



A study on the effectiveness of social media marketing on consumer behaviour in Mumbai

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Abstract

Traditional advertising once relied heavily on media such as newspapers, television, and magazines. However, rapid technological advancements and the widespread adoption of social media platforms have transformed the way businesses communicate with consumers. Social media marketing has emerged as a cost-effective and efficient promotional tool that enables organizations to reach a larger audience within a shorter time span. It has also enhanced interaction between businesses and consumers, allowing firms to understand customer needs and preferences more effectively.

Compared to conventional marketing methods, social media marketing encourages greater consumer engagement by offering convenience, accessibility, and personalized content. This shift has contributed to changes in consumer attitudes, perceptions, and purchasing behaviour. Consumers today are more informed and rely heavily on online reviews, influencer recommendations, and brand presence on digital platforms before making purchase decisions.

The present study attempts to examine the evolving behaviour of consumers toward social media marketing in comparison with traditional marketing methods, with specific reference to Mumbai. The research is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires, while secondary data was obtained from journals, articles, and online sources. The collected data has been analysed using appropriate statistical techniques to derive meaningful insights. The findings highlight the growing influence of social media marketing on consumer decision-making and its increasing importance in modern business strategies.

Keywords: Connectivity, Consumer behaviour, Perception, Attitude

Introduction

In earlier times, consumers primarily relied on word-of-mouth communication or physical retail stores to gather information about products. Offline purchasing was the dominant mode of shopping due to limited access to technology. With the expansion of internet services and digital platforms, consumers gradually adapted to online shopping and social media usage. Over time, perceptions toward shopping underwent a significant transformation, with increasing preference for digital channels.

Social media gained popularity due to its advantages such as convenience, affordability, easy access to information, and increased reliability. As user participation grew, social media platforms became an integral part of everyday life. This widespread adoption encouraged businesses to utilize social media as a promotional medium. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter now serve as important tools for advertising and allow direct interaction between consumers and organizations.

Consumer responses to social media advertisements are influenced by several factors including brand reputation, product quality, personal preferences, and psychological aspects. Consumers often evaluate online reviews and feedback

before making purchase decisions. Since consumer needs and expectations vary, social media marketing provides diverse options that cater to different preferences. Overall, consumer behaviour is shaped by emotions, perceptions, cultural influences, social class, lifestyle, and individual experiences.

Review of literature

Strong Jr. (1925) discussed the AIDA model developed by Elmo Lewis, which explains the stages of consumer decision-making: Awareness, Interest, Desire, and Action. According to this model, consumers first become aware of a product, develop interest, feel the desire to purchase, and finally take action.

Lempert (2006) ^[4] observed that consumers are increasingly shifting from traditional marketing channels to online platforms. They actively search for product-related information across multiple websites before making purchase decisions.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) ^[5] highlighted the influence of consumer-generated content, emphasizing that customer reviews and opinions significantly affect the purchasing decisions of others.

Flannery (2010) analysed the use of social media among youth and examined how advertising strategies attract younger audiences.

Cox (2010) identified a relationship between age and consumer attitudes, noting that different age groups respond differently to marketing strategies based on lifestyle and preferences.

Heinonen (2011) stated that consumer reactions vary across products and marketing messages.

Ach (2013) ^[8] found that both small-scale and large-scale businesses increasingly rely on social media marketing to enhance profitability and market reach.

Kotler and Keller (2014) ^[1] introduced the Marshallian economic model, which assumes consumers are rational decision-makers seeking maximum utility while minimizing cost.

Ramsunder (2016) concluded that online consumer reviews play a crucial role in shaping purchase intentions.

Chowdhury *et al.* (2019) examined Facebook marketing and found that social media platforms significantly influence consumer decision-making.

Murtaza (2021) analysed the impact of social media marketing on consumer buying behaviour and concluded that social media effectively promotes products and services to a wider audience.

Sawaengha (2022) studied the relationship between online purchase intention and personal factors, technical acceptance, and behavioural theories related to social media advertising.

