

**Decoding the Advancements in Digital Marketing Practices Adopted
by Selected Eye Hospitals in India and detailed Study of Digital
Marketing Practices at Sankara Eye Foundation**

Dissertation Submitted to



The IIHMR University, Jaipur

for the partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of
Master of Business Administration (MBA)

In

Hospital and Health Management/Pharmaceutical Management/Rural
Management

By

Dr. Pushpak Mahajan

Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Dr. Sheenu Jain

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Declaration by Student

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled **Decoding the Advancements in Digital Marketing Practices Adopted by Selected Eye Hospitals in India and Detailed Study of Digital Marketing Practices at Sankara Eye Foundation** is the bonafide record of my original research work. I declare that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been duly acknowledged in the text.

Dr. Pushpak Mahajan

Date- 02/02/2021



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The certificate is awarded to

Dr. Pushpak Mahajan

In recognition of having successfully completed his
Internship in the department of

MARKETING

and has successfully completed his Project on

**DECODING THE ADVANCEMENTS IN DIGITAL MARKETING
PRACTICES ADOPTED BY SELECTED EYE HOSPITALS IN INDIA
AND DETAILED STUDY OF DIGITAL MARKETING PRACTICES AT
SANKARA EYE FOUNDATION**

29TH MARCH 2021 to 29TH JUNE 2021

Organization: SANKARA EYE HOSPITAL, COIMBATORE

He comes across as a committed, sincere & diligent person who has
a strong drive and zeal for learning

We wish him all the best for future endeavours


Ms Srinikarthy
(Chief People Officer)


Mr Bharath Balasubramanian
(President – Operations)

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Certificate

This is to certify that dissertation titled **Decoding the Advancements in Digital Marketing Practices Adopted by Selected Eye Hospitals in India and Detailed Study of Digital Marketing Practices at Sankara Eye Foundation** is a record of the research work undertaken by Dr. Pushpak Mahajan in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA Hospital and Health Management from the IIHMR University, Jaipur under my guidance and supervision and his approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific, and analytical.

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Date

Abstract

Introduction: The concept of digital marketing has witnessed an accelerated growth over the past decade. In this era, hospitals are expected to have a solid presence online, as people tend to search for hospitals on the Internet first. This is a superb opportunity for hospitals to gain unrivalled visibility. While digital marketing is here to stay, there is no doubt that it will continue to evolve. McKinsey's survey found that 75% of respondents said they would like to use digital healthcare services. With the help of digital health marketing, hospitals can readily stay connected with existing and potential patients. However, the hospitals have to know how to make optimal use of this digital marketing to the advantage of their practice. This study takes a dive into digital marketing practices adopted by selected eye hospitals in India. Purpose of this study is to identify and suggest the strategies to improve digital marketing practices at Sankara Eye Foundation, India.

Methodology: The research was carried out by the way of Explorative Study using online analytical tools to study the digital marketing practices at selected Eye Hospitals. Data was collected by visiting websites and social media platforms of all the selected Eye Hospitals and also by using various online free analytical tools like ubbersuggest, SEMrush, socialinsider, sproutsocial. Search of the literature was performed using a variety of sources including PubMed, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, ProQuest database, Sage journal, IIHMR library, et cetera. Some seminal pieces which were relevant to the themes were also included in the literature review. Literature search from various sources like journals, websites have retrieved 31 relevant articles. The titles and abstracts are independently reviewed for inclusion and most relevant 10 articles were included in the study for literature review. For analysis Microsoft Excel was used. Analysis followed by interpretation helped to identify and recommend the strategies to improve Digital Marketing Practices at Sankara Eye Foundation, India.

Results: This study revealed that SEFI is doing well in terms of gaining positive reviews on online rating platforms like Facebook, Google and Justdial. For Social Media Marketing, it was found that SEFI is performing well on Instagram when compared with other social media platforms. Also, study revealed that there is a further scope to improve for SEFI in SEO. Organic traffic can be improved further by working on keywords and backlinks. SEFI stands at seventh place for Search Engine Optimisation out of nine Eye Hospitals in study. For Social Media, SEFI is performing slightly well on Instagram when compared with SEFI's own other social media

platforms but when compared with competitors it was not the case. There is a tough competition to SEFI in digital space especially from Centre for Sight, L V Prasad Eye Institute and in case of SEO, Aravind Eye Hospital, Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital and Centre for Sight.

Conclusion: Sankara Eye Foundation needs to strategize the plan for search engine optimisation as well as Social Media Marketing. Present strategy does not seem to be successful in fetching traffic, hold audience for long on their page and engaging with them. Poor mobile optimization, mismatch between content and keywords, slow loading speed, low-quality webpage design, and poor content strategy on social media are some of the contributing factors for this. Having a proper social media posting schedule, content strategy considering the demand of population, website with optimised user experience, etc. is must in order to engage population. Along with a complete SEO marketing plan and social media marketing plan, getting positive reviews on Google can propel a hospital to the top of the most popular search engine.

Key words: Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Practices, Hospital, Healthcare, Social Media Marketing

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Abbreviations

SEFI	Sankara Eye Foundation, India
DM	Digital Marketing
SMM	Social Media Marketing
SEO	Search Engine Optimisation
SEM	Search Engine Marketing
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
PPC	Pay-Per-Click
CPC	Cost-Per-Click
CPM	Cost per thousand impression
CPC	Cost-Per-Call
Quality Score	Consumer ratings and reviews
CTA	Call-To-Action
AIDA	Attention, Interest, Desire, Action
LCP	Largest Contentful Paint

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The concept of digital marketing has witnessed an accelerated growth over the past decade. Digital marketing is a technique of marketing which embraces the use of devices such as smart phones, personal computers, tablets and cell phones to connect with customers. The reduced expenses and the eventual high return on investment provided by digital marketing is inducing a larger number of organisations to resort to this marketing practice. The Internet has become a powerful marketing and communications medium used by healthcare providers and facilities around the world. Today, millions of patients and healthcare professionals are already using it to learn and connect; using it to market your practice and facility can help grow your practice. In this era, hospitals are expected to have a solid presence online, as people tend to search for hospitals on the Internet first. They might be searching for hospitals nearby, their address, services offered, reviews, etc. This is a superb opportunity for hospitals to gain unrivalled visibility. While digital marketing is here to stay, there is no doubt that it will continue to evolve. Filtering through digital clutter will be a challenge for consumers and for hospitals to be effective, they must develop a compelling message that sticks in patients' minds.

