main dimensions of social media applications in diverse contexts, 101 cultures, regions, and from different standpoints. Noticeably, and according to Dwivedi et al. (2015), the vast majority of 102 social media studies were observed to be within the marketing area. Worthwhile, diverse dimensions and many constructs 103 have been tested and covered by researchers who have considered the social media marketing issues. Further, in their 104 attempts to explore and examine such area, researchers have adopted different methods and techniques. Accordingly, this 105 study realizes a need of conducting a comprehensive review and analyses of the social media marketing current literature. So 106 that, it will be possible to have a closer view about the main important issues covered as well as which areas require further 107 interest. 108 According to the above-mentioned discussion, the main aim of the current study is to systematically scan and review the 109 related studies of social media in the marketing area as well as to synthesize and organize the main aspects considered over 110 these studies and how such studies have addressed the related issues of social media marketing.

Social media concept

Social media is a computer-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas and information and the building of virtual networks and communities. By design, social media is internet based and offers users easy electronic communication of personal information and other content, such as videos and photos. Users engage with social media via computer, tablet or smartphone via web-based software or web application, often utilizing it for messaging.

Social media originated as a tool that people used to interact with friends and family but was later adopted by businesses that wanted to take advantage of a popular new communication method to reach out to customers. The power of social media is the ability to connect and

share information with anyone on Earth (or multitudes of people) as long as they also use social media.

Social media can take the form of a variety of tech-enabled activities, such as photo sharing, blogging, social gaming, social networks, video sharing, business networks, virtual worlds, reviews and more.

For individuals, social media is used to keep in touch with friends and extended family, a network for career opportunities, find people from all over the globe who share a common interest, share content and more. Those who engage in these activities are part of a virtual social network. For businesses, social media is an indispensable tool for finding and engaging with customers, sales, advertising, and promotion, gauging trends and offering customer service. Governments and politicians utilize social media to engage with constituents and voters.

Social media's role in helping businesses is significant. It facilitates communication with customers, enabling the melding of social interactions on e-commerce sites. Its ability to collect information helps focus marketing efforts and market research. It helps in promoting products and services, as it enables the distribution of focused, timely and exclusive sales and coupons to would-be customers. And it can assist in relationship building, such as through loyalty programs linked to social media.

Social Media: Common Features

The pace of change in social media and its uses means that its definition can be a moving target. Generally, however, all social media shares the following characteristics:

1. Social media are interactive Web 2.0 Internet-based applications.
2. Client produced content, for example, content posts or remarks, advanced photographs or recordings, and information created through every online association is the soul of social media.
3. Clients make benefit particular profiles for the site or application that are planned and kept up by the online networking association.
4. Web-based social networking encourages the improvement of online interpersonal organizations by interfacing a client's profile with those of different people or gatherings

Term Using	Definition	Reference
Social networking	An electronic service, application, platform, or site used by individuals who have a common interest, beliefs, attitudes, culture, activities and really life relationships	Wikipedia (2016a)
Social networking	Using social media as a means to directly contact and have interaction with other personnel thereby having a real relationship with them	Wells (2011)
Social media	Social media as such they enable the individual to broadcast as well as to approach more people and more influence on them	Wikipedia (2016b)
Social media	New media technologies facilitating interactivity and co-creation that allow for the development and sharing of user-generated content among and between organizations(e.g. teams, government agencies and media groups) and individuals (e.g. customers, athletes,and journalists)	Filo et al. (2015)
Social media marketing	A dialogue often triggered by consumers/audiences, or a business/ product/services that circulate amongst the stated parties to set in motion a revealing communication on some promotional information so that it allows learning from one another's use and experiences, eventually benefitting all of the involved parties	Dwivedi et al. (2015)
Social media marketing	The utilization of social media technologies, channels, and software is to create, communicate, deliver and exchange offerings that have value for an organization's stakeholders	Tuten and Solomon (2015)

Importance of Social Media

Woodall and Colby (2011) analyzed the appeal of social media over traditional media and characterized four important elements. They are:

1. Satisfying an impulse. Consumers can connect when they feel like connecting or not connect when they wish to remain unconnected. Connections are quick and take little effort.

