

The role of digital & social media marketing in present global crisis (A critical review on the UK online fashion retailers' performance during COVID)

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ABSTRACT: During this COVID 19 crisis, the individual absence of awareness, information, and preparedness would put individuals and medical care staff at hazard. During the COVID situation, the media have played a very important role among the individual either it is about providing information regarding the world or for entertaining purposes or the education purpose. The challenge is how to pass the information on momentum sickness insights and its avoidance to everybody at a rate identical to or better than the spreading plague. This report tries to find out what role did social media play in creating awareness about the latest trends of fashion and how they maintained the well-being of customers by introducing e-commerce shopping. This report also reveals how social media marketing strengthens customer relationships with retailers. Also, it discusses the various ways in which the retailers of the UK in the online fashion industry strengthened their business. Notwithstanding, whenever utilized shrewdly and wisely, online media fills in as a useful asset for changing individuals' conduct and to advance the prosperity of individual and general wellbeing.

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, Social Media,

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms are one of the most demanding digital platforms right now in the global pandemic situation. It has become a medium of education and marketing for many people. People all over the world can communicate with each other from any part of the world. Social media helps people remain connected and people also get information about events and phenomena happening around the world. Information on the latest research and development, current trends, and technologies are easily obtained through social media platforms these days. It is widely used as the root of any information in the world. It provides trouble-free access to the internet with just one click. The usage of the digital platform already saw an increase in the year 2020. The number of users has increased from 2.48 billion to 2.79 billion due to the global pandemic crisis. As the recent pandemic situation has hit globally, people could not move out of houses and remained in house arrest. The United Kingdom was the second with a 12.3% rise in death due to the COVID-19 spread. One of the examples will be the crest in the search result for information about the coronavirus (Williamson, 2020). The awareness on how to stop the spread of the virus could be spread through social media platforms like Youtube, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and they have certainly played a vital role in this epidemic situation. This platform has also helped in connecting people from all over the world. In this situation, people cannot go out and meet their family members, friends due to isolation. Social media platforms have helped to stay connected even not being physically present.

Many applications were developed in support of getting rid of stress or boredom or anxiety (Lin and Kishore, 2021). The epidemic has also caused a downfall in the world income. In this situation, many individuals have come up with ideas of utilizing the platforms as marketing channels and grew their business with less investment. The world has faced such an epidemic situation a century ago and then the whole idea of digitalization was just in papers (Rani and Dhir, 2020). Even if we think about 20 years ago, the social platform was not even born. The whole idea of socialization using digital platforms was given more importance in this COVID-19 situation. In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the outbreak of the Coronavirus. The Epidemic not only affected health but also disrupted the normal lifestyle. The education system was affected by of sudden closure of universities and schools. In a survey, it was found that 78% of students started using social media for their education. The onset of the coronavirus has also affected the effectiveness of retail sales online using the social media platform in the United Kingdom. It is estimated to be near a hundred and two billion euros in 2020. A data published in 2021 shows the demanded retail items were fashion and household necessities Many European countries like Germany, France, and England have had magnificent records on E-commerce which was projected

to be exceeding 70 billion euros by the end of 2020. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook have helped small retailers to start a business (Hantrais et al., 2020). In March 2020 consumers started purchasing online goods. In a survey, it was shown that from 2019 to March 2020 the retail sales fell sharply, but amid the COVID-19 outbreak, it started gaining high demands for online shopping. Comparing the data, there was a fall of 34.8 percent, but there was a 10 percent rise from March 2020 (Poritska, Kravets, and Tymovchak-Maksymets, 2020). Therefore, social media have played a vital role in each one during the pandemic global crisis. Fashion retailing is one of the segments of Europe that has been hit hard by the pandemic situation. Shoppers had curbed unnecessary shopping and whatever they needed was mostly availed through e-commerce sellers. Hence, even during the situation of crisis, the online retailers of fashion in the UK performed quite efficiently. Zalando, a company in Berlin said that their sales in July 2020 went up by 34% as the shoppers have resorted to digital techniques for shopping. Boohoo, an online shopping company said that had seen 45% growth in sales during the pandemic situation in comparison to previous times (Bain, 2021). Many other online fashion retailers in the UK have been doing great business even in the tough times of Covid-19.

