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## Leveraging Digital Marketing and Integrated Marketing Communications for Brand Building in Emerging Markets

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### Introduction

The digital revolution has a prolific influence on markets, business, and organisations at micro and macro level. There is a surge in technological devices that has led to fast and unpredictable changes in individual cognition and our behaviour towards each other. Similarly, at the macro level, nations have embraced digitalisation into their economy and consider it a backbone for future development. Due to this, developing countries are quickly rising in status and capacity—for example, India, Africa, Thailand, Russia, Mexico, and Brazil.

Emerging markets, generally speaking, are “heterogeneous, have socio-political governance, a chronic shortage of resources exists, unbranded competition, and inadequate infrastructure” (Sheth, 2011). Emerging

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markets influence consumers' decision-making process (Thongpapanl, Ashraf, Lapa, & Venkatesh, 2018). There is complete information about various products and services, brands, and offers available with heterogeneity in products and price discrimination. The process of decision-making creates issues of trust in the minds of consumers. Consumers do not trust online channels for buying products (Ventre & Kolbe, 2020).

Moreover, this obstacle is overcome by understanding the motivations of consumers for purchasing and not purchasing online. It also depends on the brands' relevance to promote and position their products in the emerging market. For example, Starbucks in India promotes local breakfast recipes by Indian chefs, such as Sanjeev Kapoor, in their outlets, along with coffee or any other drink (Starbucks, 2020). The brand has created relevance in its host country by considering the culture and psychological factors in an emerging market. Research also argued that brand prominence in luxury purchases plays an essential role in emerging markets (Pino, Amatulli, Peluso, Natarajan, & Guido, 2019).

Along with the recommendations, word-of-mouth and reviews about the brand positively affect consumers' perceived usefulness (Sheth, 2011; Ventre & Kolbe, 2020). Along with websites, psychological and cultural aspects are essential for any brand to consider while framing strategies to understand and attract consumers online. Therefore, digital marketing and integrated marketing communication are the success pillars for brands in emerging markets. Thus, this chapter will discuss the role of digital marketing along with integrated marketing communication, using a new framework of marketing in emerging markets. We further explain in detail the process of branding in emerging marketing with digital marketing tools.

## Digital Marketing Framework for Brands in Emerging Markets

The digital marketing framework for brands in emerging markets, which many global brands are adopting, encompasses digital marketing and integrated marketing communication tools. It has four phases, Collaborate, Positioning, Personalisation, and Purchase, which are further explained in this section.

## Collaborate

Brands extensively use digital marketing for connecting with stakeholders such as allied forms, consumers, and society. When a global firm enters an emerging market, a collaborative approach is followed through joint ventures, strategic alliances, exporting, and franchising (Paul, 2019). For Example, Mahindra and Ford (a US-based automobile company) have agreed to a joint venture in India for long-term economic growth (Ford, 2020). Firms acknowledged that a collaborative relationship with the stakeholders enables a brand to develop (Dumont & Ots, 2020). For example, the Government of Rwanda worked with Silicon Valley robotic firms to be the first to deliver blood to local areas with drones (EY, 2020). The communication channels used by the brands to join are more through online mediums rather than offline. This communication has created enormous opportunities for brands to reach global consumers, as brands take initiatives to understand and interact with consumers to satisfy their needs and desires.

Similarly, it becomes necessary for consumers to understand various brands' perspectives and help them co-create strategies. The standpoint of a brand comprises the firm, consumers, and society (Swaminathan, Sorescu, Steenkamp, O'Guinn, & Schmitt, 2020). In this phase, their perspectives are essential and will be explained in detail in the following sections.

## Firm Perspective

Strategic and financial approaches are the macro-level and structural development that form the brand's institutional framework. The guidelines explain the theories related to brands and the role of urbanisation, globalisation, and digitalisation in emerging countries. The views are strategic and financial. The strategic approach focuses on the structural features of the brand. The system includes developing and implementing brand identity, and positioning, targeting, launching, and growing brands, brand portfolio architecture, and brand monitoring across nations. It helps establish a context for the brand with digital marketing

tools and creates a structure to target consumers. The financial approach explains the crucial element for a brand, which is finance. Digital transformation has enabled the emerging economy's domestic market to explore innovative digital potential (Rassool & Dissanayake, 2019). Whenever a brand wants to invest in digital marketing components for more revenue and increased sales, it also measures the return on investment (ROI). Generally, brands measure ROI concerning the brand effect, brand equity, and non-financial outcomes. Non-financial outcomes may include creating awareness, recommendations, and e-WOM. In an emerging market, community-driven marketing strategies emphasise extensively non-financial results.