In many of the world's emerging nations, such as India, segments of the population seeking healthcare services is on the rise. There is a corresponding growth in the construction of hospitals, clinics, and private diagnostic centres and this demand has also led to a very competitive environment among healthcare providers. To compete in this environment, it is important for those healthcare facilities to engage in marketing their services.

Approximately 88 percent of people search the internet for health information, and 70 percent say that the information they obtain influences their treatment decisions.²⁹

Digital marketing is an excellent technique to get in touch with current and potential patients anytime they are in need. People choose online healthcare services because they can get immediate responses and contact with specialists from the comfort of their own homes and at their leisure. According to McKinsey's poll, 75% of respondents said they would prefer to use digital healthcare services.

People use the internet to look for a wide range of goods and services. When it comes to looking for healthcare services, there are no exceptions. According to a study by Google and Compete, 44 percent of patients who identified hospitals on their mobile devices

planned a visit and scheduled an appointment. It holds true not just for hospitals but also for ordering medications, pathology and diagnostic labs, and availing of home healthcare services.

Digital healthcare is evolving at an incredible pace, and with the knowledge that this is only the beginning, the potential for it to revolutionize healthcare services is becoming apparent. In the view of the healthcare professionals, this digital change, and the change in behaviour of consumers opens up a great channel for communicating with the patients. However, the hospitals have to know how to make optimal use of this digital marketing to the advantage of their practice. This study takes a dive into digital marketing practices adopted by selected eye hospitals in India. Purpose of this study is to identify and suggest the strategies to improve digital marketing practices at Sankara Eye Foundation, India.

1.2 Research Objectives

- To identify the advancements in Digital Marketing Practices adopted by selected eye hospitals in India
- To study the current digital marketing practices of SEFI.
- To recommend the strategies to improve digital marketing practices at SEFI.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Table 2.1: Review of literature

Sr. No.	Title	Source	Authors	Year	Objective	Findings
1.	Digital marketing in healthcare	https://academic.oup.com/eurpub/article/29/Supplement_4/ckz186.077/5623365?login=true	M Grbic, D Stimac Grbic, L Stimac, Z Sostar	2019	To study Digital marketing in healthcare	1. Despite the recent growth in digital marketing efforts in other industries, healthcare continues to lag behind. In 2017, just 50% of poll respondents said they used a CRM system, while in 2018, much more (65%) said they used one. When compared to last year's poll, the number of marketers that use marketing tools has increased from 23% to 48%. Healthcare organizations are still not utilizing advanced digital activities, such as wearables or beacon technology. 2. Clients in the health field are empowered by social media. 3. The majority of people in the 18-24 age bracket (90 percent) trust information published on social media.
2.	Effect of digital marketing in hospitals: A systematic review	http://theicph.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/47.-Andreas-Aryo-Risky-Prasetyo.pdf	Andreas Aryo Risky Prasetyo, Wachyu Sulistiadi	2019	To study the effect of digital marketing in hospitals	1. This study depicts that there is a need for digital methods of promoting, educating, and providing information about medical care services in order to grow a brand. The strategic was to imply attracting new and old patients to offering them low cost and a particular high-quality health-care services, ensuring their delight and the likelihood of them referring the hospital further. 2. It was also found that the electronic media is effective for medical institutions to develop the marketing strategies.
3.	Role of Digital Marketing to Enhance Medical	https://www.proquest.com/openview/b3da4f829b5a82c2ac39a00da337a8ef/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=4451210	Ram Kumar Subramani am, Aishwarya Singhal	2019	To study the role of Digital Marketing to Enhance Medical Tourism in	1. Findings of this study reveals that digital marketing has a good impact on medical tourism since it aids in the creation of a strong brand image and influences consumer choice of location by medical tourism patients. 2. This study also discovered that most effective strategies are effective email marketing, responsive websites, video marketing,

	Tourism in Hospitals of Dubai	#:~:text=Second%2C%20presen%20of%20me%20dical%20facilita%20tors,for%20finalizing%20their%20medical%20travel.	and Paul Hopkinson		Hospitals of Dubai	Social media marketing (SMM), content and influencer marketing are most effective strategies. 3. Moreover, this study uncovers six emerging trends that will help hospitals better understand how to re-evaluate the impact of their current digital marketing tactics on customer decision-making.
4.	Digital Marketing for Private Practice: How to Attract New Patients	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6692144/	Kevin D. StClergy	2019	To study the Digital Marketing for Private Practice	1. This research provides a strategy for generating results online and attracting new patients for less money than any other marketing medium now accessible. 2. According to this study, driving utmost traffic with SEO and PPC, constructing a website that converts with direct response marketing and educational material, and gaining reviews, are the keys for successful digital marketing practises.
5.	Performance evaluation of Digital Marketing In Healthcare Industry with the application of data Envelopm ent analysis	http://www.proquest.com/library/ihmr/remotexs.in/docview/2160713495/C7E63C68BB3F4469PQ/15?accountid=136944	Zhi-Wang QIAN, Guang-Sheng WAN, Xiao-Lei DU, Yu-Feng SHI, Gang HUANG	2018	Analyse the performance of digital marketing in the healthcare industry by using data Envelopment analysis.	1. It was observed that one hospital among all the hospitals in study, shows strong digital marketing efficiency. The digital marketing efficiency of other six hospitals, show marginal inefficient, which tells that the effectiveness of digital marketing may be effortlessly promoted. 2. According to the findings of the study, it is advised that leaders in the health-care business use innovative marketing to maintain operating performance and fulfil the aim of sustained-yield management in a competitive medical environment.