2. The excitement of sharing. They use social media to share their experiences with others. Many have individual interests that may not be shared in their neighborhoods. The internet expands the reach of communication to include others.
3. Seeking advice. Users exploit social media to get information from others. Trust is inherent in the process. Social media users are often perceived as unbiased and can be viewed as experts. Their advice is seen as more trustworthy than comments from salespeople who are perceived to have a commercial intent. This aspect has far-reaching consequences for marketers and can be a bonanza of information for researchers.
4. Sharing with others with similar interests. Online consumer communities have been described as individuals who come together to discuss topics of interest. The subject matter can be related to business, family, avocations, politics, technology or other areas. Typically, there is a concentration of expertise that benefits community members and the interactivity of the internet can help the community's knowledge grow (Pitta and Fowler, 2005). The information value of online communities can be enormous.

Social media, including online communities, present a potentially valuable alternative to standard research methods that suffer from declining response rates. Attempts to hear the voice of the customer in their social media use to benefit from an open and honest foundation. Consumers are willing to ask questions of importance to them and expect comments from people who share the same interests or problems. The information flow is open to community members and represents conversation members can follow. The use of research techniques has changed as technology changed. As mentioned earlier, social media is being used throughout the marketing research community in many different ways. While companies understand the need for a social media presence in their marketing plans, few companies are making inroads using social media for the research needs of their company. Since the goal of marketing research is to attempt to understand how potential customers perceive the brand/product/service and to delve deeper into obtaining a better grasp of who are customers are, social media makes an ideal vehicle for such research (Schlack, 2010). Social media vehicles can be used for various marketing research tasks such as focus groups, consumer panels, depth interviewing, etc. While the most popular route is to send an email survey to current customers, social media enables companies to engage in a more sophisticated and enlightening technique. No longer are researchers forced to make phone calls to increase subjects or to arrange research locations. For example, researchers can benefit from the vast number of potential subjects engaged in social media as well as

providing subjects with a more comfortable environment to complete surveys or engage in a focus group (Pettit, 2011).

Applications of Social Media in the current marketing

Marketing researchers are using social media in several ways, including:

- 1. Pattern recognition.** Public opinion is measured by aggregating searches and mentions on-line. By developing a system such as Mass Opinion Business Intelligence, companies can gauge their “share of opinion” as well as the valence of the mention (Toplansky, 2010).
- 2. Consumer panels.** Members of the panel are contacted and assigned an internet chat room wherein questions about products or services are asked. Panel members engage in an ongoing dialogue in which they express their views. New questions and product ideas can be included in the discussion without any issues. With consumer panels, the researcher can control the dialogue by dictating questions. In addition, with the abundance of webcams installed on computers, companies can engage in on-line synchronous chat with panel members using Skype or another conference software. As with all panels, obtaining the “right” subjects is difficult and using an online vehicle presents even more hurdles. According to Leah Howse (2011), when recruiting subjects, companies should be direct, be transparent, provide appropriate incentives, and utilize the power of the opinion leaders (blog writers).
- 3. Social networks.** Unlike consumer panels whereby the researcher has control, social networks are “live” reducing the control the researcher has in other vehicles. Such places are open communities where consumers can express their opinions. Sites like Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter create the ability to broadcast ideas with limited opportunity for the dynamic live chat as found in panels and communities. Another aspect of social networks is the ability to create a brand/fan page. These sites enable the researcher to do exploratory research with their brand, product, or service. Twitter can be used in research as an on-line listening tool and for crowd sourcing (Burton and Soboleva, 2011; Crawford, 2009; Ehrlich and Shami, 2010). Facebook also offers the opportunity to target surveys to subjects that meet the correct criteria. Ironically, the social networks can be used to populate the traditional research vehicles like focus groups, depth interviews, and survey completion. In addition to consumer research, social networks such as LinkedIn provide opportunities for business-to-business research as well as serving as a great way

to fill business-to-business Marketing Research Online Communities (MROC) and business-to-business panels with potential contributors.