Further, non-financial consequences are becoming popular because of the increasing role of communities in emerging markets. Studies have stated that emerging markets such as India and China provide many opportunities for global brands to expand due to the increase in economic growth and purchasing power (Paul, 2019). However, international brands also need to understand the consumers, helping them collaborate in successful ventures.

## Consumer Perspective

Initially, the “top-down” approach produces goods and services for consumers based on their product-driven strategies (Alexander, Teller, & Wood, 2020). Later firms adopted the “bottom-up” approach for stakeholders such as consumers, which also plays an essential role in the co-creation of brand uniqueness (Jain, Shroff, Merchant, & Bezbaruah, 2021). If consumers can grasp the essence and differentiate the brand's unique value, this is considered the most significant brand victory. Outstanding value requires the brand to be relevant and meaningful to the right consumers (Keller, 2019). However, this is a challenging task for the brands in an emerging market. Consumers prioritise products or services that can be customised or personalised to fulfil their demand and provide a unique value proposition. If consumers are attracted and convinced, then they purchase the product. For example, in India, the luxury hotel chain The Taj has created advertising campaigns that communicate

the “Feeling of Tajness” embedded with the culture, values, and hospitality that provide unique Indian meanings and symbols for tapping the international market (Tajness, 2021).

Moreover, digital marketing has provided an opportunity to enhance products’ value by increasing their distribution globally on an unprecedented scale. For example, Nandos, a prominent South African food chain, launched a new online campaign, Tin for Tjips, using online platforms and their app (Nando’s South Africa, 2021). Consumers’ decision-making takes place considering the economic and psychological approach. The financial process explains that every brand has indulged in the production and manufacturing of multiple products. Therefore, organisations have details about the quality, quantity, and manufacturing process. Sometimes, consumers lack this detailed information about that exact product. The product leads to the creation of asymmetry of communication between the consumers and the brand. When consumers are introduced to a new brand for the first time in an emerging market, they must represent a positive image or identity. Also, there is heterogeneity in religion, history, and demography in an emerging market, which leads to differences in culture and traditions that become necessary for the new firms to consider for marketing (Sinha & Sheth, 2018). With the target consumers, digital marketing components are the medium that is used for the brands to communicate. Content marketing, blogging, and video marketing are practical measures explicitly used to share and transfer information about products, prices, ingredients, and directions to ensure a healthy relationship between consumers and brands.

The psychological approach aims at the consumer’s decision to go for a brand and does not always lie in information transfer about a brand. Along with information, processing and intention for purchase of a product depend upon the psychology of consumers. Consumer psychology is displayed in the whole process of the consumer buying journey. Consumers gather brand knowledge (mental representation of awareness) to understand, which sometimes leads to recognition or recall based on the brand image built on unique features or emotional associations. Other psychological models, such as brand trust (Rajavi, Kushwaha, & Steenkamp, 2019) and emotional brand attachment (Thomson, MacInnis, & Whan Park, 2005), significantly affect digital marketing.

Digital marketing enhances these psychological constructs in consumers through dynamic and inspirational marketing and leads marketing on various online platforms to build connections with consumers.