Aim and Objective: In the 20th century, the world is digitizing with new technology and it is a need to stay up to date. This research report aims to find out the impact that has been made on the business growth of the fashion retailers in the UK and their performance during the prevalence of the pandemic situation of Covid-19.

Objective 1: To find out how can the various platforms of social media spread awareness about the trends of online fashion and its advantages during the pandemic situation- This can build trust between the seller and the consumer. It also enhances the interest of an individual in social media platforms to polish their talents and learn to multitask. The education system has become too competitive. It is not easy to find spare time for other activities.

Objective 2: To encourage consumers of the UK to use various social media platforms for shopping purposes- The usage of such platforms should be brought under consideration and be used in a variety of fields like marketing, education, environmental cause. These platforms create a wide opportunity to even connect with different cultures, people, and countries. It has also created a demand for Ecommerce. Industry.

Objective 3: To review the performance of the online retailers of fashion in the UK during the prevalence of the pandemic- It will help the consumers understand the growing popularity of these fashion retailers which would make them rely more on these retailers and hence would increase their sale consistently.

Objective 4: To analyze the impact of social media in influencing customer relationships- This would lead to an increase in the growth of the business.

Industry Reports: Since March 2020, the world has been bolted inside because of the progressing COVID-19 pandemic. During the lockdown in COVID 19 situation, a greater number of individuals have changed to web-based media sites for expanding utilization and other applications to breathe easily (Müller, 2019). It is not, at this point, a concealed certainty that the use of web-based media sites, like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc. have superfluously flooded higher in numbers. Proactive tasks, for example, running, strolling, running, and so forth have now been substituted by web-based media exercises, for example, virtual classes, ceaseless newsfeed perusing, and video visits.

The use of social media as a business is one of the efficient ideas that started with the crisis in the epidemic situation. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook have given space to new startup businesses.

A portion of the advantages of web-based media advertising,

- Developing brand awareness: - Social media showcasing makes it easy to get the news about items and missions.
- Expanding traffic: Using online media to connect it to the site will build traffic colossally.
- Advancing items and administrations: This is eventually why individuals need to put resources into showcasing

As per e-Marketer, Facebook and Instagram have seen a 70% rise in the usage of the entire features of its applications in the long stretch of March to June (Zuhdi et al., 2019). Individuals are going to these applications to keep themselves engaged and associated with education while investing more time and energy at home with family members. A huge number of advertisers are pulling back expenditure in all zones, which includes online media, Hence commitment, and going to strategies like email and social media to keep on building a business and draw in clients Individuals are going to various channels for various substances. For example, TikTok and Snapchat have been wellsprings of fun, engaging interruptions during this time. Snapchat saw a 47% increment in utilization from Android telephones to iPhones (Android vs. iPhone Users: The Difference between Behavior,

2021). In the states of the United Kingdom, attire and family products are the most famous retail things buyers bought through the web in 2020. Information distributed by the Office for National Statistics (UK) demonstrated that other recreation exercises and administrations, for example, booking occasion facilities, travel plans, and occasion tickets were different zones customers relied upon the web to purchase (UK: social media usage 2019 | Statista, 2021).

The greater part of the world currently utilizes online media 4.57 billion individuals around the planet presently utilize the web, of those clients, 346 million new clients have come online inside the most recent year. 5.15 billion Novel versatile clients (UK: social media usage 2019 | Statista, 2021).

