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DIGITAL MARKETING MIX OF FLIPKART: AN OVERVIEW**SHEENA DAS****RESEARCH SCHOLAR****PG & RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****SREE NARAYANA GURU COLLEGE****K.G.CHAVADI POST, COIMBATORE****SENTHIL KUMAR.R****ASST. PROFESSOR****PG & RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****SREE NARAYANA GURU COLLEGE****K.G.CHAVADI POST, COIMBATORE****ABSTRACT**

Over almost half a century the frame work of four P's of marketing mix has been used as marketing tools to influence the buyers. Due globalization and technological advancements marketing mix has been to digital marketing mix. Flip kart is India's leading and largest online retailer. Flip kart has done many things innovatively to increase the sales and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. This paper is purely based on secondary data and tries to study the digital marketing mix of flip kart and thereby to understand the efficiency of each element of its digital mix.

KEYWORDS

Marketing Mix, Digital Market, Digital Marketing Mix.

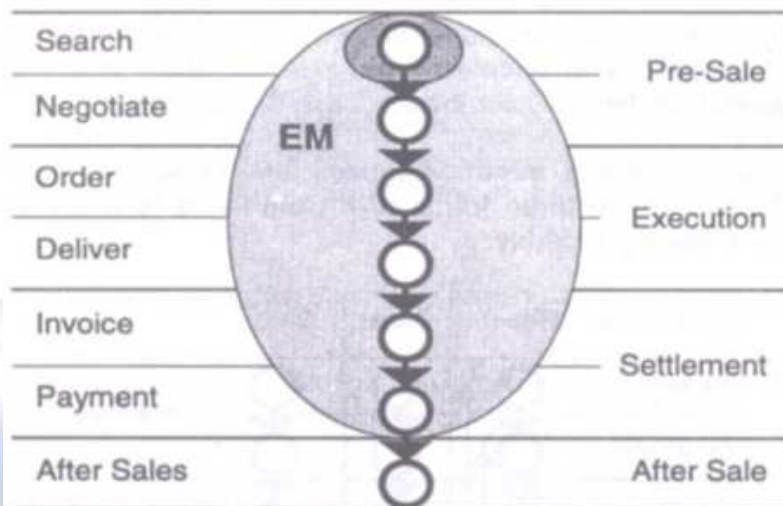
INTRODUCTION

Marketing mix was coined by E.Jerome McCarthy in 1960, American Professor of Marketing who first proposed that there are four main P's: *product, price, place and promotion* that the marketers can use in the right proportion to provide maximum satisfaction to consumers and maximum profit to the company. In modern marketing it is vital to understand how these traditional ingredients can be used in the digital market place. The old marketing mix, the four P's is getting replaced with new ones called as *Digital Marketing mix*. Digital marketing mix is essentially the same as the marketing mix. It is simply the adaptation of product, price, place and promotion to the digital marketing context. The extended marketing mix includes physical evidence, people and process when planning for marketing in online service.

ELECTRONIC/DIGITAL MARKETS BENEFITS

- ✓ It increases the efficiency of the market
- ✓ It reduces the search cost for the buyer & makes it more likely
- ✓ the buyer will continue the search until the best buy is found
- ✓ It Enlarges the local, national and international market

FIG. 1

**DIGITAL MARKETING MIX OF FLIPKART**

Flip kart is the largest Indian e-commerce company founded in 2007, by Sachin and Binny Bansal and headquartered in Bangalore, Karnataka. Flip kart marketing strategy during its initial years, focused on online sale of books but later it expanded to electronic goods and variety of other products. Flip kart had launched its own product range under the name "DigiFlip" with products including tablets, USBs and computer accessories, etc.... Initially, they spent Rs 400,000 for making the website to start its business. In May 2014, Flip kart received \$210 million from DST Global, in July 2014 it raised \$1 billion led by existing investors Tiger Global and South Africa's media group-Naspers and in May 2015 it raised \$550 million through many of its existing investors. Flip kart acquired Myntra.com for expanding its online fashion retail store and acquires a mobile marketing start-up Appiterate to strengthen its mobile platform. Today, Flip kart employs more than 20000 people. Its slogan, 'The Online Megastore' is very apt and popular. The company website is one of the most popular websites in India. Flip kart allows payment methods such as cash on delivery, credit or debit card transactions, net banking, e-gift voucher and card swipe on delivery.