## Society Perspective

Society forms an important external factor that every brand needs to consider while deciding on marketing strategies. Brands launch a new product in a specific geographic area after acquiring knowledge about a place's culture, region, and traditions. Moreover, this is why it is observed that advertisements for the same brand are different in various areas because of the demography and culture associated with it. For example, Zara, a Spanish fashion retail chain, has aligned their fashion category with India's festivals, such as Happy Holi Collections, to create relevance and meaning in the market (Happy Holi-Collection-Woman | ZARA India, 2021). The societal perspective comprises sociological and cultural approaches. The sociological approach states that brands ensure that they communicate the right message when brands connect with the consumers. There is a meaning transfer that takes place in this process. Meaning transfer starts when the brand is perceived, produced, and delivered through the post-purchase stage (Swaminathan et al., 2020). To ensure that the proper meaning and value are transferred, it is essential for brands first to understand the consumer consciousness, regional rituals and traditions, and moral obligations of the society. Consumers perceive brands based on specific symbolic meanings. Brand communities in emerging market countries ensure the precise transfer of purposes. For instance, consumers form relationships with brands by imagining human characteristics, stereotyping brands as social entities (Wijnands & Gill, 2020). Referring to brands as social entities means they are evaluated based on the social dimension of personality and gender. One such example is Royal Enfield, which is considered a man's motorcycle.

Successful brands have aligned their marketing strategies with the underlying cultural philosophy in the consumption pattern. Brands curate data for inferences and product ideation from the online consumption pattern. Further, brands promote products and services in

emerging markets for quick and easy acceptability in their culture. Standardisation of messages and building a picture for brands becomes tough in a different culture. Brands adopt this diverse culture and lack standardisation in their products and services. Globalisation's implications gave rise to the emergence of digitalisation, where brands can balance standardisation in diverse cultures by continually monitoring target consumers' digital footprints. Consumers trust brands related to the customs, associations, and heritage of that culture, lifestyle, and economic and cultural conditions.

## Positioning

Digitalisation started in the twentieth century, and since then consumers, organisations, and various actors existing in the market have gone digital. Brands use digital platforms in an emerging market such as social media to position their products and services based on functional, symbolic, and experiential attributes among heterogeneous consumers to select their target audience. With digitalisation, experiential characteristics are more focused as they evoke the consumers' convergent and divergent cognitive processes (Ihtiyar, Barut, & Ihtiyar, 2019). This section will discuss digital marketing in branding to the emerging market for positioning products and services through various online channels.

The internet allows individuals to create online networks to exchange information and conversations (Hoffman & Novak, 2017). These interactions and information exchanges can be personal and also include brands and product recommendations and feedback. WhatsApp, YouTube, Facebook, Messenger, and Instagram accounted for more than 80% of South Africa's usage of social media platforms in 2020 (Statista, 2021). However, studies have stated that the increase in these online platforms' use subsequently enables users/consumers to construct brand meaning and significance (Fournier & Avery, 2011). The social media platforms create unique experiences for consumers in the pre-purchase, during purchase, and post-purchase phases. Consumers have adopted a circular bi-directional loop of purchase and consumption in the digital age where information is shared in the online space, empowering other

consumers with product/brand information (Vieira, de Almeida, Agnihotri, da Silva, & Arunachalam, 2019). Building a brand in this dynamic marketing phenomenon is a very different format from the traditional one. Brands derive insights and generate new ideas for their products and services from the consumer. This process is known as the “bottom-up” approach (Jain et al., 2021).

Using the internet is ubiquitous, and technology is the most significant influencer in the twentieth century for consumers’ changing preferences (Veloutsou & Guzman, 2017). In the presence of the internet and hyper-connectivity, it becomes vital to monitor brand identity and representation across channels on a broad range of technical devices as consumers access many devices (Swaminathan et al., 2020). Online platforms generate awareness, share information, cultivate relationships with stakeholders, and build a reputation (Mingione & Abratt, 2020). Consumers with shared interests and common understanding gather and form a community on the online platforms. Moreover, these communities share experiences and exchange information about social networking sites, creating brand communities. A brand community is defined “as a specialised, non-geographically bound community and based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand” (Muñiz & O’Guinn, 2001, p. 412). The communities help connect with the members by developing active interactions and engagements. Brands listen to the community members, nurture adaptive identity using online feedback and insights, and learn about customers’ perceptions to build brand strategy. This adaptability is through digitalisation, which forms the core to understanding the consumer’s needs. Especially in emerging markets, communities play a vital role because communities’ recommendations, updates, and reviews about national and international firms increase awareness and profit. For example, African Business communities provide updates and information worldwide about the African people’s engagement and involvement, Government, and international firms (Communities, 2021). Communities actively interact and engage their members over various social media platforms, and generate new ideas. Brands position their products and services based on the latest ideas drawn from a brand’s collaborators in an emerging market. To set the final products or services in the market through the “bottom-up



approach”, personalisation is considered one of the most demanding strategies in an emerging market like Asia (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2016), which requires digital intervention.

