

## **Digital Marketing and Its Impact on Healthcare Sector in India**

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### **Abstract**

The study sought to find out the growth of digital marketing and its impact on medical service in Indian healthcare sector. The past studies reviewed have not clearly indicated how growth of Digital marketing has positioned itself as one of the key reliable strategies of modern marketing and especially in enhancing healthcare service. Therefore, there exists a knowledge gap to determine the growth of digital marketing and its impact on healthcare service in India. This research will help in addressing the existing knowledge gap in literature of digital marketing and its impact in the Healthcare sector.

**KEYWORDS:** Digital Marketing, Medical services, Healthcar.e

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Digital marketing is often referred to as 'online marketing', 'internet marketing' or 'web marketing'. The term digital marketing has grown in popularity over time, particularly in certain countries. In the USA online marketing is still prevalent, in Italy is referred as web marketing but in the UK and worldwide, digital marketing has become the most common term, especially after the year 2013. Digital marketing is an umbrella term for the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, mainly on the Internet, but also including mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium. The way in which digital marketing has developed since the 1990s and 2000s has changed the way brands and businesses utilize technology and digital marketing for their marketing. Digital marketing campaigns are becoming more prevailing as well as efficient, as digital platforms are increasingly incorporated marketing plans and everyday life, and as people use digital devices instead of going to physical shops.

### **INDIAN HEALTHCARE SECTOR**

Indian healthcare sector has the potential to become a global healthcare destination. India has the modern medicine combined with traditional therapies. The top private hospitals in India not only have the best-in-class medical infrastructure and technology such as 64 slice CT scans, computer navigated surgery suites and world class physicians on board. There is a 'reverse brain drain' in India in healthcare sector where top Indian doctors who were settled abroad are returning to our country.

There is a tremendous growth in medical tourism. Universal healthcare in India is still a challenge for the government because the system does not meet the basic minimum standards and is underfunded, understaffed, undersupplied with medicines and surgical equipments. A large percent of the earnings of an ordinary citizen is spent on healthcare. Private healthcare facilities are immense in amount in urban locations and are expensive to meet the demands of an average citizen.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) The main purpose of this paper is to recognize the usefulness of digital marketing in the Healthcare sector.
- 2) To study the impact of digital marketing on Healthcare in India.

#### Digital technology used in healthcare sector:

Digital technology adoption is already gaining prominence in India's healthcare industry, with efforts from both the public and private sectors. The government has launched several initiatives such as Digital India and Aadhaar in some cases with support from the private sector. The private sector has created mobile apps, adopted telemedicine, and set up innovation centres all around India, among other measures. These initiatives have number of digital health start-ups.



### TOP PLAYER IN SOCIAL MEDIA

sources:pwc analysis

A digital strategy refers to the use of the convergence of multiple applications to disrupt business processes and ensure enhanced and sustainable access to services for all. Such a strategy can be useful in healthcare. Technology is not the clarification itself; rather, it enables the development of healthcare solutions, better patient care and provider

growth. Some of the most widely discuss digital technologies that are being used to create healthcare solutions in India are:

### **1) M-health**

M-health is probably one of the largest sectors within digital healthcare in India, with an estimated market size of 2,083 crore INR in 2015—which is set to rise to 5,184 crore INR by 2020.<sup>33</sup> Acceptance of m-health is increasing simultaneously. A study showed that 68% of doctors in emerging markets recommend M-health

Example: A mobile app that offers online video consultation and an ability to book diagnostics Low-cost portable innovation are being developed in India to provide to the needs of its vast rural population.

Example: A wireless health monitor that measures blood pressure, oxygen saturation, pulse, body temperature, blood sugar, blood cholesterol and total hemoglobin count with a mobile application on your Smartphone.

### **3) Telemedicine**

Telemedicine is the use of technology for remote diagnosis, monitoring and education. While telemedicine is usually categorize under remote diagnosis, the size of its market in India allows us to consider it as an free segment. India's telemedicine market was valued at 100 million USD in 2011 and is expected to grow by over four times by the end of 2016. Telemedicine has helped bring down provider and patient costs as well as provide care in the most remote areas. .

Example: Top private hospitals in India have incorporated telemedicine capabilities, and one is even working with the central government to open 60,000 telemedicine centres.<sup>38</sup> Similar capabilities are being seen on the public side—for example, the Karnataka State Telemedicine Network Project with ISRO; and medical institution side tele- healthcare activities at the Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow.