A 2020 Children and guardians: media use and perspectives report distributed by Ofcom (UK) are intriguing if your business is associated with advertising to kids or youth markets to comprehend future utilization of online media among grown-ups. Quite, 21% of long-term olds have a web-based media profile, quickly expanding to 71% of long-term olds. Nonetheless, YouTube is exceptionally mainstream with the two business sectors, with more than 74% of long-term olds utilizing this stage. It was found that the usage of social media during the pandemic situation rose magnificently during the pandemic of 2020 where the public was forced to stay at their homes. Going to the library or doing physical research was not possible. This platform has helped the users to stay connected and make multiple research possible. It is seen that in the year 2004 the number of users was just 500 million whereas in 2020 an increase of over 2,77 billion users including all age groups and new users to the platform (Broekhuizen et al., 2021). There are points of interest among the users for the usage or proneness of usage of social media.

1. Instructive cycle- using on the web interpersonal organizations in the informative cycle has been uplifted by a few instructive creative scientists, who have accentuated the correct uses of advances. The ascending of person-to-person communication destinations and an overall interest in other education fields have stood out to the best utilization of social media as instruments to create distance training.

2. Worldwide network- this allows interacting with others and offering relative information through online media. The correspondence brings everyone together, and it's effectively available.

3. Web-based advertising- Assembling a relationship with the clients is bound to utilize the administrations. It can be criticized immediately.

4. Data spreads quickly- Exceptionally important things, like, relevant news occasions, missing individuals, weather forecast, and cover the planet in a second.

5. Sharing anything with others- Rather than convincing, a distributing business firm, social media permits the creative young generation to fulfill 1,000,000 individuals and saves imaginative demand. Some of the drawbacks of using social media are as follows-

1. Security issues- Sharing your online area or falling into difficulty at work due to sharing something unnecessary or sharing a lot with general society can cause few issues that are difficult and can't be fixed.

2. It changes the way of life propensities, and it is a rest disturbance- Since utilizing an informal community is done on certain electronic devices like smartphones and personal computers, it can now and again propel a humongous amount of plunking down in one place for a long time. Staring into the light from a laptop or smartphone screen around evening time can adversely influence your capacity to get an appropriate night's rest.

3. Needs enthusiastic association- The nature of a discussion when using social media is wasting time because it can't detect the feeling or interest of the other individual. It makes users unsure of thinking about whether they mean what they say.

4. Lessens Family Intimacy- WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, etc. separates individuals from their families more than what is suspect. At the point when the family needs personal time and gets together by watching a film or having dinner together, most kids or members are on their laptops or smartphones instead of being with the family. Online media is quite possibly the most expensive advanced advertising technique used to innovate content and increment business permeability. By contributing time for hours of the week, more than 91% of marketers asserted that their social promoting endeavors enormously grew the openness (Fraccastoro, Gabrielsson, and Chetty, 2021). The usage of social media in training completes understudies with the capacity to get more relevant

data, to interacting with learning gatherings, and other informative frameworks that make schooling best. Interpersonal business firms' instruments manage the cost of understudies and foundations with numerous chances to improve learning techniques. The capacity to make a local area of individuals who are faithful to the brand and to cultivate this relationship is the thing that makes interpersonal organizations particularly ideal spots for current organizations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID has made industry disturbance, school terminations, and social separation the new standard. The strain between everybody's natural requirement for the association and fundamental division working out across the world. As social distancing makes individuals progressively segregated from each other, the idea of association takes on new significance, and the part of online media turns out to be considerably more basic. Nowadays, web-based media fill in as a center for discussions around the current worldwide emergency. Individuals keep on going to online media to discuss their encounters, post significant data, and offer feel-great stories during this exceptional time. Coronavirus occasion is proclaimed as a worldwide pandemic in 2020 by the World Health Organisation.