## Personalisation

Consumers are becoming tech-savvy and they want to explore the world within their palm, providing them convenience and saving time and effort (Bhattacharjee & Adhikari, 2018). To leverage this opportunity, brands are investing extensively in digital marketing tools and techniques. This section introduces digital marketing and explains its role and benefits for branding in an emerging market.

The internet has altered our everyday life. It has created numerous possibilities for market actors, such as consumers and producers, through digitalisation. The digital approach has bridged the distance and brought the actors of the markets closer for better understanding and prediction. Digitalisation is considered a crucial tool for every business for its easy accessibility and global reach. For global reach, emerging markets provide enormous opportunities because of their economic infrastructure and rapid technological adoption. Digital marketing can be defined “as activities, institutions, and processes facilitated by digital technologies for creating, communicating and delivering value for customers and other stakeholders” (Kannan & Li, 2017, p. 34). American Marketing Association has referred to digital marketing as “an adaptive and iterative, technology-enabled process by which firms collaborate with customers and partners to create, communicate, deliver, and sustain value for all stakeholders” (American Marketing Association, 2021). In simple terms, digital marketing is an adaptive process that is technology-enabled to create, communicate, and deliver values with consistency to retain the existing stakeholders, especially consumers, and reach new stakeholders within a short time. It is adaptive and communicates value to all stakeholders, especially consumers, meaning that this is a bilateral process where value is co-created between consumers and organisations. Value is created for consumers to develop awareness about new products, new brands, new information, services, or markets. This value creates brand awareness and new knowledge in an emerging market.

## Purchase

Purchase is no longer considered the last consumer buying process, especially in emerging markets. Brands are redefining their strategies for providing consumers with experiences that are beyond transactions. Grönroos (1997) mentions that building a relational perspective is more important than offering goods and services. Brands need to encompass strategies that satisfy consumers by providing long-term values and connecting them emotionally. For example, Procter & Gamble promotes not a brand or product but a feeling, emotion, and value through its advertisements, which creates a connection with the consumers (Procter & Gamble, 2021). When marketers are successful in delivering value to consumers, consumers enter into a circular loop. Branding in an emerging market is an iterative process that needs to be changed as per the consumer's needs. At this juncture, marketers derive real-time insights from consumers through feedback and reviews. Based on the insights, marketers vary their positioning strategies for branding and this helps them to gain a competitive advantage.

## Marketer's Benefit

Further, digital marketing is also designed for the organisation regarding the four benefits of expanding global reach and improved targeting. First, the internet has enabled fast connectivity and the right reachability, saving time and cost. A transaction can be carried out quickly with any target consumers worldwide, thus creating new consumer platforms. As stated earlier, digital marketing supports expanding the consumer's global reach for the business units. Second, there is low-cost entry and quick adaptability, as there is no cost or fees incurred for its implementation. Any startup can be established through a website involving negligible cost with minimum finance, providing many brands opportunities to enter with their ideas and creativity. Digital marketing encourages new ideas and creativity, quickly adapts its institutional structure in this fast environment, and provides the maximum benefit to consumers and the business. Third, there is measurable ROI, since every business procedure

is an affiliate to the internet and technologies, accounts are easily maintained, and the exact ROI is also calculated. The technology helps the organisation create transparency in transactions and retains the employees' trust, morale, and loyalty. Fourth, relationship building is key. Traditionally, product-driven marketing strategies were developed. However, with time, the organisation realised the need of its stakeholders, especially consumers. Therefore, product-driven strategies were reframed into consumer-driven strategies to ensure more profit. Moreover, digital marketing tools can boost sales and gains, as well as expand the consumer base. The insights from digital marketing also communicate new value propositions with the brand and consumers and develop long-term relationships, which acts as the differentiating factor.