Need for the study

Social media has become an essential part of daily life, influencing communication, information sharing, and purchasing behaviour. As consumers increasingly engage with social media platforms, businesses must adapt their marketing strategies accordingly. A significant proportion of consumers prefer online shopping, particularly when products are recommended digitally. Generation Z, having grown up with technology, demonstrates high familiarity with social media and online purchasing.

Influencer marketing has also emerged as a powerful promotional tool, shaping consumer preferences and trust. This study aims to examine how social media marketing has altered consumer lifestyles, decision-making processes, and buying behaviour.

Research questions

1. How does social media affect the minds of the consumers at different stages in the decision making process?
2. How does social media influence the perception with reference to decision making before buying the product?

Objectives of the study

- To study the origin, history, and development of online buying in India.
- To evaluate the awareness level of social media marketing among consumers.
- To determine the attitude and perception of consumers regarding social media marketing.
- To study the impact that social media has on consumers minds and their buying process.

Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant relation between age and the use of social media.

H11: There is a significant relation between age and the use of social media.

H02: There is no significant relationship between brands that use social media marketing and the awareness among consumers regarding those brands.

H12: There is a significant relationship between brands that use social media marketing and the awareness among consumers regarding those brands.

H03: There is no significant relation between the interest of the product and the consumer buying behavior.

H13: There is a significant relation between the interest of the product and the consumer buying behavior.

H04: There is no relation between the gender and the online buying perspective of the consumer.

H14: There is a relation between the gender and the online buying perspective of the consumer.

Research methodology

For the purpose of the study the data has been collected from primary as well as secondary sources. Primary data has been collected from the users online. A google form was created to know the perspective of consumers and their perceptions towards social media marketing. The study was conducted using structured Questionnaire as the outcome will depend on the response by the people.

The secondary data for the study was collected from Journals published, official reports, research papers, newspapers and other sources such as Dissertations, Working papers, Thesis, online websites.

For this research the sample has been taken from the people of Mumbai and the approximate number of people that answered questions related to the google forms were 52.

The questions were mostly structured with multiple choices. These type of questions make it easier to analyze the data properly. It gives a limited amount of answers and it becomes easier to study the data.

Scope of the study

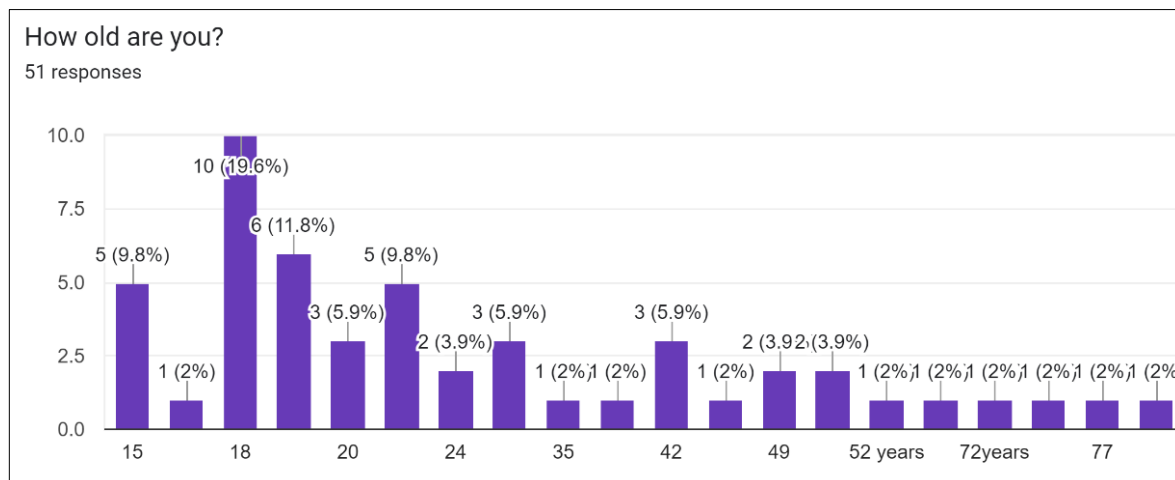
This study helps us to understand the viewpoint of the consumers and how they react to certain online marketing strategies. It helps the researcher to understand how social media has changed the thought process of consumers and what goes in their mind while purchasing a product. It helps us to understand the differences between traditional and online methods of shopping and which one the consumer prefers and why. It helps the organizations to come up with new ideas and strategies to influence the consumers in purchasing their products. It also helps us to understand the importance of social media websites and how it will be more relevant in the coming future. It will show us how social media will change the dynamics of the future generations and what more there is to come.

