

## Today's digital brand marketing trends

India has been proclaimed a "digital-first nation" where the general adoption levels of new digital trends are much higher than world averages



By Great Lakes Institute of Management

Published: Jun 29, 2017



*Image: Shutterstock*

Digitization of Marketing is inevitable as we immerse ourselves, willingly or unwillingly, in an all-pervading ecosystem of digital. Last year the “digitization of marketing” truly gained momentum. However, often digital “hotness” has a high cooling rate. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. The fad cycles are getting shorter. New applications are born every day. It’s a challenge just keeping up. It would be useful for the layman however to be aware of the goings-on in the high energy digital world.

India has been proclaimed a “digital-first nation” where the general adoption levels of new

digital trends are much higher than world averages. This has been made possible by the rapid penetration of smartphones as well as internet usage across our large country. Digital success has been made easier to achieve. Value addition via the digital universe becomes the new imperative for organizations, even traditional ones.

### **FADING STARS**

Like in all industries, there are ideas, practices and technologies which fade away with time. In the digital world too there are fadeouts. The only difference perhaps is the speed at which digital stars disappear into oblivion.

**Pokémon Go** came and went, but it created a huge opportunity for the Augmented Reality (AR) industry. Even though it was just a basic version of AR as purists argue, its biggest contribution was that in the public perception it became the harbinger of AR technology. People who were generally biased against technology found it amusing, engaging and downright addictive. Initial euphoria has waned, but in its wake it has spawned many new offerings for brand marketers.

**Twitter**, given present trends, is likely to go the same way as MySpace. It's struggling with falling enrolments, existing users exiting, and a general sense of the "vicious" happening on its platform.

**Big banner advertisements** could be another casualty as mobile marketing takes over. Mobile consumption of commercials generally has a low big banner advertisement tolerance. Big banner ads do not fit snugly into small screen mobiles despite attempts at customization.

**Stock images** are likely to suffer heavily as it does not offer the same kind of connect with the brand as real, own imagery. More and more brands have already started moving away from the use of stock pictures in its communications, digital or otherwise. Stock images indicate to consumers that the brand does not consider its communications important enough for it to be original in every aspect.

**Pop up ads** are another category of digital debris likely to be kept out by Google so that sites with them are likely to be penalized and relegated to pages so far down that nobody goes to in a SERP output.

**Fake reviews** are also in the cross hairs of companies such as Amazon. Lawsuits are being filed against fake reviewers and the trend will grow till such time as they realize it is not worth their while to write cooked-up eulogies of substandard offerings.

It is important as digital brand marketers to be cautious with respect to the fading stars mentioned above in order to protect one's reputation and marketing rupees.

### **THE ROAD AHEAD**

Just as important as watching the rear view mirror is (as fading trends fall away and disappear into the asphalt horizon behind you), it is even more important to watch for the sign posts coming up ahead on the digital highway. Let's take a closer look at what's in store for the digital brand marketer in the present and near future.

**Personalized content:** Creating unique stories about one's brand using original material – imagery, content and video - will find favour with savvy, intelligent and empowered customers. Using material which is repetitive or unoriginal will be looked down upon, thereby diluting brand equity. Fakes will be unwelcome.

**Video Popularity:** Video consumption will continue to grow and gain the attention of consumers more than any other medium. Videos shorter than 30 seconds will grab a disproportionate share of consumer eyeballs. There will be no excuse for producing poor quality visual and/or auditory material either.

**Mobiles Rule:** India being one of the largest absolute mobile phone ownership countries in the world it is a fertile ground for advertising on the ubiquitous hand-held device. Marketing activity conducted through an all-pervading network to which consumers are constantly connected is the current widely available opportunity a.k.a mobile marketing. SMS, MMS, push notifications, location specific personalized marketing inputs, app-based marketing, QR codes, in-game mobile marketing, proximity systems, and user-controlled media – all form part of mobile marketing and offer unlimited options for marketers.

**AR/VR/AI:** Technological innovations in the realm of Augmented reality, Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence will drive digital marketing interventions. Hardware and software will be unleashed to engage with customers more passionately by brands. They will permeate and control machines and appliances. Advertising and other forms of brand-consumer engagement communications could move to this dimension in 2017 itself in a big way.

**Outsourcing Digital:** A company's in-house brand team may be ill-equipped to stay afloat and abreast of latest happenings, given the level of technological obsolescence in the digital world. Therefore it is but natural that outsourcing of digital marketing services will reach epic proportions soon.

**Social Media War Room:** The double-edged sword that social media is for marketers – great for customer engagement and terrible when things backfire – it is a platform that demands war room strategization and tactical movements in real-time. Experts in online consumer behavior, sales activation, digital communications and supply chain management will huddle at these war rooms and decipher changes, subtle or otherwise, in consumer sentiments, emotions, fatigue, excitement, novelty and uniqueness seeking behaviours and attitudes.

Benefits from commitment to the above signposts, caution with respect to the fading stars and a hands-on focus on mining of insights will flow into the following: more empathetic customer care, quicker delivery responses and higher sales opportunities. As any marketer would swear, those are the mantras for continued success in the field.

*-By Dr. Jones Mathew, Professor, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Gurgaon*

**References:**

*4 Digital trends on the way out Jan 30 2017, Shannon Curtis, <http://www.marketingkeys.net/4->*

*digital-trends-on-the-way-out/ accessed April 2017*

*5 digital marketing trends that will die in 2017, Josh Steimle, <http://mashable.com/2017/01/12/5-digital-marketing-trends-that-will-die-in-2017/#J.IaRji6JOqC>, accessed March 2017.*

*Pokemon changes everything (and nothing) for AR/VR, Tim Merel,*

*<https://techcrunch.com/2016/08/12/pokemon-go-changes-everything-and-nothing-for-arvr/>,  
accessed April 2017*

*Digital Trends in 2017, Zafar Raid, <http://www.forbesindia.com/blog/business-strategy/digital-trends-in-2017/>, accessed April 2017*

To read the article online [click here](#)