6.	Digital marketing plan for a non-profit organization	https://www.the-seus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/149479/Medell_Kristi.pdf?sequence=1	Kristi Medell	2018	Digital marketing plan for a non-profit organization	1. This demonstrates that, while digital marketing gives quantitative measures, measuring qualitative metrics is more difficult. The engagement rate may be great, yet the message's significance is unquantifiable. 2. According to this study, non-profit organisations and their messaging can get exposure through social media and digital marketing. Social media can be utilised to boost customer engagement and facilitate two-way interaction between the organisation and its consumers. Depending on a non-profit's aim and objectives, publishing user-generated content could be a successful marketing strategy.
7.	Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda	https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0167811616301550	<u>P. K. Kannan</u> <u>Alice Li</u>	2017	To develop and describe a framework for research in digital marketing	1. According to the findings, digital marketing aids firms in promoting products/services using a variety of electronic channels and methods, allowing them to more precisely contact their target audiences, and these marketing campaigns can be analysed in real time utilising consumer behaviour data. 2. According to this study, digital marketing approaches establish a unique value proposition for each hospital and customer segmentation, allowing medical institutions to focus on their target segment successfully. Word of mouth, brand image, specialty treatments, and search engine optimizations are just a few examples.
8.	A study on feasibility of Digital Marketing for Small and Medium Enterprises	http://eprints.intimal.edu.my/620/	Kiran L. Maney, A. Sindhuja, Dr. Soney Mathews	2015	To study the feasibility of Digital Marketing for Small and Medium Enterprises	1. The study reveals that Small and Medium Enterprises embrace more frequent usage of Email, Social networking and company websites in comparison to other digital techniques such as mobile SMS and internet advertisements. 2. Social networking in particular contribute to high return on investment. 3. This study also reveals that, the usage of digital marketing technique is constrained by certain short comings which include lack of availability of professional technicians and lack of standardised pricing for the techniques.

9.	Use of Social Media Marketing in Healthcare	https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0972063413489058	Anita Gupta, Mukta Tyagi, Deepshikha Sharma	2013	To discuss various interventions done, using social media marketing tools in promoting public health and to explain the use of social media marketing in health promotion and education.	1. This study suggests that social media offers a significant opportunity for health promotion in the public health community, allowing public health professionals to reach out far and wide and directly to the public on a variety of public health issues, while caution is required to avoid massive damage. 2. It also demonstrates that social media, a communication blessing for the public health community, has the capacity to promote and change a wide range of health-related behaviours and issues, especially during times of crisis.
10.	GE Healthcare : Marketing Your Healthcare Practice in the New Digital Age	https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/ge-healthcare-marketing-your-practice-new-digital/docview/1427420399/se-2?accountid=136944	Ajay Chhabra, Dr Karthik Anantharaman	2013	To study the Marketing of Healthcare Practice in the New Digital Age	1. According to this study, key areas of focus, once the organisation have their domain registered, should be appointment booking and new patient traffic generation. Ensure that local online directories, classified listings, and search engines have indexed website or create a small business profile on these sites. This enables local web traffic to reach out to your website. Utilizing a map-based address integration may also help viewers to locate the practice, connect with physicians, and book appointments. 2. This study also suggests that, creating a website, conducting SEO marketing, and engaging in online listing, social media, email marketing, and educational activities may help your practice or diagnostic center to be more easily discovered in the online universe.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Study question and objectives were:

Study Question -

What are the Digital Marketing Practices adopted by selected Eye Hospitals? How can the Digital Marketing Practices be improved at SEFI?

The Objectives of the study were -

- To identify the advancements in Digital Marketing Practices adopted by selected eye hospitals in India
- To study the current digital marketing practices of SEFI.
- To recommend the strategies to improve digital marketing practices at SEFI.

Type of Study Method -

The research was carried out by the way of Explorative Study using online analytical tools to study the digital marketing practices at selected Eye Hospitals.

Method of data collection and analysis :

Data was collected by visiting websites and social media platforms of all the selected Eye Hospitals and also by using various online free analytical tools like ubbersuggest, SEMrush, socialinsider, sproutsocial. Keeping in mind the limited duration of study, few key metrics were selected and data was collected around these metrics only.

Search of the literature was performed using a variety of sources including PubMed, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, ProQuest database, Sage journal, IIHMR library, et cetera. The parameters on the search engines were set to include relevant papers from the last ten years. Some seminal pieces which were relevant to the themes were also included in the literature review. Literature search from various sources like journals, websites have retrieved 31 relevant articles. The titles and abstracts are independently reviewed for inclusion and most relevant 10 articles were included in the study for literature review.

For analysis Microsoft Excel was used and analysis was done on the data collected by using online analytical tools followed by interpretation which helped to identify and recommend the strategies to improve Digital Marketing Practices at Sankara Eye Foundation, India.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Practices, Hospital, Healthcare, Social Media Marketing

Chapter 4: Results

4.1.1 Digital marketing Practices

Digital marketing refers to the use of digital media in order to promote products or brands among consumers (Flores 2014, 3). Digital marketing goes beyond internet marketing, as it includes all interactive digital tools, such as mobile phones and interactive television (Flores 2014, 4). Digital marketing is not limited to using the internet, the marketing messages can also be promoted offline, for example through offline applications on digital devices. Digital marketing includes: E-mail marketing, E-books, games, content marketing, video marketing, mobile marketing, and TV ads. (White Shark Media 2018.)

Online marketing or also referred to as “internet” marketing is a subset of digital marketing. Online marketing requires internet connection to work. Online marketing includes: website, search engine optimization, pay-per-click advertising, display advertising, and social media marketing. However, the terms digital and online marketing are often used interchangeably. (White Shark Media 2018.)

Charlesworth (2014) has categorized digital marketing methods into the following subcategories:

- Search engine optimization
- Online advertising
- Email/Permission marketing
- Social media marketing

4.1.2 Search engine optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a practice of making a website attractive for a search engine to display it as a top search result for the searcher. This is done by presenting the website content in a way that the search engine assumes the website to be the most relevant result for the searched term. (Charlesworth 2014, 191.)

The relevance rank is based on keywords on the website and backlinks. Keywords are terms that users search for. Having relevant keywords on one’s website lets the search engine see the website and show it in the search results. Number and quality of backlinks raises the trustworthiness of the website for the search engine. To rank higher, there are two components that should be optimized: on-site optimization (optimising website to contain the relevant keywords) and off-site optimization (generating backlinks from other sources). The referring sources for backlinks can be articles on

other websites or blogs, social media channels, or discussion boards. The more legitimate the referring source is, the more it is going to effect the search result ranking of the website. (Bluehost 2012.)

The commissioning company's website is set up on the WordPress platform, therefore the following SEO methods apply to their website as suggested by WPBeginner (2018):

1. Using SEO friendly URL structures. The URL should include words or a heading rather than a combination of numbers or symbols.

