

YOUR STORY

5 marketing trends that will rule the market in 2018

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There is so much change in marketing on an everyday basis, and marketers seem to be constantly on the move to conjure up the next adrenaline high.

Consumers' stimulation levels have gone up significantly, and brands across sectors are seeking and creating newer ways to build the "experience" for the customer like they did in 2017. In 2018 and ahead, this metamorphosis will only become stronger, deeper, and faster.



One of the major tools that is making this possible is the smartphone. It has brought about an instant gratification mindset among consumers in their information search and exploration of "what's on offer". Christened "micromoments", these touchpoints are expressions of customers seeking brands that respond on-the-go. Those brands that

engage in real-time with such exploring customers who seek “discovery”, will stand to achieve brand resonance with the customer.

One estimate puts the number of consumers who reach for their smartphones to research and explore at 96 percent. Consumers consume, produce, and create communities using their smartphones. If that is true, it opens up vast opportunities for marketers to show their savviness.

Some trends that are likely to shape this transformation are:

1. Web browsing through smartphones will grow steadily while laptops, desktops, tablets, and other devices will show a decline. This presents a 24x7 opportunity for marketers to talk to customers. Accessing social media through mobiles will also grow exponentially. According to Facebook, it always ends up under forecasting the number of people who access Facebook using mobiles. With 1.1 billion people each month using its platform, it would be expected that Facebook would be in the best position to know, and yet the rate of growth of mobile usage to access social media and the internet ends up being underestimated every year. The story may continue in 2018 too.
2. Content marketing will lead the way in contacting, convincing, and converting target customers. This will be followed and strengthened by Big Data Analytics (BDA), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and Social Media interventions.
3. Use of technology to build customer experience will reach new heights. Even public-sector firms like Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) are selling more than just petrol and diesel. Their “Smart Drive” app helps drivers search for filling and service stations on the go. Working on the augmented and potential layers of the product hierarchy will help companies differentiate from competitors more successfully.
4. Video will be the driving edge of marketer-customer engagement. It rides on technology through techniques like 3D Projection Mapping, where promotional images and videos are projected on to 3D objects to stimulate customer participation and engagement to higher levels. Coca Cola has done this effectively with one of its One Brand campaigns recently; Live Video Streaming

has become an accessible tool for marketers with Facebook Live, BeLive and Zoom; VR Video Marketing, though hampered by the need to convince customers to wear special glasses to experience VR, is gaining steadily ground.

5. Customer Journey Mapping will take on a new meaning as customers offer (often willingly), and firms capture, more information. Customer experiences and communications will vary according to customer journey stages and companies will develop bespoke real-time offerings and touchpoints with the help of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning tools.

The future of marketing is eclectic and energised. The dark side is that it is also constrained by a “lack of control” that consumers feel; a sense of nudity in having all “privacy” and “private data” becoming a myth, the fear of being constantly monitored and tracked and a sense of having little say in the way marketing can be manipulative. The marketer in 2018 would do well to be considerate, empathetic and concerned about the customer they wish to cultivate and nurture.

Article can be read online [here](#).