Data analysis

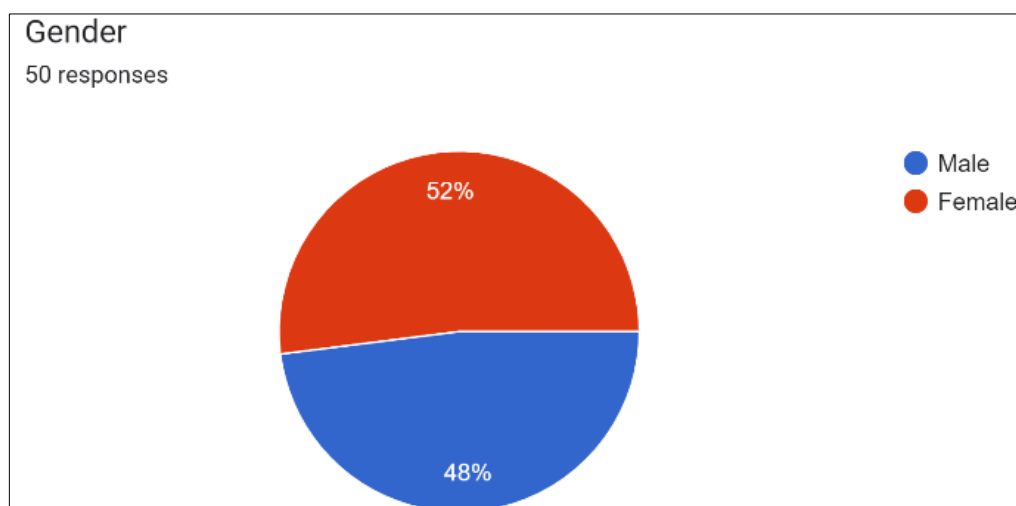
This section provides us with the analysis made on the data with the help of questionnaires.

The questions were sent via google forms. The people that these questions were sent to mostly belonged to the south

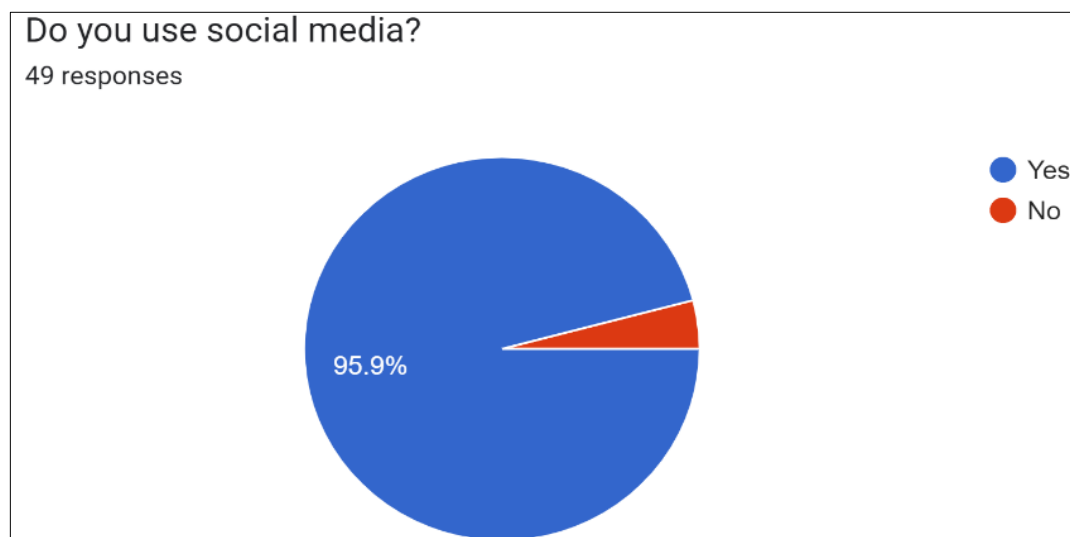
Bombay region. Using the questions the data was analysed. The first chart shows the age distribution of the people. Maximum number of people that answered the questions were 18 years of age.



