
Evolution of New Communication Patterns: A Case of Social Media

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Abstract

Communication is basically the demonstration of exchanging data starting with one place to another. In spite of the fact that this is a basic definition, when we consider how we may convey the subject, it turns to be significantly more perplexing. There are different categories of communication and more than one may occur whenever. Through the study, the aim is to understand how communication has evolved and how patterns have emerged over the years giving special priority to the internet and social media. The study explores the new patterns that have emerged specifically in business communication and also how businesses have started interacting with their customers/potential consumers.

Keywords: Social media, Advertisements, Communication, Millenials

Introduction

The word *communication* comes from Latin *commūnicāre*, meaning "to share". Entire group or community uses mutually understood codes whether verbal or non verbal to convey messages to each other. (Sinha,2012).

Since prehistoric times, Communication technologies have undergone a significant change in sync with changes in the political and economic structures of communities. Human communication witnessed a revolution with the origin of speech and then symbols for communication some 500,000 and 30,000 years ago respectively. Since oral communication only could not sustain, efforts led to creation of other mediums of communication facilitating longevity, range and retention of the intended message amongst communicators. (Sinha,2012).

This study attempts to explore not only the timeline of the journey of communication over centuries and but also the recent times when technology seems to have become obsolete in a matter of a few years. The study discusses the birth of communication and consequently. Co how communication took various shapes and sizes over the passage of time, the technologies that had come and gone, the modes and channels that had been introduced in today's lives and the underlying impact of the same.

Process of communication

The main steps inherent to all communication are:

1. The formation of communicative motivation or reason.
2. Message composition (further internal or technical elaboration on what exactly to express).
3. Message encoding (for example, into digital data, written text, speech, pictures, gestures and so on).

4. Transmission of the encoded message as a sequence of signals using a specific channel or medium.
5. Noise sources such as natural forces and in some cases human activity (both intentional and accidental) begin influencing the quality of signals propagating from the sender to one or more receivers.
6. Reception of signals and reassembling of the encoded message from a sequence of received signals.
7. Decoding of the reassembled encoded message.
8. Interpretation and making sense of the presumed original message (Shannon,2009).

The channel of communication can be visual, auditory, tactile (such as in Braille) and haptic, olfactory, electromagnetic, or biochemical (Sinha,2012).

History of communication can be traced back to Petroglyphs- carvings on the rock. It nearly took 20,000 years for first humans to move to petroglyphs from cave paintings. Pictogram became the next step in the evolution of communication It was a symbol representing a concept, object, place or event and paved way for cuneiform and hieroglyphs which developed into logographic writing systems around 5000 B.C.

With the beginning of the Bronze Age in the late Neolithic (around 4000 B.C.) is what can be attributed to the invention of writing system. Indus valley script belong to this era.

With the evolution of communication in 20th century newer and newer forms and mediums have come up. This has drastically altered the way people communicate with each other. SO the question is when the complex communication system is in place how do businesses communicate with their potential customers? Whether they are using right strategy to communicate? Therefore this study explores how communication has evolved in 20th century and how and in what way businesses can engage their target customers.

The study covers responses from millennials who form the sizeable share of the customers today who are exposed to newer form internet mediated forms of communication with specific focus on social media platforms for ex. Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram among others.

Literature Review

Panzarasa, P., Opsahl, T., & Carley, K. M. (2009) have tried to research and find out longitudinal network data from an online community to examine patterns of users' behaviour and social interaction, and infer the processes underpinning dynamics of system use. The complex evolving social network as represented by online community. Results indicated the existence of a small world present as a hub that dominated user's behaviour.

E-communication in businesses has been the target of intense research.(Kock,2005) explores the difference in the arguments whether media richness has led to change in communication and which had been attacked by the social theorists. This study establishes that the disagreement had been due to the fact that people prefer face to face communication for varied business tasks involving communication which leads to the basis of media richness but no underlying explanation was ever given as to why people prefer face to face communication. This study provides solution by



proposing media naturalness hypothesis which not only includes the factor of media richness hypothesis but also is compatible with social theories of behaviour towards e-communication tools. This paper also establishes the fact that media naturalness hypothesis despite low naturalness media individuals could still achieve same or better task related results requiring collaboration.

