"A REVIEW ON THE INSIGHTS OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE (SNS) IN BRANDING OF HOSPITAL"

SHITAL NAIKWADE & NITIN SIPPY

Assistant Professor, Dr. D. Y. Patil University, Department of Business Management, CBD Belapur,

Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT

Now-a-days, Social Networking Sites emerges as new and innovative medium of advertising. In India, Social Networking Sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter etc. are gaining more popularity among the young generation as well as professionals. Healthcare Industry is also looking at them as effective medium to reach out their target audience. It is the place where they get a wide variety of audience, which could be their prospective customers. This review undertakes in-depth study of Hospital Marketing through Social Networking Sites. Numerous studies find out the fact that Social Networking Sites is the place where the Hospitals can tap their Target Group effectively which is in turn helpful to them to building brand, new product launch, understanding the customer's preferences and choices. This review also focuses on how the brands are using social networking sites for getting attention and showing their presence online.

KEYWORDS: Professional Relationships, Social Layer, Social Networking Sites

INTRODUCTION
WHAT IS A SOCIAL NETWORKING?

Social network service usually means an individual-centered service whereas online community services are group-centered. Online social networking has become a fairly common way to keep in touch with friends and family, and it holds equal promise for building business and professional relationships. Online social networks are relationships that develop out of computer-facilitated d discussions about shared ideas or common interests. Online social networking continues to move into the mainstream through personal and professional computer use, with hundreds of millions of hits per month on a variety of sites Frequently used sites among the general public, such as Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Orkut, and Zude, are gaining popularity among businesses.

HISTORY OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Early social networking websites started in the form of generalized online communities such as The WELL (1985), Theglobe.com (1994), Geocities (1994) and Tripod.com (1995). These sites included Classmates.com (1995), focusing on ties with former school mates, & SixDegrees.com (1997), focusing on indirect ties. Between 2002 and 2004, three social networking sites emerged as the most popular form of these sites in the world First there was Friendster in 2002 (which Google tried to acquire in 2003), then MySpace and LinkedIn a year later, and finally, Bebo. By 2005, MySpace, emergent as the biggest of them all, was reportedly getting more page views than Google. In 2005, Facebook opened up to the non US college community, and together with allowing externally-developed add-on applications, and some applications enabled the graphing of a user's own social network. Social networking began to flourish as a

component of business internet strategy at around March 2005 when Yahoo launched Yahoo! 360°. Social networking began to flourish as a component of business internet strategy at around March 2005 when Yahoo launched Yahoo! 360°. Twitter, launched in 2006, has as recently as 2009 eclipsed many other social network services.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS) IN THIS REVIEW WERE

Facebook

Facebook launched Gifts on February 8, 2007, which allows users to send virtual gifts to their friends that appear on the recipient's profile. On May 14, 2007, Facebook launched Marketplace, which lets users post free classified ads. Facebook Ads gives a hospital extraordinary precision in reaching exactly the audiences they want. They are able to target according to any combination of these filters:

- Languages

- Country

- State

- City

- Gender

- Age

- Any Interest Keyword

- Educational Status

- Workplace

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site. Founded in December 2002 and launched in May 2003, it is mainly used for professional networking. LinkedIn provides the advertising solutions as per the advertising budget of a Hospital Direct Ads: - Small to medium advertisers, who are looking for deeply- targeted text ads LinkedIn advertising sales: - Large advertisers who are looking for rich LinkedIn advertising solutions whose budget is more than 25000$

Plus.google.com

Google has described Google+ as a "social layer" that enhances many of its online properties, and that it is not simply a social networking website, but also an authorship tool that associated web-content directly with its owner/author. It is the second-largest social networking site in the world after Facebook.

www.twitter.com

Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as tweets. Senders can restrict delivery to those in their circle of friends or, by default, allow open access. Ever since late 2009, users can follow lists of authors instead of following individual authors. ―Twitter users were writing 5,000 ―tweets‖ per day in 2007, 2.5 million per day in 2009 and now (2010) 50 million tweets per day, an average of 600 tweets per seconds.

HOW THE SNS CAME INTO PICTURE?