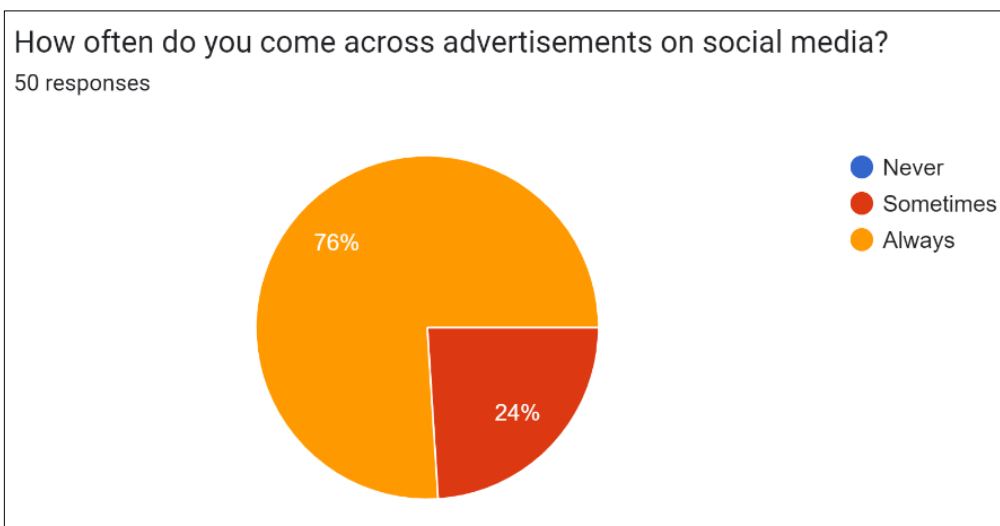
The next pie chart shows the gender of the people. 52% of people were females and rest were males.



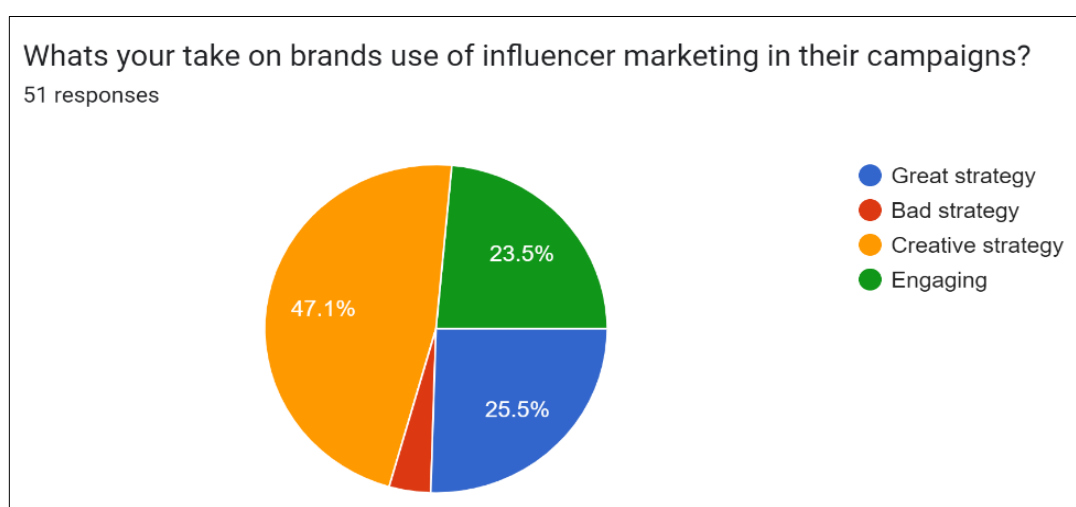
By asking these two general questions we are able to identify the diversity of the responses, which will help us give a more generalized analysis.