### **Consumer's Benefit**

Digital marketing significantly influences communication methods about a brand and consumers' attitudes towards them. The five main advantages of digital marketing for consumers are explained in detail (Bala & Varma, 2018). First, there is no longer a time limit: the internet has increased the usage time and engagement time for every consumer as there is no time and cost involved. With digital marketing, consumers of emerging markets are curious and engage with the company's various events. This engagement allows consumers to assemble more relevant information about a brand through websites and aids them in the decision-making process. Second, know more and get more: through various websites, consumers have the opportunity to gather information about a product, compare it with other brands, and make a rational purchase decision. Digital marketing enables consumers to access new information about products or services based on reviews and searches anytime. This information has changed the shopping experience. Third, helping wise and easy purchase: brands are trying to endorse their products or services using digital marketing, providing consumers an avenue to compare products by different vendors/suppliers in terms of price and time. To get information, consumers do not have to visit retail outlets and spend time. This information enables quick purchase, as data is available

within seconds. Fourth, making sharing easy: digital marketing bestows consumers the liberty to share their experiences, reviews, and feedback about brands online. Channels such as social media, blogging, or content marketing highlight the consumers' feedback and experience, making it easy for brands to know about their target consumers and making the purchase easy. Fifth, attractive pricing: one of the most significant advantages of the internet is that prices of products/services are available on the brands' websites, making it easy for consumers to decide. In addition, social media, mobile marketing, and online advertising also display the latest discounts and promotional offers made by the brands. These offerings attract more consumers as they are aware and well-informed, resulting in more sales. Therefore, digital marketing provides clear communication to its consumers to ensure proper decision-making.

Digital marketing is a boon for all types of business because of its comprehensive and versatile nature. Since digital marketing is broad and continually adapting to the dynamic marketing phenomena, an organisation needs to learn which particular feature is suitable and aligns with its objective. As the infrastructure is still developing, organisations can utilise these strategies as a foundation and make the first step to being recognised in the market through digital marketing. In this vein, the structure of digital marketing is briefly summarised below.

## Structure of Digital Marketing

### Inbound and Outbound Marketing

Digital marketing is an umbrella term, and its scope is far-reaching. Generally, digital marketing consists of two components: inbound marketing and outbound marketing.

Inbound marketing is concerned with creating content stored in the memory for a longer duration, such as content marketing, blogging, and social media marketing. At the same time, outbound marketing focuses on the increase in conversion rate by integrating traditional tools with digital spaces such as print ads, television ads, and newsletters (Bleoju, Capatina, Rancati, & Lesca, 2016, p. 5527). Further, the author explains

that since outbound marketing is myopic, maintaining long-term relationships with the consumers becomes difficult. However, Jain et al. (2021) have mentioned the bottom-up approach. It has become necessary for brands to create brand value and engagement with the consumers in an emerging market. Inbound marketing techniques enable firms and brands to co-create value with potential consumers (Bleoju et al., 2016). Therefore, we will discuss inbound marketing techniques in detail and help to brand in an emerging market.

Inbound marketing techniques include the following:

- Website Marketing
- Social Media Marketing
- Video Marketing
- Mobile Marketing
- Blogging and Content Marketing

The website: One of the first unconscious consumer behaviours, when introduced to a new product or brand, is to gather information. With the rise of the internet, information is primarily collected from online sources such as direct brand websites or general search engines such as Google. Consumers, especially in emerging economies, rely on the internet for information and consider it an authentic source of information. As not all products or brands have independent websites, affiliate marketing websites such as Amazon, eBay, or Alibaba serve as a connector between brands and consumers and offer opportunities for direct sales. The process of online information hunting is aided by Search Engine Marketing, which comprises search engine optimisation, Pay-Per-Click, and Google AdWords. These tools under search engine marketing create brand awareness among consumers. Consequently, the internet has supported expanding the consumer to reach digitally and globally.

Social Media Marketing (SMM): The application of social media such as Facebook and Instagram has augmented seamless digital interface availability in emerging markets. Millennials use it, and Gen X and Gen Y use social media extensively as well. Therefore, brands can use this medium to increase consumer loyalty by connecting with diverse consumers, disseminating their message and values (Kaplan & Haenlein,

2010). For example, Airbnb has introduced online live experiences of the famous Brazil Carnival through extensive social media platforms to entice people to travel and use their house-sharing service (Online Experiences, 2021).