An example of a good URL for SEO: <http://www.wpbeginner.com/common-wordpress-errors-and-how-to-fix-them/>

2. Using a SEO plugin.
3. Adding the website to Google Search Console, also known as Webmaster Tools. It provides reports and data on how the website is seen by the search engine.
4. Optimizing blog posts for SEO. This will be discussed further in the content marketing section.
5. Using categories and tags properly. Categories are for broad grouping of topics while tags are specific keywords which describe individual posts.
6. Internal linking. For example linking one blog post in another.
7. Optimizing WordPress comments. Avoiding spam comments.
8. Optimizing website speed and performance. It is important that website loads fast, which depends on the files on the website. For example, the image files should not be too big.
9. Optimizing image tags and title.
10. Keeping the website secure. Blacklisted websites do not show up in search results.

Search marketing is critical for hospitals and other medical institutes. As per the "Digital Journey to Wellness: Hospital Selection" survey conducted by Google and Compete that fielded more than 500 hospital researchers, search engines are a critical cog for healthcare marketers.

- Search drives nearly 3 times as many visitors to hospital sites compared to non-search visitors.
- Patients primarily search on symptoms and condition terms towards the moment of conversion.
- 44% of patients who research hospitals on a mobile device scheduled an appointment.
- 53% of patients who did not watch a hospital video were unaware they existed.

- Over 70% of health-related searchers click on the results listed on the first page

4.1.3 Online advertising

Another digital marketing method is online advertising. Paid online advertising can be done on social media websites, search engine results pages, portals, blogs, community websites, virtual world sites, podcasts/video streaming, newsletters, emails, question-answer websites, newsletters, and any other website. The main question to ask is which sites does the target market visit. (Charlesworth 2014, 231.)

The three main online advertising objectives are initiating direct action, lead generation, and branding (Charlesworth 2014, 225).

Charlesworth (2014, 224) points out that online advertising has following 3 major benefits-

1. Targeting – possibility to target a specific audience
2. Analytics – possibility to monitor and measure the results
3. Interactivity – the customer can purchase the product immediately

The targeting of online advertisements can be based on contextual (relevant to the content of the webpage), behavioural (ad relevant to the previous action on the web), and geographic (location-based) factors (Charlesworth 2014, 227).

According to Charlesworth (2014, 227), the common payment methods for online advertising are:

1. Cost per click (CPC) or pay per click (PPC) – the advertiser pays when the ad is being clicked on. The cost of PPC depends on the keywords that are “purchased” for the ad.
2. Cost per thousand impression (CPM) - this is used for display ads and the cost depends on the website that displays the ad.
3. Cost per call (CPC) - used for some specific services ads, the advertiser pays for each received call through the ad.

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is a paid advertising method which is based on the concept of matching searcher’s keywords with specific sponsored search results. The advertiser can “purchase” specific keywords from the search engine to rank higher as a sponsored search result for those search terms. One of the benefits of SEM is that it gives some control for the company for their search result rank. Also, the text of the ads can be written by the advertiser which is not the case with SEO.

Having paid search results may increase the customer's perception of the brand's quality. However, there are a few downsides to search engine marketing. While good search engine optimization is hard for competitors to reproduce, then for search engine marketing the keyword strategy can be copied. (Charlesworth 2014, 244.)

When creating paid online advertisements the following aspects should be considered:

- A call-to-action (CTA)
- A design that fits the ad format (platform where the ad will be shown)
- Consider the target audience and keywords
- The brand displayed prominently
- Direct, concise and urgent language

(Dodson 2016, 110.)

4.1.4 Email marketing

Email marketing is a marketing method that is one of the most successful channels for delivering high relevant messages to targeted subscribers. While different social media platforms come and go, email is still used. If optimized correctly, email marketing can drive great returns and levels of engagement. (Dodson 2016, 121.)

Dodson (2016, 122) writes that the success of email marketing is based upon a consistent process. Dodson (2016, 122) suggests three steps to email marketing:

- Initiating – Who are the subscribers and what type of content would bring the most value to them?
- Iterating – Measuring and analysing the performance of the email campaign
- Integrating – Incorporating the email marketing campaign with other online and offline marketing tactics

Pinkham (2018) writes that email marketing is a cost-effective method for reaching customers on a platform that they use every day. Pinkham (2018) points out that the email marketing can be used to build credibility, strengthen customer relationships, improve communication, boost sales, build the brand, and save time.

The General Data Protection Regulation affects the collection of e-mail addresses for email marketing. The General Data Protection Regulation requires proof of the e-mail address owner's consent that they have agreed to share their e-mail for marketing purposes. In other words, the opt-in consent of the e-mail owner. The opt-in consent

should be collected in a clear manner. A hidden check-box within other text is not enough. (GDPR EU 2018.)

In addition, the company is not allowed to use the customer's email for other purposes without their consent. Consent should be received for each data processing purpose separately. (Smart Insights 2018.)

4.1.5 Social media marketing

Social media marketing is a significant part of digital marketing. Charlesworth (2014, 292) has defined social media as a collection of social network and community websites including blogs, podcasts, reviews and wikis. Charlesworth (2014, 292) adds that social media are websites where users can add their own content but do not have control over the website itself.

Social media marketing can be useful for some companies for a cost-effective two-way communication with customers. However, for other companies the return on investment is questionable. Furthermore, poor engagement rates can generate negative perceptions of the company even more than no social media presence at all. (Charlesworth 2014, 291.)

Social media marketing includes social networks and online communities, blogging, viral marketing, online public relations and reputation management, and consumer generated content (Charlesworth 2014, 291).

Chaffey and Smith (2013, 137) write that customer engagement on social media can drive the business. Engaged customers can become brand ambassadors through word-of-mouth. The most valuable customer does not have to be the one that buys the most. A customer who posts ratings and reviews online can be a valuable influencer. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 137.)

Content marketing is a social media marketing method that is focused on creating and distributing valuable content to attract a clearly defined audience and to drive profitable customer action. There are three key benefits to using content marketing: increased sales, cost saving, and customer loyalty. As people are exposed to various messages every day, having a content marketing strategy helps to differentiate the brand by more relevant and valuable content. Content marketing is beneficial for social media marketing, SEO, paid advertising, and inbound marketing. (Content Marketing Institute 2018.)

Vaynerchuk (2017) suggests content marketers to post documented content rather than creating new content. Besides it being a more time-effective way of content creation,

sharing documented content about the business can attract more attention than the “created” content (Vaynerchuk 2017). Vaynerchuk has also suggested content creators to have a content schedule, such as theme days, for example “Meditation Mondays”. One piece of content can be used across multiple platforms, for example, a video on YouTube can be transcribed into a blog post. (Kent 2018.)