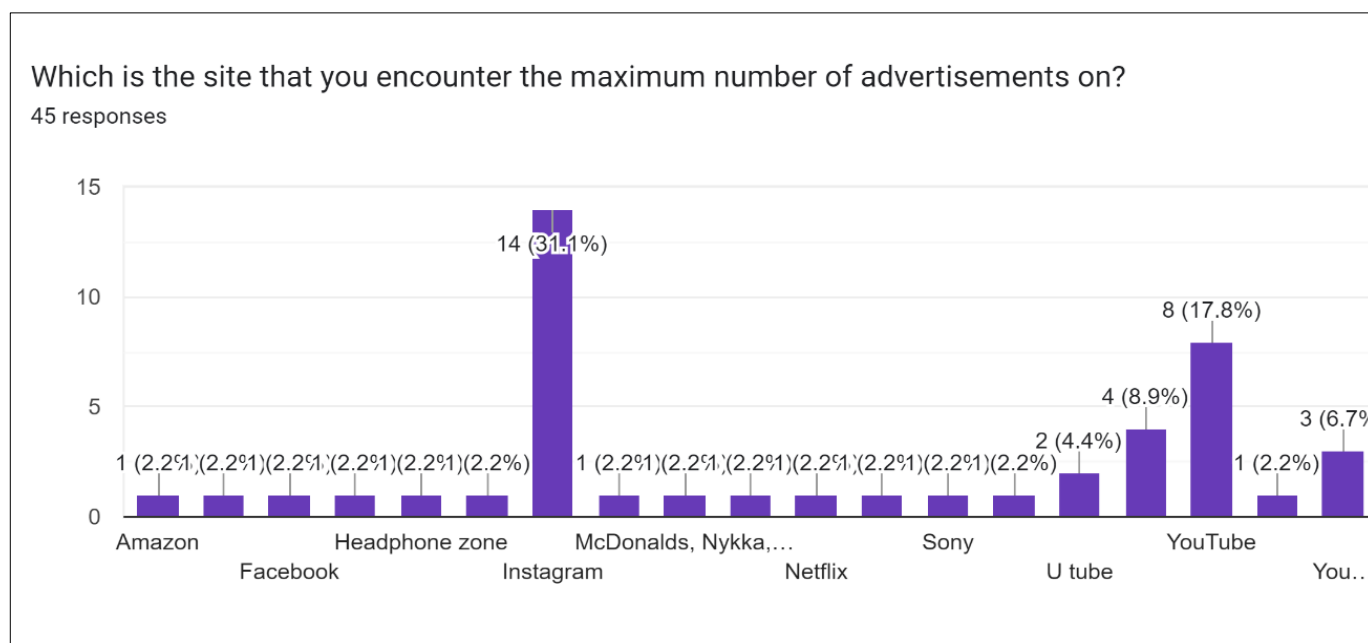
This shows us that maximum number of people surveyed use social media.



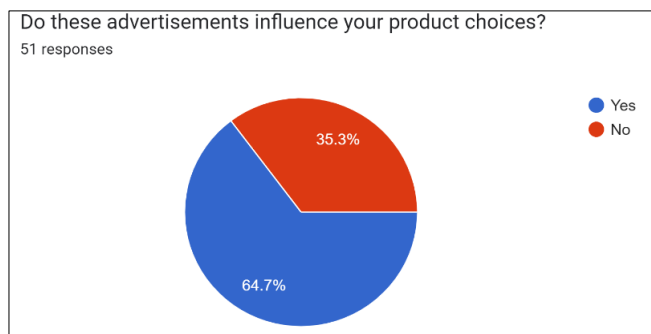
This pie chart shows that maximum number of people come across advertisements on social media.