Video marketing: When a consumer sees a new product or service on the website or social media, he/she intends to play a video that can demonstrate its benefits or usage for clear understanding. Video marketing plays a crucial role in creating awareness of new products. It provides the correct visual information to the target consumers. The trend in video marketing is livestreaming adopted by Facebook, YouTube, and Google. Therefore, new brands can reach out to new consumers. The source is more important in visual online advertisements than the content.

Mobile marketing: One of the traditional yet popular ways for brands to reach consumers is through mobile features such as text messaging, multimedia messaging, and push notification. For example, in emerging markets such as India, with the increase in smartphone users' growth to 696.07 million (Statista, 2020a), mobile marketing is flourishing.

Blogging and content marketing: When there are seamless digital interfaces and information about global trends, blogging and content marketing add authenticity and value. Apart from buying a product, knowing its features, background, and multiple uses is equally essential. Brands communicate about the details of products in the form of content. Good content provides the necessary information the consumer is seeking and develops trust based on reality. Social campaigns related to sustainability or CSR engage in content marketing to build a relationship with the target consumers. Some examples are The Adventure Blog, Pinch Of Yum, Cookie & Kate Content marketing, Coke's "Share A Coke" campaign, Microsoft Stories, and McDonald's "Our Food, Your Questions". Content is also created to celebrate occasions that represent the brand's identity in the market. For example, Nubank, the world's largest online bank, made its first Brazilian March edition magazine by displaying a pregnant woman as a celebration of Women's Day (Mari, 2021). After understanding the advantages of digital marketing, it is imperative to know how digital marketing aligns with Branding and Integrated Marketing communication, discussed in the subsequent section.

## **Digital Marketing and Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for Brand Building**

For a brand to achieve a competitive advantage in the dynamic marketing phenomena, IMC aligned with digital marketing is no longer just an option but a necessity. Brands and consumers are a separate entity that exists in the market. Both entities indulge in exchanging information and transaction so that a circular flow of money in the economy and benefit is distributed equally. A gap needs to be filled, connecting these entities to ensure the completion of circular flow. Brands require promotion, direct selling, advertising, or social media as a way to reach consumers. This process will connect them with the right consumers and create purchase intention based on content relevance and meaning. In simple terms, these tools will increase awareness about a brand and eventually accelerate sales in the firm. For appropriate promotional strategies, communication plays a vital role. Communication is a sensitive and crucial aspect as it deals with the brands and consumers simultaneously across various platforms online and offline globally. Therefore, Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) can be defined as “an audience-driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels, and results of brand communication programs” (Kliatchko, 2005, p. 19). As consumers are highly dependent on digital gadgets, especially phones, it becomes effortless for brands to communicate online. Therefore, the concept of digitally integrated marketing communication is developed. Brands can quickly achieve well-coordinated long-term competition. For example, McDonald’s in the Middle East has renewed its purpose and marketing strategy to target consumers by implementing their 3Ds model of Digital, Delivery, and Drive-thru (Campaignme, 2021). As IMC tools enhance the curation of the right information to serve consumers’ required demands digitally, brands can flourish in an emerging market. This process can prove to be a great success when a brand enters an emerging market.

The emerging market provides opportunities for brands to communicate with target consumers because this market is not rigid. There is a high level of adoption and acceptance of any brand’s new product in these markets. In an emerging market, consumers need information

about new brands and their products or services. The best medium to provide what is required by the consumers is through digital marketing components. For example, in India, 696 million people are internet users (Statista, 2021b), and they access the internet through mobile phones. In this case, mobile marketing or social media marketing can be implemented by brands to create awareness and promote their products and services through advertisements. Brazilian consumers are attracted to online videos, and thus video marketing or social marketing is well-suited for entry into the Brazilian market (Think with Google, 2021). Digital channels are used to develop marketing communication about a brand. Therefore, digital marketing tools aligned with IMC have been considered a successful measure to influence, interact with, and engage consumers with brands in emerging markets (Anabila, 2019). Besides, brands aligning with inbound marketing techniques also provide value to the consumers to retain long-term relationships through unique purchase experiences.