Balkhi (2015) provides the following suggestions for writing blog posts, in order to have effective blog posts for sales and SEO:

- ✓ Having a catchy title
- ✓ SEO title under 60 characters
- ✓ Having a meta description for the blog post
- ✓ Having desired keywords in the title, content, and description
- ✓ Having keyword variations in the text
- ✓ Internal linking to other blog posts on one’s own blog
- ✓ External links open in a new window
- ✓ Adding image sources
- ✓ Adding tags to images
- ✓ Check post thumbnail on different social media channels
- ✓ Check formatting
- ✓ Include and check call-to-actions
- ✓ Add categories and tags
- ✓ Preview and test all links before publishing

4.1.6 Digital Marketing Practices adopted by Selected Eye Hospitals

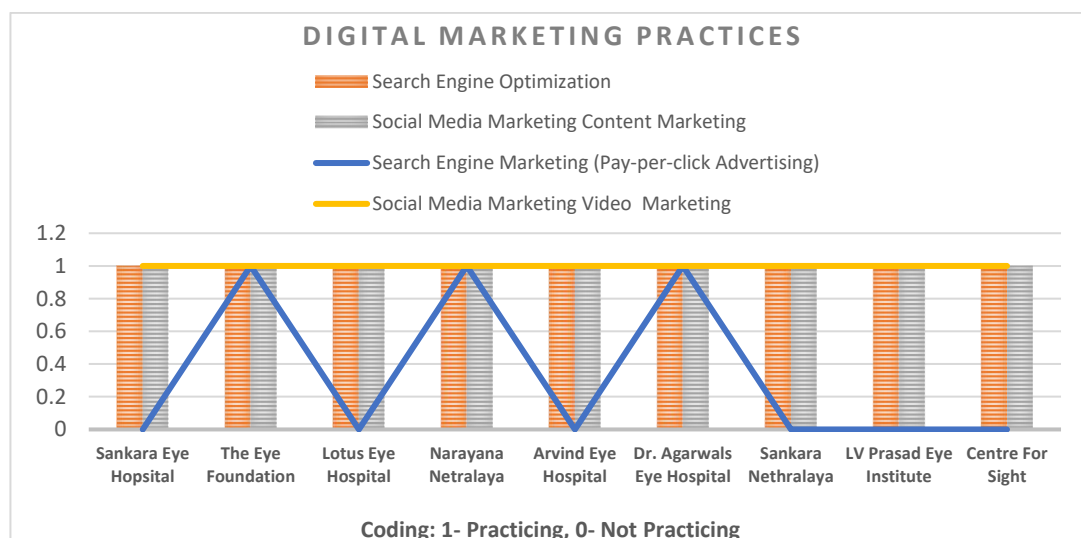


Figure 4.1: Digital Marketing Practices adopted by Selected Eye Hospitals

Figure 4.1 very clearly depicts that The Eye Foundation, Narayana Nethralaya, and Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital is practicing all the digital marketing practices mentioned in the figure i.e. Search Engine Optimisation, Search Engine Marketing- PPC advertising, Social Media Marketing. On the other hand Sankara Eye Foundation, Lotus Eye Hospital, Aravind Eye Hospital, Sankara Nethralaya, L V Prasad Eye Institute and Centre for Sight hospital are practicing Search Engine Optimisation, Social Media Marketing and not Search Engine Marketing- PPC advertising.

Now, it will be very interesting to see how these hospitals are performing in some important aspects of these digital marketing practices and where the Sankara Eye Foundation stands in comparison to these hospitals, which is covered in further sections.

4.1.7 Key Performance Indicators of Digital Marketing

The indicators that are used for measuring the performance of a company are called Key Performance Indicators, also known as KPIs (Flores 2014, 50).

There are two types of indicators: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative metrics measure the total audience of the campaign, such as the number of impressions, the number of clicks it generated, or number of items sold. Qualitative indicators show the direct and indirect effects of the message and how it was understood. (Flores 2014, 48.)

It is important to note the difference between marketing metrics and key performance indicators. While every marketing metric can be an important indicator, not all of them are “key” performance indicators. (Grigg 2016.)

The appropriate key performance indicators should be chosen based on the marketing objectives (Flores 2014, 50).

According to Chaffey and Smith (2013, 541), the common key performance indicators for assessing online performance are:

- ✓ Enquires or leads
- ✓ Sales
- ✓ Market share
- ✓ Return on investment

Other key performance indicators of e-marketing are number of unique website visitors, conversion rates, number of page impressions, repeat visits on websites, time spent on the website, popular pages, subscription rates, number of unsubscribes, bounce rate,

click-through rate, and social media engagement (shares, comments) rates. The number of hits alone is not enough to measure the performance of the website. Instead, many variables should be taken into account simultaneously, such as the number of sessions, page impressions, repeat visits, bounce rate and duration spent on the website. (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 542.)

Flores (2014, 40) has used the AIDA marketing model in order to determine which of the quantitative performance metrics should be measured and monitored. AIDA is a persuasion model that stands for attracting Attention, arousing Interest, inducing Desire, and causing Action. This model is applicable to digital marketing today as the objective is to get the customers attention, raise their interest, induce desire and cause action, such as purchasing the product. (Flores 2014, 40.)

Flores (2014, 40) applies the performance indicators to the AIDA model as:

- Attention – Website visits, unique visitors, number of impressions and time spent
- Interest – Coverage, affinity, clicks, click-through rate
- Desire – Clicks and click-through rate, conversion rate
- Action – Click-through rate, conversion rate

4.2 Quality Assessment

Customer experience is the new trend in digital marketing. Online reviews play a very important role in strengthening hospital's credibility, gaining trust and increase clickability. Clickability is more for the hospitals with a better rating. Online reviews have increasingly become the front to digital reputation. Reviews help the hospital to get noticed, lead to more sales and improve search engine rankings.

These stats illustrate that reviews are on the minds of all consumers:²⁹

- 40% of consumers form an opinion by reading one to three reviews, vs. 29% in 2014
- 26% of consumers say it's important that a local business responds to its reviews
- 88% trust reviews as much as personal recommendations, vs. 83% in 2014
- 23% will visit the business premises directly after reading positive reviews
- 95% of consumers suspect censorship or faked reviews when they don't see bad scores

4.2.1 Consumer Reviews and Ratings

The review ecosystem is booming and hospitals need to pay attention. 92% of customers consult review sites before making purchase decisions. When the average person has a question, they turn to Google. As of 2019, it is estimated that there are over 63,000 Google searches per second. Google is the first place customers go for any question they have or problems they need help solving. That means hospitals need to be ready to deliver when a customer is in need of their services. But, that's not the only one of Google's features that hospitals should be paying attention to. Google is not just the king of search. It's also the king of reviews. According to Google, there's been over 500% growth in searches for "near me" in recent years. This is a huge opportunity for hospitals to capitalize on.