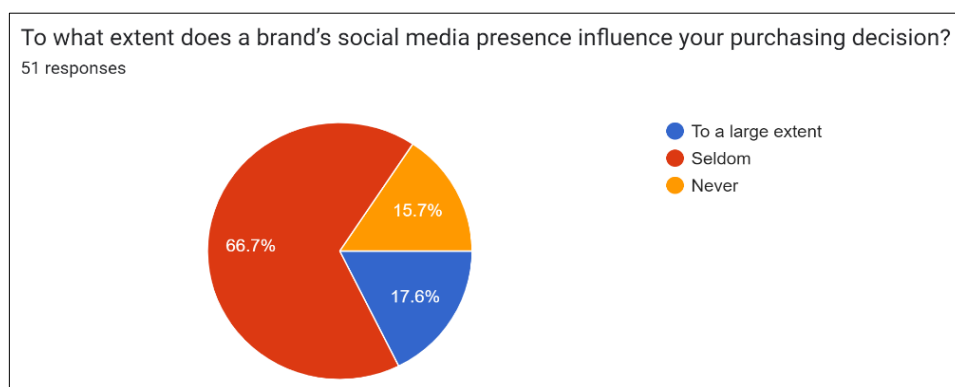
47.1% people believe that social media marketing is a creative way to advertise products whereas 25.5% people believe that it is a great strategy.



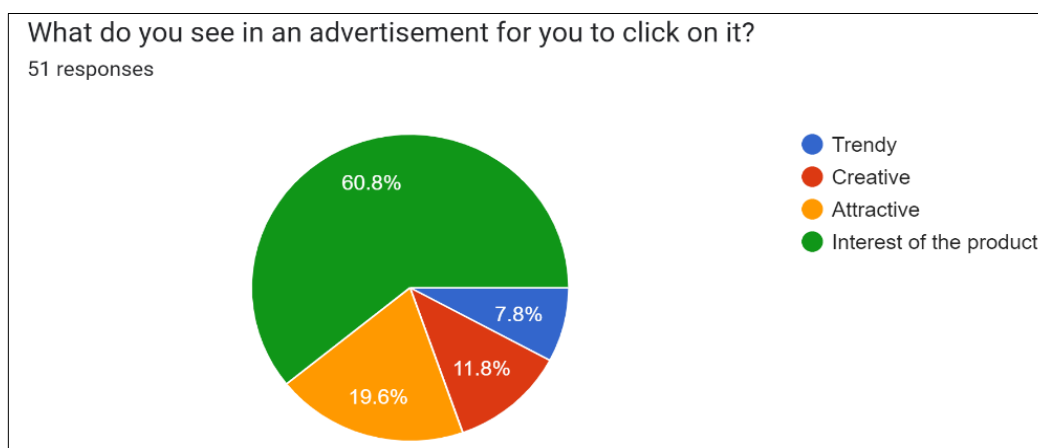
Almost all social media platforms have advertisements it is believed that maximum number of ads are encountered on Instagram and youtube.



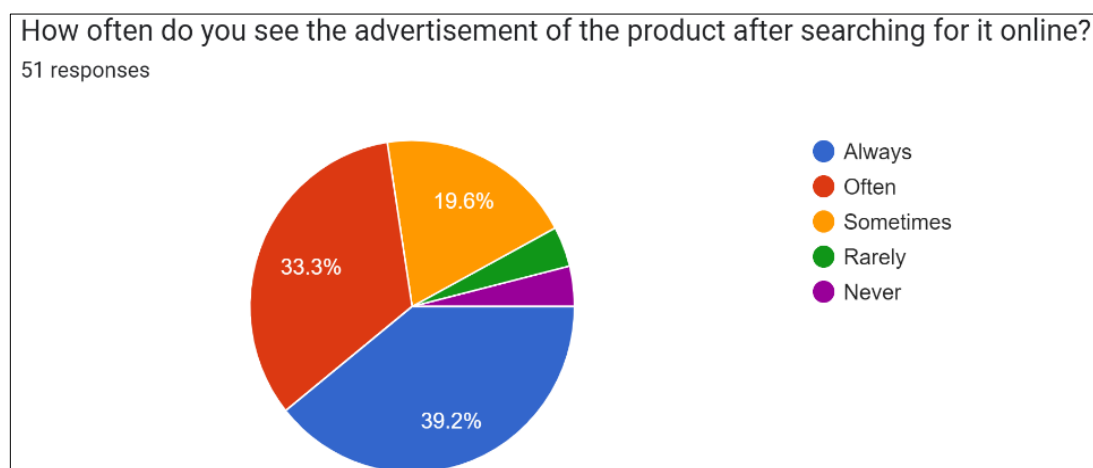
52.9% people believe that they are somewhat likely to buy a product recommended online. 11.8% people believe that they are very likely to buy a product online