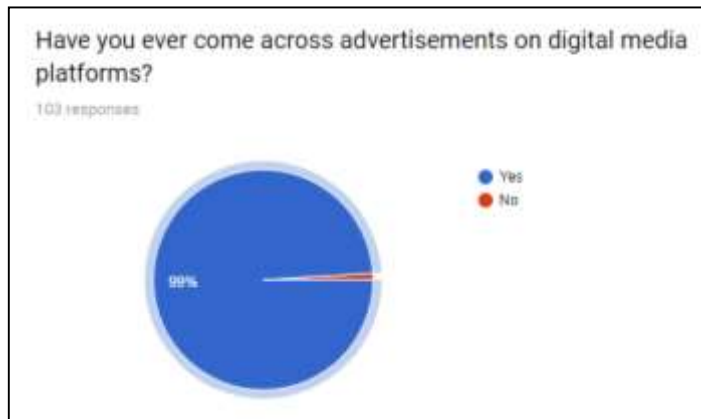
According to the authors (Perrigot, Kacker, Basset, & Cliquet, 2012) the rapid increase in of social media network as means of communication at workplaces led to the study. The authors primarily focus on Facebook (its adoption and use) used by franchisors focusing two questions(1) antecedents of early adoption of Facebook by franchisors, mainly in terms of system age, size, organizational form, advertising royalty rates, industry, and internationalization; and (2) variations in use of Facebook (in terms of content) by these franchisors and the way these variations relate to the characteristics of the franchisors and their systems. Thus the study does establish the fact that newer technology in communication can help smaller businesses to innovatively compete with businesses

Several recent studies have found that managers engage in redundant communication. Given how busy most managers are, and how much information their subordinates receive on a daily basis, this practice seems, initially, quite puzzling. Ethnic study was conducted on managers in six companies to explore the events leading them into redundant communication. The study revealed that redundant communication resulted as a response to unexpected endogenous and exogenous pressures to meeting work related goals. Managers at higher designation followed reactionary follow up using the single communication again and again when their first communication attempt failed. Moreover, findings indicate that managers employed different types of technologies for these sequential pairings created on the premise whether their motivation was simply to convey a message of threat or to persuade people that a threat existed. (Leonardi, Neeley, & Gerber, 2012) .

Methodology

Communication is essentially about the transmission of messages and information from one end to another. A survey was carried out with keeping the objective in mind to find out how organizations are using new mediums of communication to connect with their audience at large, whether targeted or not. Some of these mediums are email, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, etc. The survey intends to gather information about the consumer attitude towards advertisements they see on various digital media platforms. Advertisements are the focal point of this survey as it's a major part of promotion for any organization and they are using new platforms like messaging apps and social media platforms to promote themselves and their brand.

The sample size was 103 students from a reputed business school in India within the age group of 20-30 years. This sample was apt for the study as these are the group which constitutes the major consumer group. Around 89.3 percent of the total number of respondents belonged to the age group of 19-29 years which can be categorically termed as millennials, who were exposed to internet based communication channels.



Data was collected based on their responses to the questions adapted from '15 Common Social Media Questions by dominique jackson. To understand whether the audience that is taking part in this survey is well versed with technology and if communicating through digital means is a daily part of their lives. All 103 respondents said that they were prevalent users of digital platforms like email, Facebook, WhatsApp and other paraphernalia. This gives credibility to the outcome that it will not consist of respondents who aren't involved with technology.

Findings and Discussion

The findings showed that 98 percent of the respondents used Whatsapp followed by Email (86.4 percent) and Facebook (81.6 percent)