Though every review platform is important, hospitals need to pay particularly close attention to the big players in the space. Today, the two dominant platforms in the review ecosystem are two companies you most likely know very well: Google and Facebook.

Google is the premier search engine and the nearest competitor (Bing) isn't even close. As a result, doing anything and everything to improve hospital's Google search ranking is worth it. When customers search for the hospital on Google, the first thing they will see is hospital's knowledge graph on the right side of their screen. Information about the hospital such as hours of operation and phone number is displayed clearly, along with hospital's overall review rating. Hospital's Google review rating will also be displayed clearly, along with ratings from other review sites such as Facebook and Justdial.

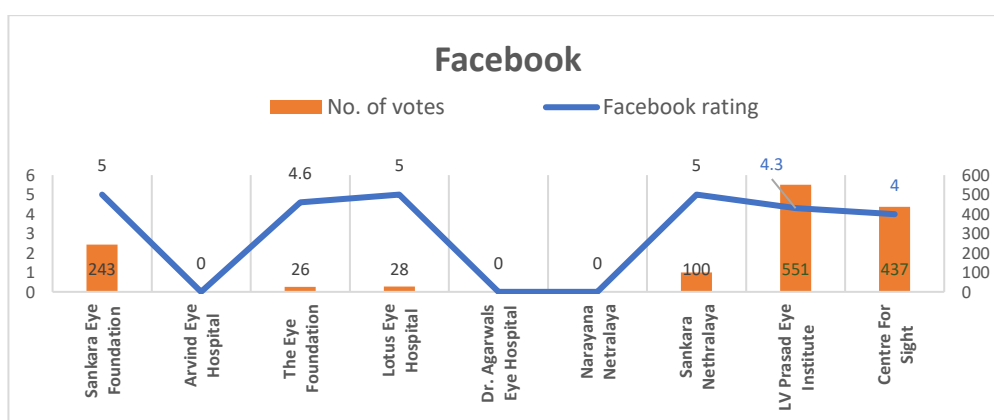


Figure 4.2: Comparison of Facebook ratings and reviews among selected Eye Hospitals

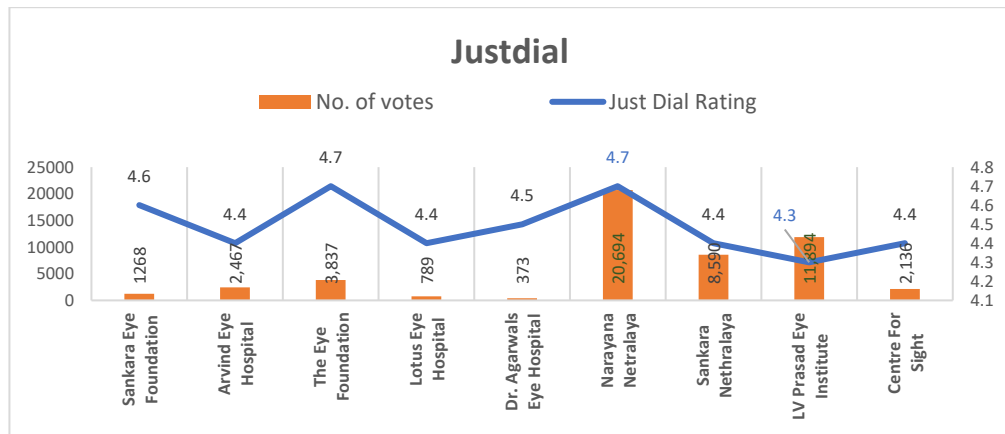


Figure 4.3: Comparison of Justdial ratings and reviews among selected Eye Hospitals

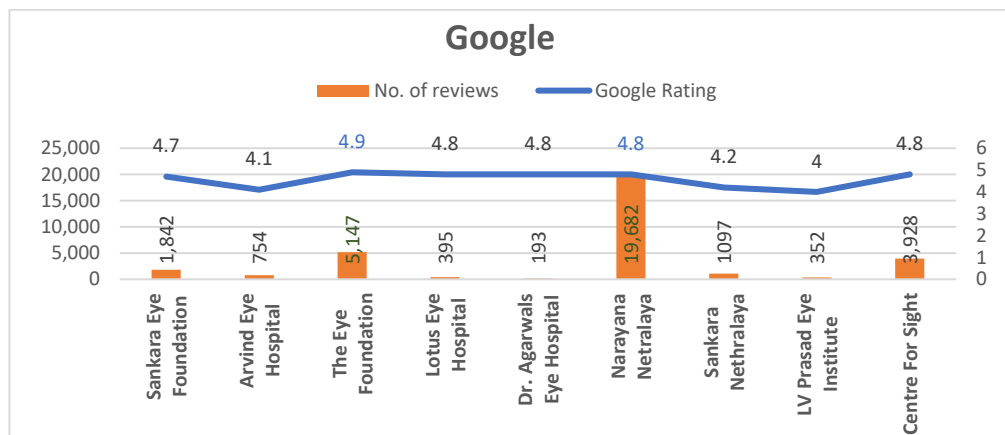


Figure 4.4: Comparison of Google ratings and reviews among selected Eye Hospitals

Figure 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 depicts that quality score on Facebook were found to be highest for L. V. Prasad Eye Institute followed by Centre for Sight, whereas consumer rating on Google and Justdial were highest for Narayana Nethralaya i.e. 4.8 and 4.7 respectively from total reviews of 19682 and 20694 reviews respectively.

On the other hand the quality score of Sankara Eye Foundation according to figure 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 is good, SEFI is getting good number of positive reviews but still there's a lot more scope to improve it. On google SEFI has got 4.7 rating from 1842 reviews which is not even close to the quality score of Narayana Nethralaya or The Eye Foundation. Also, on Justdial SEFI has got the 4.6 rating from 1268 reviews which is again not even close to quality score of Narayana Nethralaya or L V Prasad Eye Institute or Sankara Nethralaya. Plus, the Perfect rating score of 5 is often perceived doubtful by the consumers.