### **4) Digital and social connectivity**

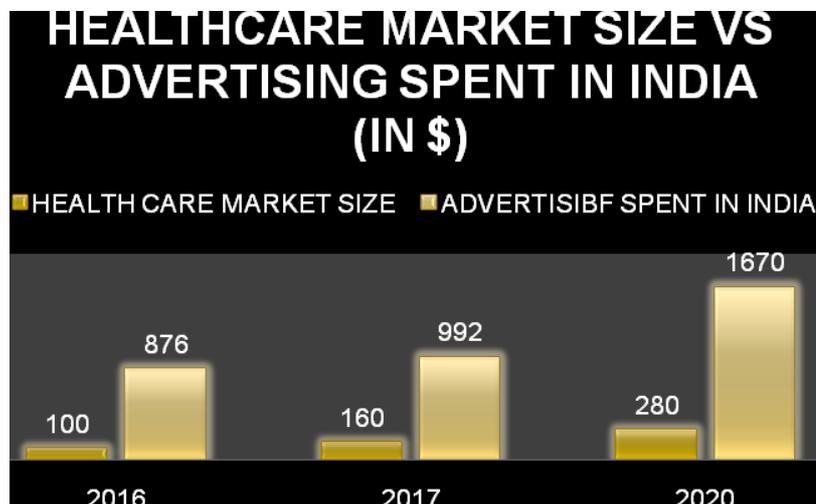
As mentioned earlier, social connectivity is an upcoming trend. Social media is important in India, with the average person spending 25% of his/her time on social networking sites, courtesy of improved telecom infrastructure.

Example: The Indian government is trying to set up a National Optical Fibre Network to connect 2,50,000 gram panchayats in the country to the Internet, which aids the expansion of e-health.

### **5) Wearables**

Initially, wearables in healthcare were devices that could way known to improve diet and exercise outcomes. Now, wearables are being increasingly used to measure basic health parameters such as heart rate. The overall healthcare wearables market in India is currently valued at 30 crore INR and is expected to increase in value as wearable technology is beginning to expand.

Example: there is a wristwatch that acts as a personal emergency response system and relays medical and GPS data to a remote server.



### How Digital Marketing Affects Healthcare Industry

- **Social Engine Marketing:** Businesses that employ search engine marketing along with search engine optimization and ad campaigns gain higher visibility than those who don't.
- **Social Media Marketing:** People are active on social media and social media is equivalent to 'word of mouth' marketing. This type of marketing plays a huge role in the healthcare sector. If many people around you, recommend an XYZ doctor, you are more likely to consult that doctor.

### TRENDS IN HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY

There has been a visible transformation in the healthcare industry that creates both opportunities and challenges for marketers. There are two variables which drive this transition. One is the rise of the digitally empowered healthcare consumer and the other is the shift from a fee for service payment to a healthcare delivery model on the basis of patient satisfaction, quality outcomes, and transparency.

It affects both the 'who' and 'how' of marketing strategies in the medical industry. Therefore, there has been a transformation in the role of physicians as decision-makers.

### Key trends that should be considered by every healthcare marketer:

- Consumers are now avid researchers

Today, the consumers are no longer satisfied to blindly accept what a doctor tells them. They have a preference doing homework before visiting a doctor. This means that the doctor no longer has the only say on medications, hospitals, treatment, and more. Healthcare is more like the association

between the doctors and consumers, thus catering to the needs of digital marketing for hospitals.

- **Healthcare marketers to target payers and consumers**

For healthcare marketers, there are different audiences. This segment is the primary 'who' on the basis of the product or service being offered. Not so surprisingly, doctors are the primary marketing target. And why not? They still recommend, prescribe, advocate, and buy products and services. However, doctor decision-making is gradually shrinking as decision-making shifts to healthcare consumers and payers. Therefore, the emerging trend is that healthcare marketers need to increasingly target payers and consumers.

- **Digital channels overshadowing traditional marketing**

While digital marketing is infusing in almost every sector, the healthcare industry is one of them. The last couple of years has seen a huge jump in the preference of digital marketing over traditional marketing in the healthcare. According to MM&M study, the greatest growth for the biotech, medical, diagnostics, and pharmaceutical device marketing budgets is taking place in digital sales material, mobile apps, and social media. Since consumer marketing tricks are shifting greatly to digital ads, social media, and mobile apps, therefore, the shift to digital channels in the healthcare industry is no wonder.

## **Conclusion**

It is the right time to take the healthcare business to next step by integrate with digital marketing. Healthcare industry is never ending or does get affected by inflation. There are lots of opportunity further on and it is the perfect flash to learn digital marketing for individuals and for healthcare industries to implement digital strategies for better business.

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