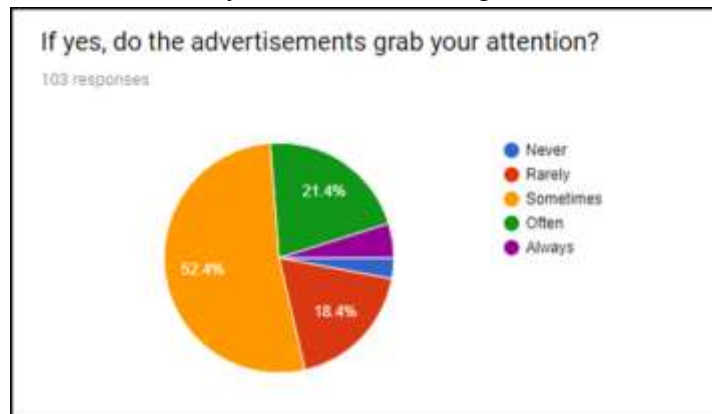
Next, they were asked the frequency of them using these platforms. How long were they spending their time on these websites for communicating. The major chunk claimed to be using these platforms for an average of 2-4 hours a day, the rest said 1-2 hours a day, followed by equal percentage of people saying they spend more than 4 hours a day and they use these sites almost all day. It shows how communication is shifting from traditional means to digital means where a lot of people prefer to exchange information and gain knowledge about the world through the internet, which saves time, money and effort.

Respondents were asked when did they shift from the traditional art of writing letters to each other to the Internet for exchanging emails. Since, the majority of the age of respondents is 19-28, most of them started using these services after 2008, followed by another major chunk of the people starting to use such platforms after 2012. There are also a small portion of people who started pretty early in the early 2000s. It has to be noted here that if these people started using the internet in the early 2000s, they were merely kids using the computer. It goes to show how communication through the desktop was far reached not only to adults but also children.

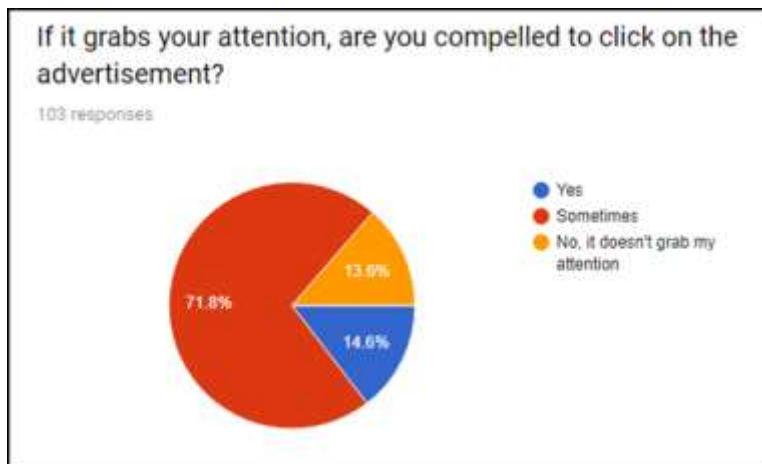
After understanding basic information, about the background of the respondents and their familiarity with websites and digital presence of communication, Respondents were then shifted to questions on advertisements on the internet, on these websites that people use to socialize. Advertisements were chosen as they represent a way of communicating a firm's products and values to their target market and by flashing ads online, firms are able to connect to a numerously

large audience which is one of the major drawbacks of traditional ways of promotion. 99% of the respondents said they have come across ads on digital media platforms. 1% responded saying they had not come across any advertisements.

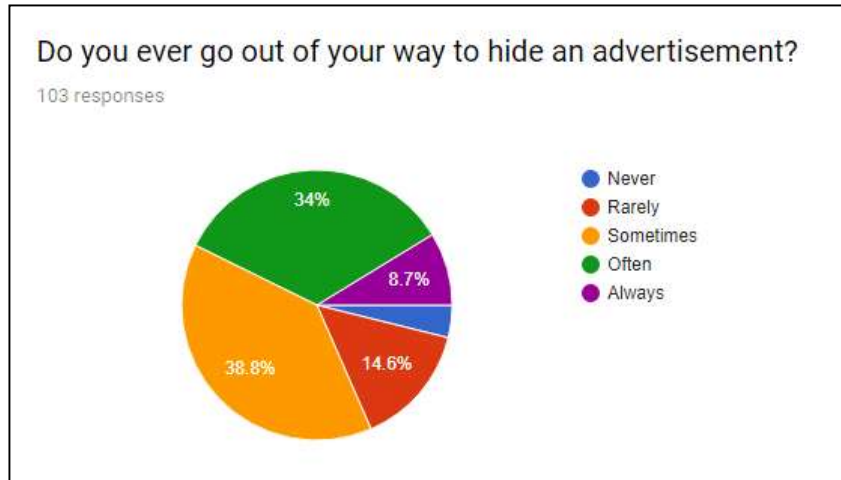
Next, they were asked whether these ads grabbed the attention of the respondents in any manner. Half the respondents said that ads sometimes grab their attention. 21% said ads often catch their attention and 18% said ads rarely are able to grab eyes. This study also shows signs of dogmatism, who have said that ads never catch any attention, these segments of audience are hard to please.