- 4. Market research online communities (MROC).** Similar to panels, MROCs are closed communities that recruit members for a particular study and interest. Members are invited to discuss topics based on their interest and for the purpose of meeting others with similar interests. While consumer panels are recruited for each session, MROC members are engaged throughout a longer research process. But like consumer panels, MROCs can employ on-line synchronous chat with members of the community. Additionally, MROCs are not limited to discussion groups but can include bulletin boards, blogs, idea banks, etc. For example, the entertainment community, in particular, Fox Television, has embraced these MROCs to gain immediate information regarding their television programs. Fox believes the MROC members are more willing to discuss the programming naturally without much prodding (Benoit, 2010).
- 5. Listening platforms.** Different from many of the other social media groups, listening platforms are bulletin boards, blogs, review sites, etc. They are just mentions of the brands or service. For market researchers, it is the total mentions. The web has an abundance of information at a researcher's key stroke and these platforms are the best first step in learning about your brand or service. These platforms are also a rich source of data mining for understanding potential trends and thoughts.
- 6. Geo-tagging.** Geo-tagging services like Foursquare and SlideShare provide research opportunities for not only business to consumer operations but also business to business operations. Foursquare enables users to check in when they are in an area or at a location. Such measurements provide helpful quantitative evidence for companies and consumers. Similar operations are used by businesses to record visits to booths at tradeshows. Another example is SlideShare whereby businesses share ideas providing research opportunities.

A great advantage of these techniques is the ability to uncover information quickly and without great costs. Social media shift the research technique from asking to listening – from an active listening to a passive listening approach (Brandwaithe and Patterson, 2011; Pettit, 2011). A problem many have with social media and research is the belief that it will take over traditional methods. Such belief is unfounded because traditional methods are still needed, for example, to better understand customers, investigate the competition, and measure awareness (Pettit, 2011).

There are, however, some drawbacks to the use of social media for such endeavors. First, the use of social networks and other devices are hampered by their inability to a source who is writing. With panels, subjects with known demographics are recruited, but social networks and listening platforms have limited ability to track demographics of the respondents. Without demographics, researchers have limited ability to extrapolate who is saying what and where. A second problem is that researchers are unable to see if the same people are posting on multiple sites. While one may see quantity, it may be the result of continued posting by one fan. Such a situation leads to a third problem that of data quality and external validity. If the same people are writing numerous postings, the data become suspect, not valid and, thus, not generalizable. Fourth, with the inability to question those who post, the message being written by the writer is subject to interpretation by the coders. With misspellings and vernacular, coders can misidentify messages and possibly lead to an inaccurate interpretation of the wording. The technique of attempting to understand the emotion associated with a posting is called sentiment analysis. Thus, the data collected via social media can be construed as primarily qualitative since interpretation is needed to review writings on bulletin boards or Facebook or Twitter. Yet another major concern regarding social media was expressed by the American Association of Public Opinion Research (2010). Within the social media circles, members tend to be “over-surveyed” resulting in a conditioning of respondents. These respondents become aware of questioning and thus do not provide a solid source and a major problem with response bias. Further exacerbating the situation is the lack of representativeness in the sample with subjects belonging to multiple panels leaving the “silent” members not heard. The less experienced subjects may feel inhibited in expressing their opinion with more experienced people in the group and may not be able to quickly navigate the forum. Overall, the AAPOC question the response bias, attrition, and conditioning. A major point of interest is to consider your target audience. Not all target markets embrace social media the same way. The methods of using social media for research need to differ according to whom you need to research. Millennials embrace all aspects of social media and are more likely to be highly engaged while baby boomers may be less engaged in general. As you narrow down your target, the more you need to make sure you are obtaining the necessary information you need for your project. An interesting issue addressing social media is the inability to analyze body language and facial expressions. While webcams have attempted to solve the problem, this avenue still lacks the depth of a face-to-face encounter. Body language and facial expressions to many researchers are tools to better understand customers and their latent beliefs. A major issue that is just beginning is the

ethical aspect of using social media gathering the data and research (Pettit, 2011). Companies are sometimes not transparent about what data they are collecting and how they are collecting it. The problem stems from the technology moving quicker than the marketing research industry with researchers just beginning to realize the power of the social media tools. The covert nature of social media access may lead to suspicions about researchers. Are companies collecting data secretly? How are they using social media research in collecting data among children?.