## Purchase

Digital marketing is related to branding; similarly, branding builds a close relationship with its consumers, involving the dynamic process of value co-creation. Consumers prefer to buy branded products because there is an exchange of emotional feelings along with cognition. To construct this intimate relationship with the target consumers, brands need to understand consumers and serve a platter of real choices and preferences. Advertising provided a medium to connect consumers with the brands. Advertising offers a unique and desirable brand perception through an offline and online medium (Boyd, Kannan, & Slotegraaf, 2019). Conventionally, offline advertisements create appealing content to generate purchase intention. Since the internet's onset, online advertisements compete with the offline mediums as it is also a valuable tool to reach target consumers. Online mediums in advertising and branding provide an opportunity to be ubiquitous, communal, and interactive to engage the consumer to foster a warm and cordial brand image (Boyd et al., 2019). Digital marketing provides all the requisite tools and



measures for the brands to understand, interact with, and predict the wants of the target consumers digitally in the emerging markets.

Social media is widely accepted by everyone, irrespective of demographics. Self-presentation is the means through which brands create their presence in the community or the crowd. Moreover, the advent of Web 3.0 technologies, where organisations depend on value-driven strategies, boosts digital marketing growth in any brand's emerging markets. It is not always that brands keep on reaching their consumers, but also that consumers connect and spread awareness about the brand. Consumers introduce a new brand in their community through online social networking sites (oSNSs) (Ozansoy Çadırcı & Sağkaya Güngör, 2016). To create an impression on the oSNSs, consumers upload photographs as selfies, share pictures, make videos, and comment. Selfies are cues that enhance personal branding and can also incorporate product promotion. Therefore, selfies are also considered as an effective medium for branding through oSNSs (Ozansoy Çadırcı & Sağkaya Güngör, 2016).

Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn have introduced innovative and engaging ways to connect with consumers and brands through selfies, videos, and pictures (Marketandmarkets, 2019). These are the most-used components of social media marketing in an emerging market. Various brands adopt social media marketing to build a strong brand image among consumers by offering opportunities. Consequently, this creates strong brand loyalty. Moreover, using social media, the brand creates an identity in the virtual space, also known as personal branding. Personal branding refers "to the process individuals use to develop and market themselves to others" (Jacobson, 2020). Social media curates the relevant information about the brand and presents it to the target consumers to create awareness and build a positive brand image. After making the image, brands strive to sustain it with the target consumers through interactions, providing promotional offers and endorsements through emails, campaign involvement, and blogging space.

Along with social media, the internet, from a broader perspective, serves as a robust instrument for increasing brand effect (Batton & Swoboda, 2020). Positive brand effect influences consumers and builds loyalty across nations, especially in emerging markets. The concept of

brand effect is used by the fashion and beauty industry. Consumers incorporate various brands in their daily life that are guided by the motive of creating self-identity and inclusion in the communities, such as “cool girls”, who “get it” on various social media platforms (Findlay, 2019). The consumer’s aspiration to be identified in a social media community forces him/her to go for the brands and create a sense of confidence and belonging. Furthermore, in the case of luxury consumption, in emerging markets, other judgements, shared norms, collectivist values, and conformity play an essential role (Pino et al., 2019), which is transferred through digital spaces. Therefore digital marketing is considered the best form of marketing as it is a valuable tool to interact and connect with consumers. Digital marketing acts as a facilitator for connecting consumers with the business and also consumers to consumers. Sharing reviews, recommendations, and feedback in various digital spaces enables brands to understand consumer sentiments and preferences that enrich their positioning strategies for products and services in an emerging market.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is considered the next step towards digital marketing for brands and consumers. AI makes a significant contribution to digital marketing. It can help improve consumer experiences by curating data through tools such as sentiment analysis, big data analytics, and cloud computing (Marketandmarkets, 2019). For example, experiential marketing has resulted in positive post-purchase behaviour, ensuring customer satisfaction and creating a solid brand image in consumers’ minds (Ihtiyar et al., 2019). Further, brands can convert dissatisfied consumers into loyal consumers by applying AI aligned with digital marketing strategies by reducing the environment’s negative physical and psychological factors (Ihtiyar et al., 2019).