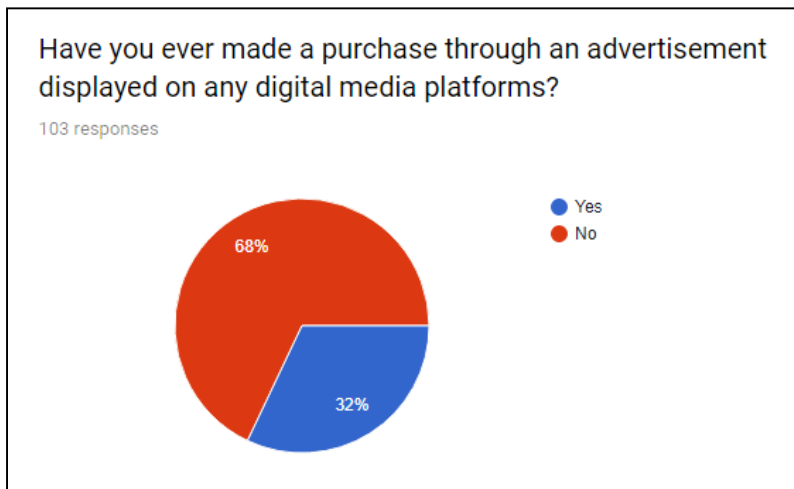
71% said they're compelled to click on the ad after seeing it online, trailed by 14% saying yes they're always compelled to click and 13% saying no they're not compelled to click on any ad that they come across.



To understand the level of dogmatism that was present in the respondents, the below question was asked to know to what extent they go to hide an ad that they see. There were mixed results which show that ads do annoy a lot of people, so much so, that they go to an extent to hide it. 34% said that they often hide ads, 38% saying that they do it sometimes, 14% saying rarely and 8% saying they always hide ads.



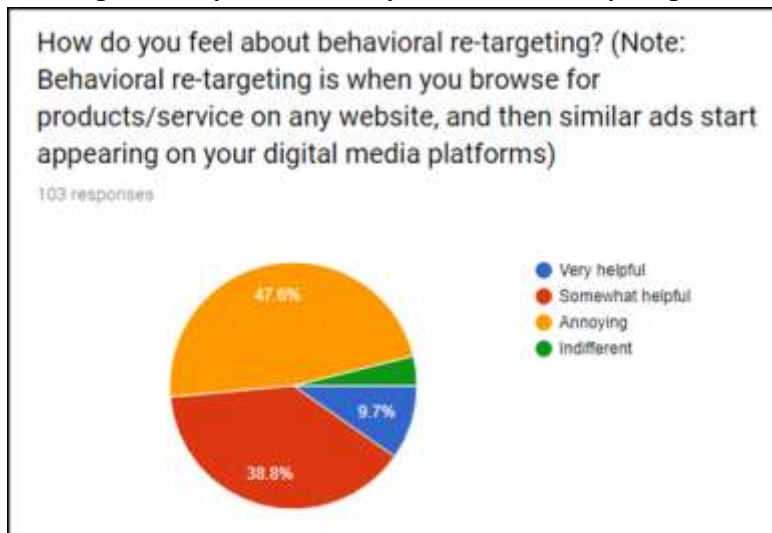
To measure the success rate of an ad, we enquired whether respondents made a purchase after clicking on an ad, 32% said that they have made a purchase and the rest said that they haven't.