Spreading awareness about the adoption of social media and e-commerce retailers for purchasing products:

In such an emergency, the vast majority of individuals everywhere on the world track the quantity of affirmed and active cases recuperated patients and perished of their nations alongside the equivalent for different nations through online media, computerized web applications, and web access (Project, 2020). However, provincially, the effect of web-based media is a lot more significant as it assumes an urgent part in communicating news inside a fraction of a second or any slip-up that quicken propaganda of COVID. A new report shows that 91% of individuals put stock in web-based media's ability to interface individuals, and 78% of shoppers need brands to utilize web-based media to assist individuals with associating with others. In recent months, the general population has been facilitating conversations inside the Social Media Today people group to study the pandemic and what it has meant for organizations and our field of work (Goel and Gupta, 2020). Through these discussions, individuals had the option to recognize normal web-based media advertising patterns that can help everyone start to get ready for what's to come.

Through the utilization of social media, people consumers can learn about the latest trends of the fashion industry while remaining restricted at home. In this way, the online media or the techniques of social media marketing enabled the users to stay at their homes in house arrest and purchase fashion garments of their choice. This could prevent the gathering of people in public forums and malls. This could further aggravate the spread of the disease even more. Moreover, delivery of purchased products would be delivered by the retailers maintaining all protocols of protection. The deliveries would be no contact deliveries. Hence, it could be said that the retailers of fashion in the UK considered the well-being of consumers in the UK during Covid-19.

Encouraging customers to use online social media platforms: Consumers in the UK can be made aware of the growing popularity of the concepts of digital marketing and how social media marketing can increase their knowledge of certain products. Also, they can be told about how using digital platforms for the purchase of goods can help to prevent social gathering and hence can help in reducing the incidence of Covid cases in parts of the world. The International Telecommunication Union's new report reveals that 53.6% of the world population, or 4.1 billion individuals, utilizes the Internet till the end of 2019 than 560 million Internet clients, India is the world's second-biggest online market universally, positioning it close to China. Of all the web-based media-friendly in India, the most mainstream person-to-person communication locales are YouTube and Facebook (Portz and LaMendola, 2019). For sure, India has the biggest Facebook client base on the planet. WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook Messenger are as of late a couple of the other popular interpersonal interactions local utilized in India. People utilize cell phones an excess these days that which might cause clinical ramifications. In the climate, therefore, individuals are conceived, live, study, work, play, love, and age are social crucial of wellbeing, which are the components that impact a wide assortment of wellbeing results, dangers, and by and large nature of life. Based on these determinants' medical care associations and general wellbeing experts tremendously utilized web-based media for wellbeing direction and any flare-up's avoidance. A few emergency clinics, clinical specialists, and wellbeing offices have opened YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter pages to gain admittance to their patients. Some sites ought to be utilized with precautionary measures by specialists and others as any deception makes ruin among everybody.

To forestall this at some level, numerous medical services associations have web-based media use norms for their primary care physicians and other staff. For instance, the web-based media counsel given by the UK Nursing and Midwifery Council, an enhancement to proficient rules that feature the requirement for fitting utilization of online media and informal communication sites. At certain spots proficient direction is likewise upheld and observed by

nearby hierarchical approaches like, take the example of Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust's web-based media strategy and direction as it expressed that "Don't post, transfer, forward or present a connection on networking mail, garbage mail, kid's shows, jokes or tattle." The utilization of web-based media for any general wellbeing emergency requires total thought and commitment. Despite this negative press, COVID-19 likewise uncovers the positive social job of web-based media and how it has gotten progressively vital to the public spread and conversation of imperative data about the pandemic (Sayyida et al., 2021). Coronavirus additionally uncovers the positive social job of web-based media and how it has gotten progressively fundamental to the public dispersal and conversation of essential data about the pandemic. The force of web-based media stages to offer granularly custom-built and intelligent data has likewise changed the link between residents as shoppers and promoters of the news, considering the swell of participatory utilization of information.