It is different from advertising on social media as here brands do not speak, but consumers do. It is all about participating, sharing and creating value for each other. No more of "us" and "them", but it is who we work together to meet our very different needs and objectives. Marketers are hunting for the most authentic data in their bid to catch the huge mass of consumers young. The Indian youth is emerging as a key decision maker and the most targeted segment for political advertising by the campaigning parties. Obama has just created history by exploiting the power of the online revolution. This high in demand and somewhat pampered mass of Indian youth are socializing in great numbers at various social networking sites forming communities, voicing their opinions, showcasing talents, living virtual lives, breaking and building governments. Social networking sites are no longer a place to hang out for only the urban English speaking population of the country.

TYPES OF SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES

Social Networking Websites

Examples: Facebook, Google+, MySpace, and Bebo

This usually involves creating a profile page, adding valuable content or applications, and promoting it to the wider community. Mainstream online advertising opportunities are also available such as creating polls and banner advertising.

Social Media Websites

Examples: Digg, Mixx, Reddit

The marketing approach involves developing relationships and leveraging this through providing interesting or valuable content. When done well there's dual effect like increased traffic to brand's website and incoming links are obtained through bloggers in particular linking to brand's content.

Social Bookmarking Websites

Examples: StumbleUpon, Del.icio.us

This involves participating in communities, promoting valuable and interesting content, and building relationships, ultimately to create a high level of credibility from which you can gain visibility for your content.

Niche Social Networking Websites

Examples: Twitter

New niche social networking websites are being launched all the time, but one which has really taken off is Twitter, a micro-blogging site. To succeed you need to be active and provide valuable content from which brand can hopefully create a list of followers. This visibility can then be leveraged towards brand's blog or website.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology undertaken is Descriptive Research study. The information on the Hospital Marketing through Social Networking Sites is collected by the following stages:-Secondary Data

- Articles published in the Newspapers, magazines and books.

- Inferences, opinions and views of the media people.

- Various websites and the hospital's website.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This report is undertaken with the aim-

- To understand How the social networking site is helping the process of brand building online

- To analyze an impact of SNS on the consumers as well as brands

- To understand the ways the current brands managing themselves on the social networking

- To study the way the brands are managing consumers and getting a better way to interact with their consumers.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The research is totally based on secondary data.

- Technological Barriers

- This study is limited to specific SNS.

With the above objectives and hypothesis a review was prepared and the result of review is summarized in next section of research paper.

KEY FINDINGS (AT THE TIME OF WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER)

Top 10 Social Networking Sites in World- (Report by Comscore)

Table 1

Rank	Social Networking Site
1	Facebook.com
2	Twitter.com
3	LinkedIn.com
4	WordPress.com
5	vk.com
6	Weibo.com
7	tumblr.com
8	pinterest.com
9	instagram.com
10	Fropper.com

Top 10 Social Networking Sites in India

Table 2

Rank	Social Networking Site
1	Facebook.com
2	Twitter.com
3	LinkedIn.com

Table 2: Contd.,	
4	Myspace
5	Orkut
6	Imbee.com
7	Sconex.com
8	Google+
9	Cafemom.com
10	43things.com

Source: waytosites.com, November 2013

FIVE WAYS TO BUILD BRAND ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

- **Listening (Research):** Observe online discussions of your audience to gain a deeper understanding of their opinions, needs, desires, etc. This can be a big help in identifying opportunities to engage with the audience.

- **Talking (Marketing):** Participate in conversations. This becomes an avenue to promote your Hospitals position and message.

- **Energizing (Sales):** Identify enthusiastic brand advocates and create strategies to empower them to be even more effective as ambassadors of your brand.

- **Supporting (Customer Support):** Build networks of customers for the purpose of helping each other to get more out of the hospital's products or services.

- **Embracing (Development):** Once you have a solid understanding of where your customers are, invite them into the discussion of where the hospital is headed in terms of new products or services.

SWOT ANALYSIS OF SNS

With the vast growth of Internet use nowadays, business advertising has enjoyed a more advanced phase. There are more options to advertise. Marketer has wider selection for media, advertising cost, advertising purpose, and market range. The challenge is to find which one to focus and set as priority. Among the many options, social networking site has turned out to be one of the most promising media today. The advantages can be substantial if businesses utilize them optimally, while the drawbacks can be tactical.