Flip kart focuses on consumer experience and social media strategy through digital marketing mix. Brian Featherstonehaugh, Chairman and CEO of Ogilvy One Worldwide, replaced the 4Ps by the new 4Es.

- Product has become Experience
- Place has become Everyplace
- Price has become Exchange
- Promotion has become Evangelism

FIG. 2



1. PRODUCT

Historically, products can be touched, smelled, seen with our naked eyes in stores and its quality and value could be determined. In digital environment, the features and benefits of products need to be communicated in virtual space in different ways. Online audience can easily research, compare and find reviews all over the internet for the product they are considering to buy. For two years, Flip kart sold only books through its websites but now it offers air coolers, washing machines, air conditioner, life style products, cell phones, computers, laptops, cameras, audio players, micro ovens, water purifiers, products relating to health care, dishwashers, e-books, apparels, accessories, house hold elect., mobile technologies peripherals, wellness, books: fiction, academic, literature. Flip kart has recently introduced its personal product range called "DigiFlip". Under this brand, it offers product like computer accessories, camera, headphones, and pen drives. Flip kart introduced its own tablet phones and networking router under "DigiFlip". Flip kart has provided a platform for the launch of 'Moto G' by a special tie up with Motorola Mobility. Product performance, quality and price are ranked the top criteria for Flip kart. So their product features and benefits are real and differentiated from its competitors.

2. PRICE

Price will always be an important factor to consumers while making the purchase decision. Customers prefer high quality differentiated product at a competitive price in order to justify paying a higher price. Use of exclusive offers, voucher codes, money-off deals and referral discount can also push customers to purchase the products. Though Flip kart is started its business with an initial investment of just INR 400,000 today its net worth is nearly 1 billion dollars as its sales. Apart from 50% by selling books online. The company determines its price by considering the innumerable expenses like transport expense, supplier expense, packaging cost, courier charges, shipping cost, office expense, maintenance expense, depreciation, taxes, advertisement and many other expenses. Discounts up to 50% are allowed periodically to boost up the Sales and maintain competitive prices. Flip kart offers discount, contest, premium facilities, e-wallet, e-gift voucher to their customers. Flip kart also enhances its services by providing cash on delivery, debit and credit card transactions, pay zippy safe payments, vouchers available as e-gift and net banking..

3. PLACE

Place is the combination of decision regarding channel of distribution, transportation, warehousing and inventory control. In olden days, place means where a buyer buys the products from a physical shop. On mouse click, internet provides a wide variety of products in large scale, even globally. The digital place is a reflection of the modern technology. People can access to the product anywhere, anytime. Flip kart is owned a Singapore based company is registered over there. According to India's foreign policy, a foreign company is not allowed e-retailing over here. Therefore, in India, flip kart sells the goods through an Indian company WS Retail. The website is very easy for browsing, keeping track of products, getting reviews, ordering goods and payment methods for audience. Flip kart has made a place for itself in digital marketing. Flip kart has inventories in four major centers- Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore and Kolkata. At least 80% of the orders placed are handled and controlled via ware houses. It provides delivery services using e-kart and postal service. The company has covered all tier one cities, major tier two and tier three cities.

4. PROMOTION

Traditionally promotion refers to the ways in which products were promoted offline. This was done through television or radio advertising, print or outdoor advertising. But in digital marketing, promotion tactics can be reinforced through creating connections and engagement with online audience. Flip kart has changed the concept of multi brand retailing through internet in India. Flip kart has promoted their products by using different tools like e-mail marketing, advertising, online marketing, word of mouth to promote their sales. It operates mostly through mouth advertising and used the services of Google Ad-words and Search Engine Optimization. Downloading the exclusive app of flip kart helps in getting alert about the current offers, older status, price drops, recent launches and various gift coupons.

CONCLUSION

Flip kart is the most prominent online retailer in India which has prioritized customer satisfaction. The company has adopted digital marketing mix as its set of marketing tools to pursue its marketing objectives in the global market. The company has set a bench mark of excellence by being more real times, customer centric and scalable in their overall approach to digital marketing. It has proven that it is always a step ahead than its competitors because of its use of new channels of marketing and technology which meets the requirements of digital marketing. Flip kart competitive approach towards four E's yields a global market.

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