Impact of social media in improving relationships with customers: With the help of the advent of social media into the lives of people, it has been seen that interaction between retailers and customers has increased through comments, posts, newsletters, blogs, and such kinds. When customers are given importance by retailers, they automatically feel prioritized which smoothens the relation between the retailer and customer. The COVID-19 pandemic has an awful exhibit of this, as real news has much of the time circled via online media quite a while before the news got evident on regular media streams. For instance, our fundamental exploration shows that the spread of the infection across Italy got obvious altogether before, via web-based media than in the established press. An approaching financial exchange crash and worldwide monetary emergency were additionally obvious from the notions around moving Twitter points, for example, – #Black Monday and #StockMarketCrash2020 – well before they were accounted for in conventional outlets. A feeling of local area administration has likewise swayed web-based media as clients underlined the significance of #social distancing and #stay home messages as a significant piece of emergency recuperation plans. The entire situation of Covid-19 has posed a great impact on a positive note on the fashion retailers of the UK as they have seen a spurt in their businesses. Even though the shoppers have to handle clothes for knowing really whether how the clothes would fit them or not, they have started adopting online shopping more in this time of pandemic (Sayyida et al., 2021). Some experts predict that the pandemic and several behavioural changes have accelerated the shoppers to buy digitally.

Our past investigations on pig influenza, Ebola, and the Zika Virus show comparative examples in social mindfulness, as humour is utilized to guarantee quick dispersal and simple cognizance of basic messages in manners that conventional definitive wellsprings of data battle to do. Our examination of the 5G and COVID-19 paranoid fear additionally found that web-based media influencers assume a significant part in countering falsehood. Web-based media has additionally assumed a significant part in praising the 'mindful and sharing' of networks across the world (Oven and Hicintuka, 2020). Numerous people and good causes contacted the old and powerless through hashtag crusades, offering to assist with food, medication, and shopping for food. Facebook has built up another element where volunteers can connect with individuals out of luck. In the UK applaud our cares have become a terrific cross country show of appreciation and appreciation to the forefront labourers, yet few understand that it was an activity driven by a person via online media.

After a stamped increase of 7 million clients somewhere in the range of 2016 and 2017, online media take-up in the United Kingdom has eased back down. Notwithstanding this, the quantity of clients keeps on developing every year and is estimated to arrive at almost 51 million by 2025 with a market entrance pace of around 73.5 percent from one side of the country to the other (Oven and Hicintuka, 2020). Online media in the UK is inescapability has acquired itself a spot at the bleeding edge of computerized showcasing, as found in the ascent of influencer and web-based media promoting (Elrhim and Elsayed, 2020). The development of dynamic web-based media clients in the UK is likewise easing back, because of the way that most of the qualified crowds use it. The entrance of web-based media in the UK market saw an ascent of 1% throughout the most recent year, moving from 66% in 2018 to 67% by January 2019. Web-based media is presently an imbued part of regular day-to-day existence in the UK.

Review of the performance of online retailers during covid-19: For a couple of years, the internet deals as a level of all-out retail deals in the UK. As per information from the National Statistics office, web deals as a level of absolute retail deals shot up as the nation went into lockdown in March. It crested in May and has gradually started to fall. Despite the economy starting a lethargic, staged return toward the beginning of June, web deals keep on having a grip over more than one-fourth of the retail deals. In July, web deals represented 28.1% of retail deals, which is right around seven rate purposes of offer more noteworthy than the 2019 pinnacle of 21.5% in November. The final quarter of 2020 showed an increase in retail e-commerce performance owing to Christmas, Black Friday along lockdowns. There were a growth of 39% and 37% in sales during November and December