Social Media Usage and Examples

It has been estimated that some 81% of Americans used social media as of 2017, and increasingly so. Over one-fifth of an individual's online time is spent on social media, according to one estimate. In 2005, the percentage of adults using social media was around 5%. Globally, there are roughly 1.96 billion social media users. That number is expected to rise to 2.5 billion by the end of 2018. Other estimates are even higher. According to the Pew Research Center, social media users tend to be younger (some 90% of people ages 18 to 29 used at least one form of social media), better educated and relatively wealthy (earning over \$75,000 per year). The United States and China lead the list of social media usage:



Facebook: 2.167 billion users

Facebook is a prevalent free long range informal communication site that enables enlisted clients to make profiles, transfer photographs and video, send messages and stay in contact with companions, family and associates.



You tube: 1.5 billion users

You tube is video making platform where we can share our videos and promote our products or anything which we want and we also market our products and services too



Google plus: 645 million users

Google plus is offline networking service provided by google. Google+ influences utilization of the Google to internet searcher, Google Profiles, and the +1 button. Google+ initially propelled with the components of Circles, Huddle, Hangouts, and Sparks.



Instagram 800 million users

Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking service. The app allows users to upload photos and videos to the service, which can be edited with various filters, and organized with tags and location information. An account's posts can be shared publicly or with pre-approved followers. Users can browse other users' content by tags and locations, and view trending content. Users can "like" photos, and follow other users to add their content to a feed



LinkedIn: 2.167 billion users

LinkedIn is a person to person communication site composed particularly for the business group. The objective of the site is to enable enrolled individuals to build up and report systems of individuals they know and trust professionally.



Pinterest: 2.167 billion users

Pinterest is a social curation site for sharing and classifying pictures discovered on the web. Pinterest requires brief depictions however the principle focal point of the site is visual. Tapping on a picture will take you to the first source, in this way, for instance, on the off chance that you tap on a photo of a couple of shoes, you may be taken to a site where you can buy them. A picture of blueberry hotcakes may take you to the formula; a photo of an eccentric perch room may take you to the directions



snapchat 255 million users

Snapchat is a multimedia messaging app used globally. One of the principal concepts of Snapchat is that pictures and messages are only available for a short time before they become inaccessible. The app has evolved from originally focusing on person-to-person photo sharing to presently featuring "Stories" of 24-hour chronological content, along with "Discover" to let brands show ad-supported short-form entertainment.



We chat: 980 million users

WeChat is a Chinese multi-purpose **messaging, social media** and **mobile payment app** developed by **Tencent**. It was first released in 2011, and by 2018 it was one of the world's largest standalone mobile apps by **monthly active users**



Twitter: 330 million users

Twitter is a free microblogging administration that enables enlisted individuals to communicate short posts called tweets. Twitter individuals can communicate tweets and take after other clients' tweets by utilizing various stages and gadgets



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

Wikipedia: 3.30 billion users

Wikipedia is a free, open substance online reference book made through the collective exertion of a group of clients known as Wikipedians. Anybody enlisted on the site can make an article for distribution; enrollment isn't required to alter articles. Wikipedia was established in January of 2001.



skype 260 million users

is a telecommunications **application software** product that specializes in providing **video chat** and voice calls between computers, tablets, mobile devices, the **Xbox One** console, and smartwatches via the Internet and to regular **telephones**.^[11] Skype additionally provides **instant messagingservices**. Users may transmit both **text** and **video messages**, and may exchange digital documents such as images, text, and video. Skype allows **video conference calls**.



Viber 260 million users

Viber is a **cross-platform instant messaging and voice over IP (VoIP)** application operated by **Japanese multinational company Rakuten**, provided as **freeware** for the **Microsoft Windows, macOS, Linux, Android and iOS** platforms. It requires a telephone computer^[clarification needed] to operate. In addition to instant messaging it allows users to **exchange** media such as images and **videorecords**.