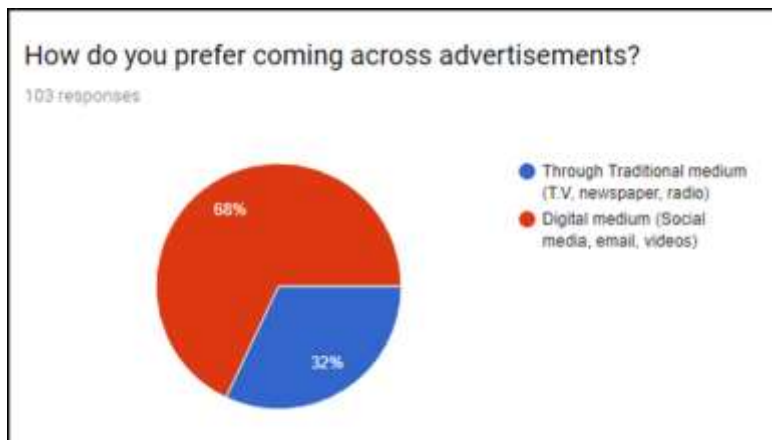
To understand what makes a person click on ads and what makes him or her repel ads, they were asked what factors make them click on an ad. The factors listed were curiosity, offers & discounts, attractiveness of an ad, humour used in an ad and also impactfulness and information source. Most of the people rated curiosity and humour as their most significant factor of clicking on an ad, followed by offers and discounts, and attractiveness of an ad. These factors play a crucial role in determining whether the worth of an ad is being realized or not. It is important for the firms to make an ad as lucrative as possible to get a decent conversion rate. Ads online cost a lot so if they're not being clicked on, then there needs to be some sort of assessment to see where they're going wrong and what should be done to rectify mistakes.

Another strategy utilized by organizations is making use of predictive analysis and recording consumer behaviour to see what products they're browsing and then displaying the same items on their news feed on Facebook, and such sites. This is called Behavioural Retargeting marketing strategy. It is sure shot ways of making people buy products. But contradictory to the concept, a lot of people have started getting irritated by the repetitiveness of such ads everywhere they go. Be it Instagram, twitter or even emails, the same products will flash everywhere. The firms should

realize this as fast as possible before tarnishing their brand image and before the user personally goes and blocks all ads. 47% said they find this strategy very annoying and 38% said they find it somewhat helpful. Only 9% said they find it extremely helpful.



At last, respondents were inquired about how they wanted the ads to come to them. Through traditional mediums like the television, radio or newspaper or through digital platforms like videos, emails and social media is what is preferred. Despite some people blatantly agreeing that they do not like the presence of ads, majority of people would rather endure ads on the digital platform over traditional medium. It goes a long way to show that one can ignore and get away with skipping ads on digital, but on traditional mediums, you cannot do so, hence they prefer digital over traditional.



Managerial Implications

Given the objective of the study, it will have various managerial implications. Firstly,. It will help organizations at large to know which mediums on the internet are successfully capturing the attention of their target market when an advertisement is displayed. Secondly, which strategies are preferred by these consumers and which are found annoying or irritating. The survey and the

results that follow thereafter will give managers various insights, where they are going wrong, scope for improvement in devising strategies and also where they are successful.

Limitation

The proposed methodology for carrying out this research might pose some limitations. Since the survey was conducted on self- report basis that can be considers as a limitation to the study. The sample of 103 may be relatively small to come to any generalized conclusion

- Results of this study may not allow to be completely generalized because the sample size is restricted to only 103 respondents which can be considered small scale considering the topic of the study is communication which is quite vast.
- The responses of the survey could be given in an uninterested fashion thus greatly influencing the outcome.
- Reliability and validity of this study greatly depends on the respondents and any dishonest/disinterest on their part can impact the outcome in a negative way
- Uncontrollable factors and extraneous variables

Conclusion

With the evolved means of communication in 20 th century organisations are definitely adapting to the new ways of reaching out to their potential customers. Among them Internet mediated communication has been on continuous rise. Social media primarily has come out to be the favoured tool by the companies to target their potential customers. Advertisements through these means can be very effective if the attitude of the potential customer is studied by the organisations before targeting them. Millenials form the core of these customers as they are the ones with full exposure to Internet and thus social media. The outcome of the current study clearly indicates that not all who are hooked to social media platforms actually pay attention to the ads thrown to them by the businesses. Thus there is a need for the businesses to relook and realign how they approach their potential customers.

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