

Date: October 5, 2018

Career In Marketing: Going Digital Traditionally

The fact marketing has a high rate of interest with multiple prospects, it is also laden with risks while making managerial decisions, especially to those who skip the basics and begin with Digital Marketing directly

By Dr. T N Swaminathan



Marketing jobs were considered as dream jobs when we started our careers in 70s and 80s. Invariably, you had to begin in field sales before moving to market and then take up higher responsibilities. Thanks to ITC, Lever and other MNCs, over the years, the Marketing field has only been emerging and attracting creative and driven individuals to choose this as a major career path. Marketing, on the whole, is undergoing a sea change with every industry metamorphosing and offering various opportunities. And, with the advancement of technologies, evolving new fields including digital and social media, businesses are constantly transforming their functioning methods and deliverables, inviting more and more millennials to be part of this rapidly growing landscape. Be it an aspiring or a freshly minted MBA or a professional planning for a transition, Marketing continues to be a popular career choice even today.

Notwithstanding the fact marketing has a high rate of interest with multiple prospects, it is also laden with risks while making managerial decisions, especially to those who skip the basics and begin with Digital Marketing directly. The millennials seem to be overwhelmed with the term –‘Digital Marketing’. True that the buzzword in organizations is going digital, but as an aspiring Marketer, one needs to have a strong knowledge about the fundamentals before jumping into Digital Techniques.

Marketing: Tradition Vs Digital

Marketing is a process of ‘CCDVTP’ - Create, Communicate, and Deliver value to a Target customer at a Profit” (Kotler, 2014). To achieve this and ensure profitability, businesses work on two ways – (i) Traditional Marketing - refers to the conventional methods of marketing using promotion or advertising of any product through print advertisement, newsletters, billboards, etc. (ii) Digital Marketing – refers to methods using digital medium, mainly on the Internet, and technologies including mobile phones, apps etc.

Historically, in India Traditional marketing has been successful through offline promotional methods, face to face selling, cold calling, allowing direct connection with a consumer. Traditional practices also mold you with skills required for marketing – how to structure and value a product, how to interact with a consumer and improvise verbal communication skills.

Whereas the Digital method completely deals in a virtual world, lacks physical connect, and every communication and process occurs online. A significant growth in recent years and new skill sets such as Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and well paid secured jobs have been some of the benefits of Digital Marketing.

Integrating Traditional Marketing (TM) and Digital Marketing (DM)

Although the growth in online marketing has been phenomenal in recent years, Tech companies and researchers are constantly looking at ways to offer digital services that surpass TV and offline space. With Netflix and Amazon expanding their market presence, TV is being consumed digitally these days. However, to sell these products and cater to the needs of consumers, a marketer should immerse and understand Language of Things (value, consumer behavior, pricing) as well as the Internet of Things. And, this can be achieved only with a strong base of a Traditional method.

According to the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) report (May 2017), consumers rated that they still prefer Print and TV over digital media. Given that in India 91 percent is still traditional retailing and 84 percent is non-digital advertising, professionals, as well as millennials, should look at these advantages and understand the strategic side of going for basics.

Merging of technologies, cost factor, real-time engagement can be interesting, enticing millennials toward DM as a career. But, on the flip side, one must be aware of the fact that these are also leading to tech disruptions, exposing personal information, examples being the recent Facebook data breach, Cambridge Analytica scandal, and resulting in job loss and other exploitable vulnerabilities.

Therefore, an aspiring marketer should look at integrating Traditional marketing with Digital marketing support. Balancing the right mix of both is one of the best ways to specialize in Marketing. And, doing that in a classroom environment enriches one with more conversations, debates and live demonstrations of marketing techniques. It further encourages confidence level, creative marketing and communication skills and nurtures the individual as an industry ready professional.

One must understand, be it any industry, digital marketing skills are often looked at as an additional skill set. The emergence of new tech skills is going to be a never-ending cycle. But, as a marketer, on a long run, bringing more skill sets on a table with basics in core marketing values (CCDVTP), enables to strengthen your career and role in an organization.

Career choices

There are plenty of career opportunities if one is planning to opt for marketing, as the field itself is diverse. Some of the trending jobs in the market are Marketing and sales specialist, Brand manager, Advertising specialist, Research Analyst, Sales and business development, and if you are planning to shift into Communications team in an organization, with digital skill set you be able to land up in as a social media manager or an SEO specialist. Though a basic degree in Communications is enough to kick-start a marketing journey, most organizations these days prefer an MBA degree. Graduates in any discipline can apply for an MBA programme with specialization in marketing. There are a number of institutions such as IIM (A, B,C), FMS Delhi, MDI Gurgaon, JIBMS, IMT Delhi, Great Lakes, Symbiosis are some of the best places for pursuing the course in Marketing. Admissions in these institutes are based on written examination followed by group discussion and personal interview. To get through the Admission process, one must get a fair percentage in the entrance test (CAT, XAT, etc.) conducted by reputed institutes every year.

Dr. T N Swaminathan, The author is Professor Marketing, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai.

Read the article online at - <http://bweducation.businessworld.in/author/Guest-Author/Dr.-T-N-Swaminathan-84899/>