Reddit: 250 million users

Reddit is a social news site and discussion page where stories are socially curated and advanced by site individuals. The site is made out of many sub-groups, known as "subreddits." Each subreddit has a particular point, for example, innovation, governmental issues or music. Reddit site individuals, otherwise called, "redditors," submit content which is then voted upon by different individuals. The objective is to send very much respected stories to the highest point of the site's principle string page

Social media analytics

Web-based social networking investigation is the act of get-together information from online networking sites and breaking down that information utilizing web-based social networking examination devices to settle on business choices. The most widely recognized utilization of online networking investigation is to mine client conclusion to help advertising and client benefit exercises.

The significance of Social Media Analytics

Audience demographics, volume, engagement, and interactions

- Measure to evaluate the effectiveness
- Measure according to existing objectives
- Measure social media as a component of an integrated communications plan.

Limitations of Social Media Analytics

Your objectives/goals

- The qualitative measures
- The 'what' but not the 'why'
- Who your audience could be and how they could behave
- What your audiences want or why they are engaging with you.

Social Media Analytics Tools

Sprout social

With Sprout's social media analytics, you can measure performance across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, all within a single platform. Having all of your analytics in one place makes it easier to track and compare your efforts across multiple profiles and platforms.

Networks: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Google+

Price: Starts at \$99/month (try a free 30-day trial)

Recommended for: Any brand that manages multiple social media profiles across multiple networks. If your brand is active on social media, a tool like Sprout is a must-have.

Snaplytics

Of all the major social networks, Snapchat gives brands the least amount of data on performance. One reason for this is the platform itself isn't as robust as Facebook, Twitter, and others. Aside from viewing and leaving comments, there isn't a lot of data to be collected. But luckily, there are third-party tools you can use to get more in-depth Snapchat analytics. The most popular of which is Snaplytics.

Snaplytics gives you data on the performance of your snaps, audience growth and more. Another unique feature of Snaplytics is that it also gives you insights on your Instagram Stories as well.

Networks: Snapchat and Instagram

Price: Contact for pricing

Recommended for: Brands that want to measure their Snapchat performance

Iconosquare

Iconosquare is a social media analytics tool specifically for Instagram. One of the standout features that separates Iconosquare from other tools is that in addition to analysis of your normal photos and videos. It also gives you insights into Instagram stories. With higher level plans, you can also get influencer analytics as well.

Networks: Instagram

Price: Starts at \$9/month

Recommended for: Brands heavily invested in Instagram marketing

Buzzsumo

Buzzsumo is different than the other social media analytics tools on our list. Instead of analyzing your brand's individual social media performance, Buzzsumo looks at how content from your website performs on social media. For instance, if you want to see how many shares your latest blog post received on Facebook and Twitter, Buzzsumo can provide you with that data.

Social media is one of the top ways content gets spread. So it's important to understand what resonates the most with your audience. Buzzsumo will not only show you the number of shares for each piece of content, but it also shows you which type of content performs best on each network based on length, type, publish date and more.

Networks: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Instagram

Price: Starts at \$99/month

Recommended for: Brands that that blog and distribute their content on social media.

Tailwind

While Instagram and Snapchat are currently the most talked about players in the visual social media landscape, Pinterest is still very active. And just like with any other social network, you need to measure your performance. Tailwind is arguably the most popular third-party Pinterest analytics tool.

Through Tailwind, you can track trends in followers and engagement, analyze your audience and they even provide some Instagram analytics as well as certain plan levels.

Networks: Pinterest and Instagram

Price: Starts at \$9.99/month

Recommended for: Brands that use Pinterest as one of their top marketing channels.

Google analytics

While it's not technically a "social media analytics tool," Google Analytics (GA) is one of the best ways to track social media campaigns and even help you measure social ROI. You likely already have GA setup on your website to monitor and analyze your traffic. But did you know you can access and create reports specifically for social media tracking?

For instance, you can see how much traffic comes to your website from each social network, or use UTM parameters to track specific social media campaigns.