A collection of score near to 5 and other positive Google reviews actively increases hospital's position for relevant keywords. Along with a complete SEO marketing plan, earning positive Google reviews can spur hospital to the top of the world's most popular

search engine. In order for hospital to be able to receive (and benefit from) Google reviews, hospital need to have a Google My Business profile set up. Once it is in place, changes can be made to make it easier for customers to discover the hospital. Add high-resolution images, correct contact information, accurate hours of operation, and news and offers. This will help the hospital look more trustworthy both to customers and Google’s search algorithm. Just as updating Google My Business page helps your hospital’s visibility when it comes to search engines, updating hospital’s Facebook page will help to get discovered on News Feeds, since Facebook’s algorithm is partially based on hospital page’s credibility.

Facebook is the most popular social media platform of all time. We need Facebook reviews to ensure that hospital is well represented on such an influential platform. While Facebook reviews don’t help to dominate the search rankings, Facebook is a social platform made for conversation. Facebook allows hospital to converse with greater probability of an actual conversation with someone who leaves a review. This connectivity can further nurture a positive relationship or diffuse a bad impression and even convince someone to remove a negative review. While this can happen on a Google review, it is much more likely on Facebook.

Bottom line is, if hospital acquire most new website visitors through position in a competitive search field, Google reviews will be more important for that extra push up the rankings on page one. However, if a hospital acquire most of its customers through paid Facebook media campaigns or positive social media word-of-mouth, having those stellar Facebook reviews will be more important to the hospital.

4.2.2 Employer Review and Ratings

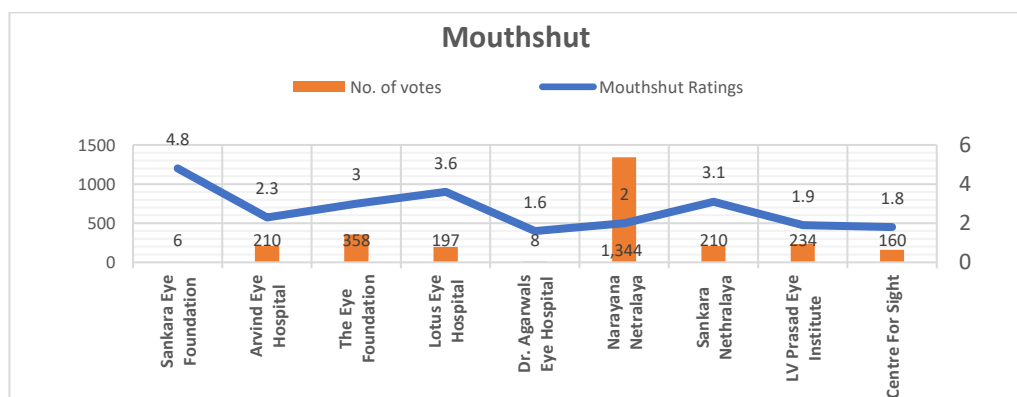


Figure 4.5: Comparison of Mouthshut ratings and reviews among competitors of SEFI

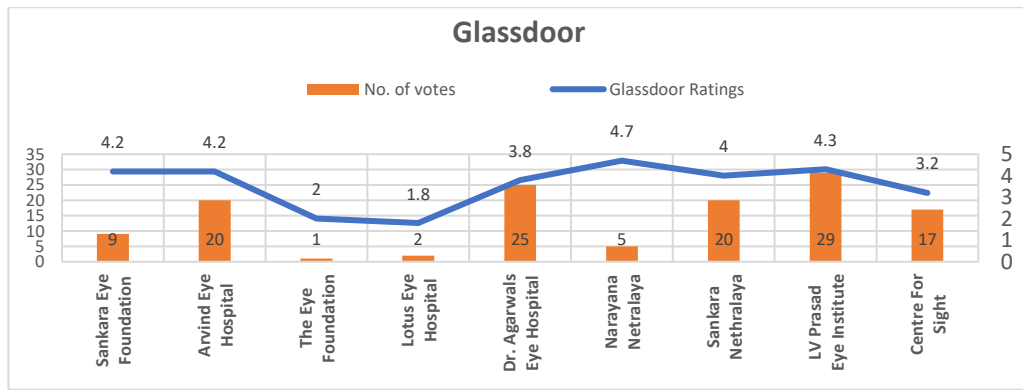


Figure 4.6: Comparison of Glassdoor ratings and reviews among selected Eye Hospitals

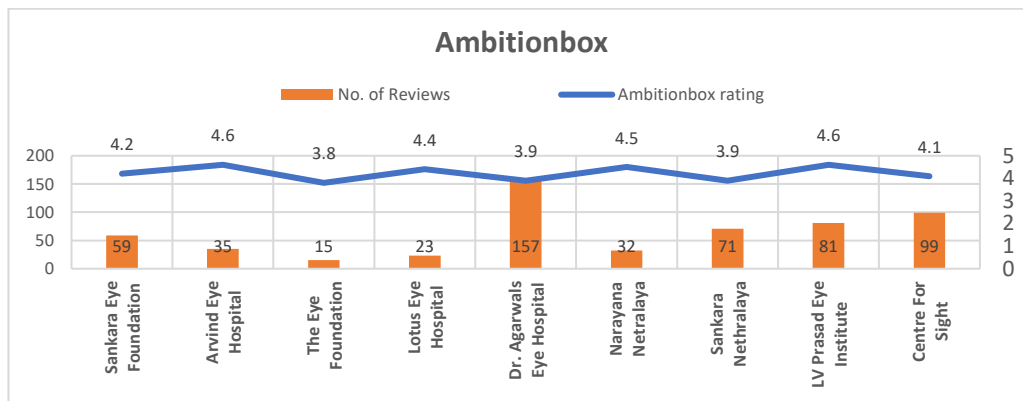


Figure 4.7: Comparison of Ambitionbox ratings and reviews among selected Eye Hospitals

