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Event management and social media marketing

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ABSTRACT

Event management is a multidisciplinary occupation, it is an exciting and continuously growing industry. It attracts people who possess creative talents, and organizational skills which they use to execute all event and event-related functions. Event managers are in a work environment in which no two days are the same. Events not only provide people with Entertainment, Unique, and Memorable experiences but also have the ability to reflect and mold a society. Thus it becomes important for an Event Manager or Event Management organisation to understand their Capabilities, Target Market and the Trends in the Event Management Industry, the marketing of their services also need to be done right in order to keep the present customers informed and attract new potential customers, not to forget to remain a step ahead of the competition in this ever-evolving industry. Social Media Marketing is gaining more and more acknowledgement with various industries increasing brand awareness and focusing on increasing their interactions with their customer. Similar practices of using social media to promote the event and event-related content can be useful for an organization in the event management industry too.

Keywords— Event management, Event managers, Events, Event management organizations, Social media and social media marketing, Promotion, Brand awareness

1. INTRODUCTION

This study's purpose was to understand the scope of the event Management Industry and the potential in investing in Social Media Marketing for the purpose of engaging with the target and potential customer alike and improving Brand Awareness.

The variety of events encompassed within this industry include Meetings and Conventions, Fairs and festivals, expositions and entertainment events, fundraising and cause-related events, community and commercial events, sports and leisure events, social and life cycle events, and company incentives and promoting events.

Although there are many varieties of events that various event management companies manage and execute, each one of these companies has specific services which they believe they do it better than the rest. These organisations, therefore, focus on attracting a certain segment of customers. This study will showcase how with simple of social media and some tools the process of reaching out to target audience also ensuring that the communication of ideas, views and trends in the industry can easily be followed.

2. UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA

This part showcases how social media is defined and how much it has grown over time to become an important phenomenon in our daily lives.

2.1 What is Social Media?

2.1.1 Definition: Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are among the different types of social media. (techtarget.com)

Some insights on social media from the works of Philip Rothschild. [1]

A self-described “general” definition of social media is a “group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow for the creation and exchange of user-generated content.” Web 2.0, they explain, refers to web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centred design, and collaboration.

2.1.2 Classification of Social Media: It also provides a helpful classification system for different types of social media including blogs and micro-blogs like Twitter; social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace; and content communities like YouTube, and Flickr.

This classification rubric is based on a set of theories related to social presence media richness, and self-presentation and self-disclosure. Social media can take many different forms, including internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro-blogging, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, rating, and social bookmarking. Of interest to this study are some of the most popular applications that allow groups to generate content and engage in peer-to-peer conversations and exchange of content (examples are Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, etc.).

Others have attempted to explain and study social media as a type of online WOM (Word of Mouth) communication, comparing its influence on consumer attitudes to that of offline WOM.

2.2 How fast is Social Media growing?

The global increase in social media usage since January 2017 is 13%. Saudi Arabia has the largest year-on-year increase in social media users since January 2017 (32%), a 17% increase compared to the global average. Other countries with the largest social media usage increase include India, Indonesia and Ghana as technology is improving and social media becomes easily accessible to more of the population. U.A.E, South Korea and the UK have the slowest increase with <5 %. (smart insights.com).

It is clear from the above statistics that social media is an ever evolving one, and there are a number of organisations that have found their way to take over social media and make the best of it all the while creating a strong image of their brands through effective social media campaigns.

For example, York (2010) reported how Starbucks got its business brewing again with social media, and Kaplan and Haenlein (2009) report PC-maker Dell generated \$1 million in incremental revenue as a result of sales alerts via Twitter. And Victoria's Secret has successfully built PINK Nation using social media Interns.

3. EVENT MANAGEMENT IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

As discussed in the research paper by Seema Gupta [4], Event management is a booming industry in India and the event managers can look forward to the coming years in terms of international events as well.

The managers need to step up their game in terms of marketing as there are increased competition and pressure to generate revenue for their own businesses, which means they need to focus on each and every aspect of their services and come up with strategic event marketing plans and execute them in a manner that is both profitable to business and the society.

Thus this paper discusses how these two technological domains of social media which has already been discussed is seeing immense growth and participation from people and the event management industry which creates events for people can collaborate well with each other and prove to be productive for the event managers or organizers and revolutionize the event industry too.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology deals with the ways in which the researcher conducted this study, the related technology and tool utilized are explained in the following sections.

4.1 Technology used

SMM (as defined by Nora and Stephanie [5]) is a relatively new concept aimed at measuring the effectiveness of communications disseminated through interactive digital media. SMM is a means of organizing conversations on the Internet in a structure that allows a user to see how conversations interconnect. There are now several agencies and available software that can assist firms interested in applying SMM techniques.