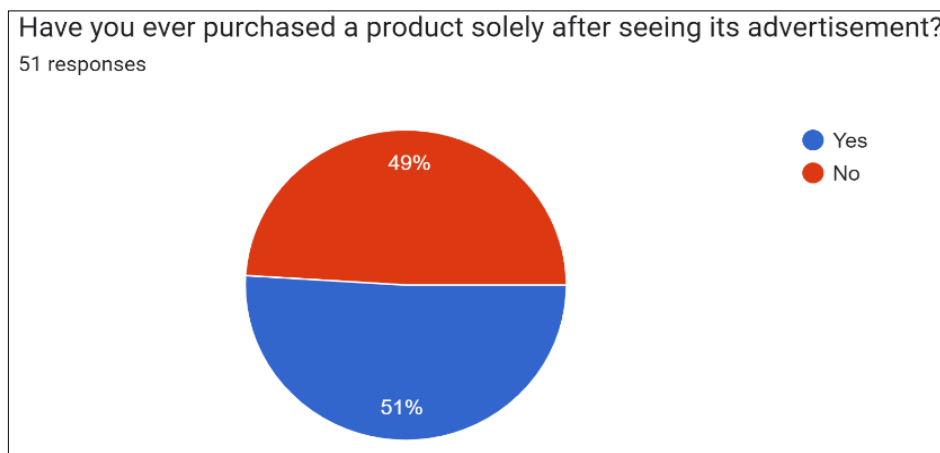
If a brand has a good social media marketing team and a good social media presence then that can influence people to buy the product



Many people believe that interest of the product and the attractiveness of the product influences them to buy the product.



Many people encounter frequent advertisements of a particular product after searching for it online. This algorithm has made the lives of social media marketing agencies much easier.



Findings

- The maximum number of people who did the survey were 18 years of age. But the survey also included people from various age groups.
- Among the people surveyed almost everybody uses social media. Social media has played a very crucial role in binding people of various places and various generations be it millennials or gen x together.
- All the people that use social media come across ads on it.
- 47.1% people believe that influencer marketing is a creative strategy and it influences their decision making process.
- The maximum number of ads are encountered by people on Instagram and youtube.
- 64.7% people believe that advertisements influence their product choices. As most of the people read reviews of the product before buying any product which helps them to get a clear vision of the product and influences their decision.
- People are somewhat likely to buy a product recommended online.
- The most important thing that influences the people to buy the product is the interest of it and the attractiveness of the product.
- 39.2% people say that even if they search for a product then they start encountering the ads of the product which entices them to buy it eventually.
- 51% people are believed to buy the product only after seeing the advertisement of the product. This tells us how social media algorithms play with the minds of people and influence them to buy the product even when they don't want to.

Conclusion

It can be assumed from the research that everybody is engaged in some type of social media activity. If someone does not know about social media that means that they are living under a rock, quite literally. It has been a boon to the consumers in quite a number of ways. One consumer influences the other and then they influence someone else and it goes on. The consumers enjoy this process of shopping more as compared to the other ways as it is hassle free and cost effective. Social

media has a strong effect on the purchasing power of consumers.

It can also be concluded that advertisements affect the decisions of the consumers to a great extent. Advertisements influence the decision making process of the consumers. Consumers are however inclined to these social media campaigns because it makes their work easier and hassle free. They find it easy to locate the products online and can read the reviews of the products before buying it which makes their decision easier. It can also be concluded that people prefer online mode of shopping more as compared to the traditional means of marketing. Social media marketing has made the lives of people much easier as they do not have to put much thought into the process. Sure it has some disadvantages but mostly it has been a boon for the society as a whole.

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