Networks: All

Price: Free

Recommended for: Any brand with a website.

Brand watch

Offering a suite of tools that work across major social media platforms, Brandwatch is perhaps best used as a research suite. It provides information about the markets you own and

want to enter, such as demographic data about gender and occupation. You can even monitor your brand's reputation in real-time, seeing if users are posting positive or negative messages about you. Best of all, the data is accurate – Brandwatch filters spam and duplicate mentions.

Klout

Test out Klout to quantify your influence on each major social platform. Giving you a mark out of 100, it grades you based on your ability to engage and drive action. You can see on which platforms you're most influential, giving you an idea of how to successfully interact with your audience.

Hootsuite

Similar to Buffer, HootSuite is a social media management dashboard. On top of scheduling posts and aggregating content, you can use its analytics tools. The platform not only tracks standard engagement numbers but measures your team's performance. For example, it records resolution times for customer service issues.

Tweetreach

A search engine-like platform, just types in a keyword, hashtag or username to get a look at the analytics behind your term. Useful for checking trends, it illustrates engagement data such as reach and impressions. TweetReach also gives you a long timeline of tweets to inspect.

Application Areas of Social Media Analytics Tools

Economics and Finance

- Sociology/Psychology
- Marketing, management and organization science
- Geospatial: civil and environmental sciences
- Healthcare and public health
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Computer science

Implications for Marketers

Social media has transformed the way in which society communicates and has changed societal perceptions and norms. Consumers' abilities to contact each other have prompted actions like "flash-mob" events or even political demonstrations during the "Arab Spring" movement that have toppled governments. Social media's effects are clear. What is not so

straightforward are the techniques and approaches to use them for marketing research. While a variety of research techniques, listed above, have been developed, each should be used with knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, they complement traditional research techniques. Finally, the nature of social media, a public discourse that can be viewed covertly, requires researchers to be careful about how they use and evaluate the voice of the customer heard in these sources. Issues of information validity require careful assessment of whether many consumers voice a particular issue or just a few vocal contributors.

Limitations and future research directions

The focus of the current study was exclusively on the main body of literature of social media in the marketing context 561 while it was ignored a large part of studies that have conducted over different areas such as education, political, sociocultural 562 environments. Thus, it could be worth considering these studies conducted in different areas for future studies. Even 563 though this study does a contribution by theoretically scan the main body of literature, there is still a need for statistical 564 evidences from these studies by conducting a meta-analysis study especially in the light of the fact that there is a good of 565 number of quantitative studies that have conducted over the area of social media marketing. As a new trend and topic, 566 researchers need to spend more efforts on how such phenomenon could behave different from platform to another; over 567 different countries (i.e. developed, emerging, developing); cultures (i.e. collectivism versus individualism); and different con568 texts (i.e. tourism, sports, governmental). Despite the fact that this study comprehensively examines the main dimensions 569 covered by the prior literature of social media marketing, it does not accurately count the main factors and how these factors 570 affecting each other (which antecedences and which consequences). This could be worthwhile direction for future studies. 571 This, in turn, would help to establish a theoretical foundation to examine the related issues over this emerging area. In 572 the current review, very small part was devoted to discussing the main research methods adopted by reviewed studies. There573 fore, future studies could pay more attention in analyzing these methods and which appropriate methods could help future 574 empirical studies to have more valid and reliable results. This is in addition to the need to discuss how future studies could 575 modify and improve new methods and techniques to examine the consumer behavior in the social media marketing area.

CONCLUSION

Social media has become the essential part of current marketing scenario. Social media platforms help in various ways to find out the information about specific product or entire company. It helps to improve communication with users, increase brand visibility and reach more (potential) customers. It allows the organizations to gain a competitive edge over their competitors by facilitating a much better comprehension of their brands. There are countless tweets, blogs, comments and complaints regarding products and services. This huge volume of information contains consumer sentiments that can be used to evaluate users' experience with a particular product or service. This information can then be used to help companies perform better with the help of SMA tools. Social media marketing increases brand's awareness, to increase customer loyalty and helps to validate your brand.

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Declaration of interest

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