respectively. The overall growth in online sales is 36% which is the highest in the last 13 years (Gilliland, 2021). The pandemic is required to have a boosting impact on the U.K's. web-based business market by adding 5.3 billion in deals in 2020, carrying the complete market volume to 78.9 billion as per an official statement from retail experiences firm Edge. The first 2020 estimate was for just 73.6 billion in deal extent. The record performance in the online retail sector of fashion in the UK post-pandemic has helped the GDP of the country to rise by 15.5% in the third quarter of 2020 (Record online retail performance helps UK GDP recover by 15.5% in the third quarter from Covid-19 impact, 2021). The recent 2020 deals amount will show the development of 19 percent in 2019 to 66.3 billion. The UK web-based business market's development was more prominent than the US market, some certifying stricter lockdown measures. Moreover, Statista information shows an expansion in UK online orders of 161% in May from the earlier year (Liu et al., 2020). Albeit the measurements show a lethargic diminishing from May online business deals, the numbers are still up by 40% paying little heed to individuals currently having the option to get back to their neighborhood retail locations. web-based shopping in the UK brought about by the pandemic is relied upon to add 5.3 billion to UK internet business deals this year, bringing about an aggregate of 78.9 billion (Kirby-Hawkins, Birkin and Clarke, 2019).

It can be critically acclaimed that since its advent, the online retailers or e-commerce shopping companies are doing great business in the market of the UK and this has posed some extent of the threat to the high street fashion industry as well. With relation to the previous predictions of market positioning, it has been revealed that some of the high-street retailers are at threat of disintermediation from the suppliers while the e-commerce companies will be flourishing greatly (Bonetti, Warnaby, and Quinn, 2018). The growth of online retailers has been sustainable and significant at the time of COVID-19 as it facilitated doorstep delivery at a lockdown period and prevented people from getting infected due to the spread of the virus. The future of online retailers is great in terms of doing business in the market of the UK. The e-commerce business has become highly predominant in the market of the UK in terms of fashion retailing as the retailers have put a lot of effort in creating and improving as well as promoting the online stores. Some of the temporary retailers who could not sell their products online developed temporary solutions for the same. They worked a lot on doing robust social media marketing by putting information about products on their online websites and social media platforms (Koch, Frommeyer, and Schewe, 2020). Among other regimes taken by the retailers of the UK were offering discounts and rendering delivery services. The UK fashion retailers also provided provision for pick-up from the doorstep in case of returns so that customers did not have to move out of their houses.

III. CONCLUSION

The utilization of the web and online media have changed shopper conduct and the manners by which organizations direct their business. The case study was all about the e-commerce business and its growth during the COVID 19 situations. Talking about how social media have affected the lives of individuals during this global pandemic. Social media has influenced us in both good and bad ways making it a great deal during this pandemic. This article unites the aggregate understanding issues identified with advanced and web-based media marketing (Portz and LaMendola, 2019). This examination offers a huge and ideal commitment to the two specialists and experts as difficulties and openings where we feature the constraints inside the ebb and flow research, plot the exploration holes and build up the inquiries and recommendations that can help advance information inside the space of computerized and social marketing. Mainly focusing on how the UK e-commerce is leading its way during the lockdown situation and coping up after the post lockdown.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

As seen that during this global crisis social media have been a big impact either it is about communicating or entertainment purposes or for education purposes. For making it more resourceful and use it for positive reasons, nowadays, due to the lockdown students are unavailable to go to their college so the student is attending classes online with the help of giving a platform they are being able to communicate with teachers. Students are learning new subjects from different social media platforms. Using a social media platform for learning new creative things, learning and being aware of unwanted fake news, and being updated with the global news. As written above, UK e-commerce is trying its best to process and cope up with losses made in 2019. For improving the businesses by supplying the right product to the customer, upselling a customer is not the right discussion to make for such a business. E-commerce can improve by making its product seasonable and keeping the details of the product so that the customers find it easy to know about the products which he or she is going to buy. To add a customer care service number for people to be able to communicate regarding any doubt, by adding this type of detailing may help in sales growth. To further enhance the growth of online fashion retailers in the UK market, they can introduce the system of review and feedback on the social media pages and websites of retailers where the customers can give their feedback. This would help the retailers to improve.

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