4.2 Tool used

The tool that is the Social Media Monitoring tool utilized in for this project, wherein it enables a researcher, an organisation or any other personnel interested in creating a Social Media Monitoring project.

For every project created, Buzzinga provides the user with the ability to harness the power of social media to make strategic decisions through the insights it provides.

It provides a user-friendly dashboard which can be navigated through easily and provides the data analysis in an easy on the eye manner that is the social media feeds selected on the basis of keywords given as an input for a project the outcome is presented in an easy to understand format.

5. RESULT

The researcher was able to infer the following aspects from the monitoring of Event Management related content on the social media and introduce social media marketing as a solution to improve the customer interaction, brand image, development of a specific strategy for online marketing.

5.1 Volume of conversation

Dialogue and participation are what social media is all about. Devising creative ways to capture the customer insight with polls, idea jams and challenges are done. Letting customers participate by voting on their favorite ideas or innovations. Getting customers invested in the outcome will help build the advocacy and brand affinity we seek (Carolyn Heller Baird et.al [6]). Thus it becomes important that these conversations and the reaction for the same be monitored, organisations can track the volume of conversation that has been generated during a time period this helps the organisation understand the type of content that needs to be developed in order to grab the attention of the target and potential audience. This helps in improving the overall quality, reach of content and level of engagement between the organisation and customers.

5.2 Automated Sentiment analysis

Also known as Opinion Mining, Sentiment Analysis can be defined as the “computational treatment of opinion, sentiment, and subjectivity in the text” [7]. It has been applied to many contexts, like reviewing customers’ products and services, monitoring reputations in social networks, tracking people’s feelings about politicians, promoting marketing campaigns, etc. [8] (Feldman, 2013).

The sentiment analysis provided in the form of Positive, Negative and Neutral which are easily understandable responses, the organisation can, therefore, understand how the content developed to market their services is being perceived by their target market.

5.3 Sources of conversation

Sources of conversation show the resources from where the relevant articles or posts are being tracked from, listened to and monitored. Sources of conversation are important for an organisation to know as they are known to provide five types of connections that can be established, as discussed in a paper on social e-commerce (by Wang and Sun 2012)[9].

These connections are:

- Connecting business sites with social networking sites
- Connecting shoppers with shoppers
- Connecting shoppers with products
- Connecting online and offline social networks
- Connecting sellers/online shops with sellers/online shops

When it comes to event management such information will help and organisation in this industry to realise the social media platform where promotion of their services is required and expand their realm of potential customers.

5.4 Listening Grid adjustment

The listening grid focuses on three main aspects: (1) the channels that are monitored (example blogs and micro-blogs, social networks, video and image websites, etc.); (2) which countries and languages the tools provide support for; and (3) the topics relevant to the enterprise. Additionally, the listening grid should send alerts to inform clients (example when post volume increases over a defined threshold or sentiment becomes very negative). [10]

5.5 Near real-time processing

It is crucial for enterprises to follow up potential customers or customers’ complaints, questions and thoughts well in time. Therefore, the monitoring tool should provide actual data in near real-time.

5.6 Geo-Location Spread

To visualize space-time dimensions of ideas spreading on the Internet, An effective method to geo-locate the contents of individual posts and web pages from cyberspace to real space was designed by Tsou [11]. Where he introduced an integrated geocoding method by utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS), IP addresses, Computational Linguistics (CL), and computer-based ontology technologies to track and analyze the dynamic changes of ideas on the Internet.

As conveyed by the above-cited research, it is important for organisations to track the location from where the content relevant to organisation interests is generated to understand the spread of target audience and from where the most content is being generated and to measure the generation of idea related to event management.

5.7 User Interface

Besides the accurate production of insights described in the previous subsections, the client should be able to visualize the results of the data gathering and analysis stages in a clear and concise way. Thus the user interface and the features possessed helps enterprises understand their social media presence, along with a dashboard that provides ease of access.

The historical data and data on top influencers lets the user capture the most influential media, writers and source which ones allows the user to use these influencers to their benefits in promoting and marketing the organisation’s goals and services effectively.

6. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the study is that social media is a platform where one can witness the presence of various people share their opinion and views also where some many influences and get influenced. From the perspective of an Event Manager or an Event

Management Organisation, not just the ones located in India, but companies located anywhere in the world can create a strong presence there are already many organisations from different domain creating a strong presence and a sense of brand in the minds of their people.

On the other hand, the process Social Media Monitoring through the use of Monitoring tools saves efforts of the organisation as many technologies are implemented through a single application interface thereby reducing the hassle of analysing bulky data for hours on end.

Since the focus is on event management the social media monitoring was done only for social media content related to event management but can be applied in other fields and inferences can be made respectively.

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