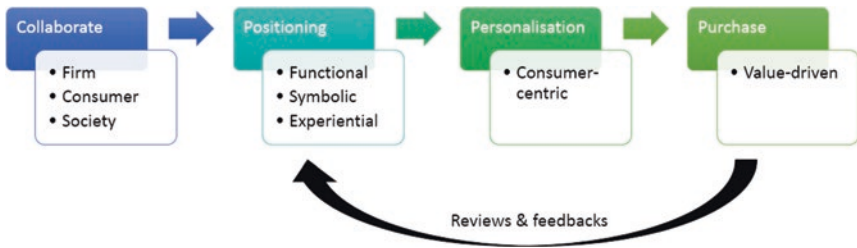
Consequently, brands will have more engaging consumers, and consumers will also be happy with the brands. Regarding the digital era, the scope of integrated marketing communication (IMC) is expanding. From direct selling, it has evolved to online selling through various components of digital tools. For example, Mini and Telsa in the automotive business focus on online selling (Ihtiyar et al., 2019). However, we can reframe it as a process of organisation, planning, and monitoring of marketing components and data digitally and influencing consumer associations and experiences. Digital marketing provides a valuable mix of

marketing communication options to its consumers. A communication option becomes necessary as the local and international advertising competitions encourage innovations within this framework. Advertising strengthens client relationships, improves strategic marketing, attracts potential customers, and increases brand awareness (Zwerin, Clarke, & Clarke, 2019). Brands consistently work to maintain specific touchpoints with their target consumers (Belch & Belch, 2017). Moreover, IMC helps in keeping the consistency of the brand through various mediums and measures. As far as digitalisation is concerned, we can align the IMC tools with digital marketing; both serve as the pillar of any brand's success in the emerging market.

## Implications

Digital marketing and integrated marketing communication are the solid pillars for brands to enter emerging markets. This chapter's contribution is to discuss and understand the role of digital marketing in IMC and branding in emerging markets based on the framework. Furthermore, there are four crucial implications: collaboration, positioning, personalisation, and purchase. First, in partnership, stakeholders play a pivotal role in the expansion of any business. As there is a lack of infrastructure and a shortage of resources (Sheth, 2011), global brands collaborate with local firms to enter these markets. Also, to minimise the investment risk, digital marketing tools and techniques have been incorporated in their marketing strategies to ensure financial safety and business expansion. Second, in positioning, the emerging market is characterised by market heterogeneity (Sheth, 2011). With marketing 4.0, apart from functional and symbolic, experiential attributes are demanded to provide unique value to the consumers.

Emerging market consumers have high purchasing power and desire to own products and services that provide exceptional value. Therefore, marketers need to focus on developing products and services that create new experiences for the consumers. Third, in personalisation, the “bottom-up” approach (Jain et al., 2021) emphasises consumer-driven marketing strategies that brands need to adapt to achieve a competitive



**Fig. 13.1** Digital marketing framework for brands in emerging markets. Source: Authors



**Fig. 13.2** Structure of digital marketing. Source: Adapted from Bleoju et al., 2016

advantage in an emerging market. The framework in Fig. 13.1 states that “personalisation” is the new approach of branding, incorporating digital marketing techniques and integrated marketing communication for an effective and positive customer purchase experience. Finally, for purchase, the framework in Fig. 13.2 depicts that investment takes place in various forms, such as positive word-of-mouth, loyalty, building long-term relationships, and satisfaction. Also, purchase and positioning are bi-directional and iterative. Reviews and recommendations are insights that brands curate and add into their positioning strategies to meet the consumers’ demands and preferences in an emerging market.

However, managers will understand that it is necessary to implement strategies aligned with digital marketing and integrated marketing communication for branding their products and services in emerging markets. This chapter explains emergent digital marketing trends, consumers’ attitudes towards the change, and branding elements in the digital era using the framework for academicians and practitioners. The chapter will also benefit society in understanding the new digital focus of brands in building relationships and accepting the recent evolution and unique

identity of brands, especially in emerging markets. Finally, effective digital marketing approaches would be used by companies for developing brands in emerging markets through collaboration, positioning, and personalisation, leading to the final purchase.

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