STRENGTHS

- **Build Strong Customer Relationship**

Social networking sites are great for building customer relationship. It is so easy to interact with customers at social sites. Marketer basically need to set up accounts at popular social sites, gather the community or customers of their product, provide relevant and useful information, and update the networks regularly. Customers will be pleased to join the community as they regard it as a place to share their experience and find relevant information about their purchase.

Once the community is set, you can add more features such as poll, question and answer, discussion, and review. The more engagement of the people, the deeper they will feel the personal attachment to brand. Social networking sites are really powerful to serve for building customer relationship. In long term, business will be able to build better customer loyalty.

- **Attracting More Customers**

Social networking sites are great for attracting more customers. The network is unlimited. If a customer is connected to a particular product or brand, his/her family or friends will be able to see the information about that product in the account as well. You know words of mouth spread quickly. The network can soon grow wider and even more. Also, many social sites have integrated widgets and features that help businesses to promote their products and services. There are fan box, fan page, profile badge, customized link, collaborated features that enhance the methods of updating information, and many other examples. Marketer should make the most of them as the exposure is unlimited.

- **Increase the Sale Leads**

Social sites can increase leads and sales. Marketer can put the relevant links to their business on their profile. If there is information about new products, special offers, or others that encourage purchase, customers can react soon and take actions. As social site has become a considerable part of most people's life nowadays, they are online for hours in a week doing activities and interact with their network. By updating the vital information at social site accounts, marketer presents the news directly in front of their walls and profiles. The chance to be read is much better than if marketer post on the traditional methods of advertising.

WEAKNESSES

- Brand awareness is usually built through big advertisement on TV, banners, newspapers, and other repeated ads which focus mainly on the brand. However, social sites help to build brand awareness indirectly, especially through long term satisfaction and influence of community. This is the most obvious weakness of social sites.

- Brand awareness becomes limited in technologically.

- SNS branding can never supersede word of mouth appreciation.

- In a service sector and especially in hospital industry SNS can create only a perception in the Potential customer but faith and loyalty to the brand cannot be ensured through SNS.

- Access to SNS can also create undesired views and opinions to the same masses.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Online Purchase/ Buying**

The brands can also open up the option of online purchase/ buying, which in turn would be advantageous to the brand itself to increase the sales of the brand.

- **Video Conferencing**

The ideas of video conferencing will a give more interactive look to brand, so that they are able to connect their customers more personally. As this way, the brands are able to give more personal feel to their target audience, which is right cord of every consumer.

- **Live Webinar**

Live Webinar helps to learn how to apply change management best practices across all departments of the health organization. In the exclusive webinar, the leading experts will explore the implications of social networking technology for the future of medicine. The patients are using social networks to learn more about their conditions and seek treatment information, thereby facilitating the provider-patient relationship and realizing efficiencies in the healthcare system.

- **Online CME**

- **Medical Second Opinion**

- **Google Ad Words**

THREATS

- The biggest threat for every brand is the number internet users available; in India the internet users are very less, i.e. 4.7% of the total population. But the sigh of relief would be they are growing at fast rate.

- There are lots of brands going on social networking sites to tap the right mixture of their target audiences, but the consumers are getting frustrated by constant advertising of brands on the internet.

- Advertising on social networking sites (SNS) is not going to be the only solution. The first paradigm shift, therefore, is to move from information to involvement.

- Advertisers will need to be extra cautious not to interrupt the flow of dialogue and find the optimal moment when they can deliver their message without intruding.

EXISTING BRANDS & THEIR STORIES

In the age of tweets, re-tweets and live updates, various businesses are contending to leverage the power of social media to grow their businesses. The healthcare industry is also joining the bandwagon. Hospitals in India have started using social media as a tool to boost their businesses. Super-specialty hospitals like Apollo Hospitals, Fortis Healthcare and Max Healthcare are the forerunners in aggressively pursuing social media marketing. Let's see how hospitals are using social media.

Fortis Healthcare

Fortis Healthcare, a leading, integrated pan Asia-Pacific healthcare delivery provider, has its presence in 11 countries. It has 647 video uploads on Youtube, 2420 followers on Twitter and 59,120 likes on its Facebook page. The hospital also boasts of a Facebook application through which a user can book an appointment with a doctor anywhere in India. On the occasion of Holi, it launched Fortis Balloon Pop challenge on its Facebook page and Twitter and also includes interesting cartoons depicting human body facts. The hospital's blog is a wonderful example of the hospital extensively markets its services and offers and reaches out to patients through Health Check Screening, Patients Education Series and Get an Appointment.

Max Healthcare

Max Healthcare, one of the best hospital chains in India, has around 200 video uploads on Youtube and includes

testimonials as well. The leading healthcare chain has an impressive 80, 895 likes on Facebook, 1419 followers on Twitter and even a substantial presence on Pinterest with 179 pins and 10 boards. The hospital has a vibrant presence on Facebook with Pink Connect, a breast cancer initiative to inform and educate women about breast cancer and the importance of early detection, along with a forum for discussions and interactions. Enlighten – on Facebook provides an interactive forum that offers educative and support services for obesity and bariatric treatment, along with success stories, and aims to create awareness about fighting obesity. Bundle of Joy, an interactive portal, offers parenting and mother and child care related information and advice on Facebook. Max Healthcare's fan page contains videos to provide information about healthcare to be taken during pregnancy, especially for women in their late thirties.

Narayana Nethralaya

One of the best super specialty eye hospitals headquartered in Bangalore, Narayana Nethralaya offers the best service in eye care. It has 7600 fans on Facebook and has been actively using Facebook to promote campaigns like Eye Donation campaign and interactive posts like How good is your Glaucoma quotient?, Free Glaucoma screening for patients, Bangalore Glaucoma Walkathon, etc. In keeping with its social responsibilities, Narayana Nethralaya Foundation funds KIDROP as its core belief is that —no child must go blind for want of financial resources.

KIDROP also has a substantial presence in Facebook and it uses the channel to create awareness about Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP), which is the leading cause of infant blindness in the world. The hospital also uses a SaaS-based social media tool, Simplify360, to competitively implement social media concepts.

Several recent surveys and reports confirm that the modern age patients seem to rely heavily on the results of their Internet search. People today log on to various websites to gather information regarding their health. While more than 60% of hospitals globally use social media platforms, Indian hospitals too need to cash in on the benefits of using social media by marketing their services and facilities effectively and utilize the social media platform for patient feedback and improving patient care. After all, social media is here to stay and is not a passing fad!

WHY SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES?

Online Advertising on Social Networking Sites is Essential

Nowadays, not just teens but a lot of adults are using Social Networking Sites. All social media help in promoting your brand irrespective of what it is. The following are the reasons due to which, the social networking sites are helpful to build the brands.

- **Targets Specific Group of People Makes Effective Advertising**

Marketer can target specific audience for advertising their product. People join groups in Facebook and other such networking sites. These groups consists of likeminded audience which may be very to target audience of marketer for their brand promotion. As this way the marketer can easily spot their target audience and understand them more closely, which in turn helpful to associate their products to the target audience.

- **Helps to Establish Their Expertise and Relationship with Their Audience**

The marketer share their knowledge with people to whom they are targeting. By sharing their knowledge and expertise on any particular subject, they can establish the strong relationship with their audience/clients. Once they win

trust of people their chances of doing online business will increase tremendously. People like to do business with experts they know. The marketer can establish their brand by mixing with people in social networking sites. Online advertising on social media can get name more quickly than any other form of online marketing. People visit sites related to person they know more often than any other site. That is why traffic of social networking sites is doubling each year.

- **Update Activities and Shares New Message Very Easy and Fast**

Updating information on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Orkut take only seconds. Addressing friends, followers, community members and other connections is much easier in social media. There are several free online applications that allow marketer to update their status across several of their social media accounts simultaneously.

- **Social Networking Sites Offer Free Online Advertising**

Most of the social networking sites are free. There is no fee of any kind. Some of the free networking sites are Facebook.com, Twitter.com, and Orkut.com etc. Unlike search advertising based on pay per click that not only consumes time and money, social networking sites consume time only. The marketer can know their audience more closely in networking sites than PPC marketing.

- **Reach Globally**

Social networking sites are not limited to geographical locations. There are 50 - 60 millions of active members on Facebook alone. Similar figures are there for other sites as well. People living in India are selling their products in US and vice versa. Live tweets are possible in Twitter. There are different communities and groups who can promote the brands. Online advertising has reached beyond the dimensions of single country.

- **Community Involvement, Which Helps to Increase the Audience Base**

Once people become member of Facebook, LinkedIn, Orkut, Twitter etc. they can create their own groups and community and send invitations to fairly a large group of members. Once they make the community, other people join their community who are interested in that community, or product becomes obvious. There is no limit number of members that join community or group. So the marketer can spread their message with just few key strokes. The best thing is that marketer needs not any well planned hi-fi strategy to promote their products.

- **Use of Social Media to Partner with Competitors**

In spite of cut throat competition, in social networking sites marketer can team up with their competitors to reach interested audience. This spirit of co-operation develops because advertising on social media is free and marketer do not lose anything as in PPC marketing. People are ready and even their competitors are ready to share their experience to promote their brand. There is more emotional touch in social media than any other platform of online marketing. The number of customers/audience on these social networking sites is fairly large, so there is room for almost everyone.

There are many more reasons why marketer should use social networking sites for online marketing. They can develop strategies once they are into it. Doing business, promoting brand and attracting and reaching to potential audience/clients are much easier on social media than any other form of online advertising.

CASE STUDY

THE SUCCESS STORY OF APOLLO HOSPITALS

Apollo Hospitals

Apollo Hospitals is an integrated pioneer healthcare organization with owned and managed hospitals, diagnostic clinics, dispensing pharmacies and consultancy services in addition to the group's service offerings that include healthcare at the patient's doorstep, clinical and diagnostic services, medical business process outsourcing, and a host of other services. The hospital boasts of more than 100 video uploads on Youtube that include FirstAid, Patient Testimonials, Chairman Speak, Apollo Hospitals' Initiatives, etc. The hospital has a massive 706,657 likes on Facebook and actively engages its users through health quizzes, Tweetinar and activities that help users to win vouchers and exciting merchandise. It also has 3967 followers on Twitter. The objective of the Health Quiz (launched on 31st August 2012) was to reinforce the health awareness of users and reward those who fare well in the quiz.

Apollo Prism, the cloud-based online Personal Health Record (PHR) service, helps users to receive and organize their health information, track and monitor health and store their data securely. Apollo Hospitals, Bangalore, has also tied up with Groupon to launch health check programs for all age groups, thus leveraging the web-based platform to enhance awareness about their medical services.

Meanwhile, Apollo Hospitals are building an incredible awareness campaign through their social media network and showcasing themselves as a social media savvy organization. The organization through its ad ―Celebrating 5 lakh fans on Facebook invited fans to join their huge list of 5 lakh friends by liking the page to participate. Users had to complete the phrase ―Health for me is… in 3-4 sentences and the best entries would receive gift vouchers. Thus, the Apollo Hospitals' celebration drives home its objective: to create awareness about health and build an online community for the long term. The organization is also quite active on Twitter with regular quiz contests and tweetinars at the end of a month. Apollo Hospitals had recently held a tweetinar on sports related injuries where queries were answered by a qualified joint care specialist, specializing in Sports Medicine.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some suggestions and recommendations which would be helpful to brands to attract more attention of their target audience.

- **Online Purchase / Buying**

The brands can also open up the option of online purchase/ buying, which in turn would be advantageous to the brand itself to increase the sales of the brand. Eg: Online ordering of simple pathology tests & online reporting.

- **Video Conferencing**

The ideas of video conferencing will a give more interactive look to brand, so that they are able to connect their customers more personally. As this way, the brands are able to give more personal feel to their target audience, which is right cord of every consumer.

- **Live Webinar**

- **Online CME**

- **Medical Second Opinion**

- **Google Ad Words**

CONCLUSIONS

It is time to reap the benefits of this new dynamic media called social networking site. They provide competition to traditional publishers for consumer attention and at the same time, facilitate new ways for publishers and advertisers to connect with their audiences.

Social media is about relationships and connection. In social media, the entire marketing philosophy is built on direct mass marketing. It helps to brand to understand what people are talking about, is their highs and lows with a particular category or brand; it also influences the purchase decision.

When brand listen they are into a position to put a socio graph and figure out, who is connected to whom, who is talking to whom on a regular basis and what they are talking about.

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