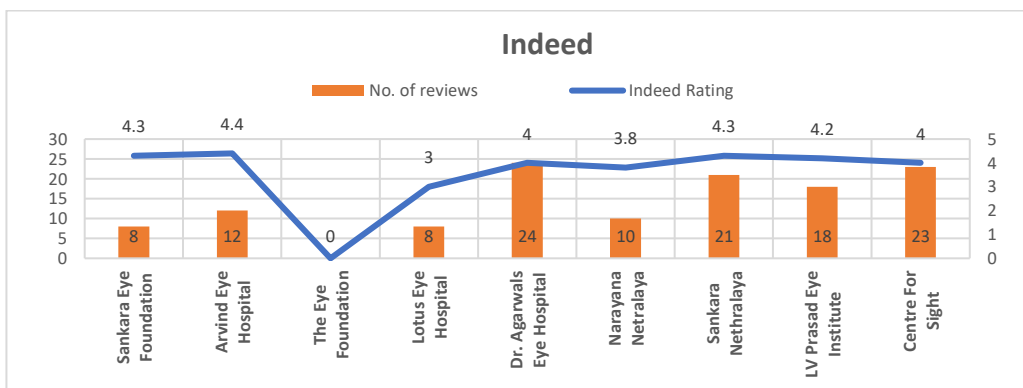


Figure 4.8: Comparison of Indeed ratings and reviews among selected Eye Hospitals

Here also in figure 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8, it is very clearly visible that Sankara Eye Hospital is getting positive reviews but not the desired amount of reviews. On the contrary competitors of SEFI, as we can see in figure 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, Lotus Eye Hospital, L V Prasad Eye Institute, Centre fort Sight and Sankara Nethralaya respectively are getting good amount of reviews compared to SEFI even though they are also not able get optimum good quality reviews. Managing online reputation has become crucial & plays a vital role in keeping the market image of any organisation

clean & secure and hence it is very crucial for SEFI to look into it. Although it is very interesting to note according to figure 4.5 that Narayana Nethralaya is getting reviews but not quality ones. This also holds true looking at figure 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 that they are not able to get good engagement from employees. Getting good amount of quality reviews is very important in order to manage online reputation.

These ratings are important as prospective new employees and potential customers are forming opinions about your business without ever talking to anyone at your organisation and employees are the best representation of the brand. Also, having recent reviews on these profile improves search relevancy and ensures that the organisation remains at the top of search results on these platforms.

Also, It helps to know what kind of quality the competitor organisations have. Are people liking the service they are providing and how much they like it. What kind of culture or commitment these organisations have towards their employees. This all information i.e. quality assessment, plus Competitive assessment and Social media assessment feed the decision making in order to create marketing plan.

4.3 SEO Assessment

Table 4.1: Data for SEO assessment of all the selected Eye Hospitals

Hospital	Domain	Organic keywords	Organic traffic (1 month)	Backlinks	Daily Time on Site (past 90 days)	Bounce Rate (past 90 days)	Domain authority
Sankara Eye Foundation	https://www.sankaraeye.com/	5,808	31,749	4,437	02:58	38.90%	32
Arvind Eye Hospital	https://arvind.org/	15,438	1,00,508	2,10,923	01:49	40.60%	57
The Eye Foundation	https://www.theeyefoundation.com/	4,513	23,184	4,452	06:56	28.60%	21
Lotus Eye Hospital	https://www.lotuseye.org/	3,554	63,292	3,728	02:18	78.60%	37
Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital	https://www.dragarwal.com/	18,488	1,16,162	8,731	03:10	55.00%	32
Narayana Nethralaya	https://www.narayananeethralaya.org/	7,680	25,019	3,071	02:32	48.00%	29

Sankara Nethralaya	https://www.sankaranethralaya.org/	10,635	44,775	40,716	01:55	43.80%	33
LV Prasad Eye Institute	https://www.lvpei.org/	10,981	50,385	26,636	03:04	33.90%	44
Centre For Sight	https://www.centreforsight.net	21,705	1,66,904	9,878	03:32	46.20%	33

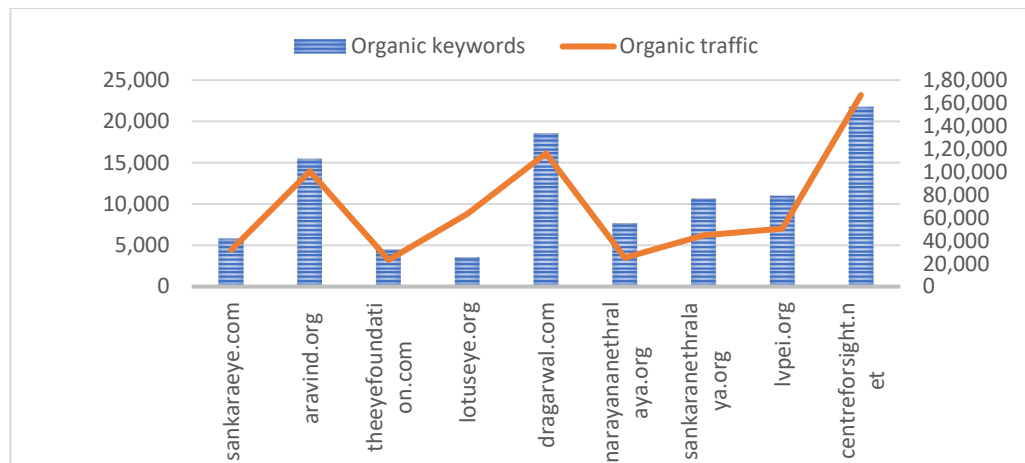


Figure 4.9: Organic keywords and organic traffic among selected Eye Hospitals

Figure 4.9 demonstrates the comparison for the total number organic keywords optimised and the organic traffic attracted by each of the nine hospitals in a month. It was seen that the number of keywords the website domain of Sankara eye foundation ranks for in the organic search is very low i.e. 5808 as compared to the competitors like Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital and Centre for Sight Hospital which have 18,488 and 1,66,904 organic keywords respectively. Also organic traffic attracted by SEFI was found to be only 31749 which is not even near to tough competitors in SEO like Centre for Sight, Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital and Aravind Eye Hospital which has a organic traffic of 166904, 116162, and 1,00,508 respectively. Sankara Eye Hospital stands at seventh position in terms of organic traffic it is fetching in month considering organic keywords and the number of keywords their domain ranks for in the organic search among all of the nine hospitals in study.

Keywords are ideas and topics that define what the content is about. In terms of SEO, they're the words and phrases that searchers enter into search engines, also called "search queries." Keywords are important because they are the linchpin between what

people are searching for and the content the organisation is providing to fill that need. The goal in ranking on search engines is to drive organic traffic to hospital's website from the search engine result pages (SERPs), and the keywords the organisations choose to target will determine what kind of traffic they get. Users visiting hospital's website from a search engine's organic results have a very specific intent and if the organisation can provide them with a solution or answer to their question, they are more likely to convert.

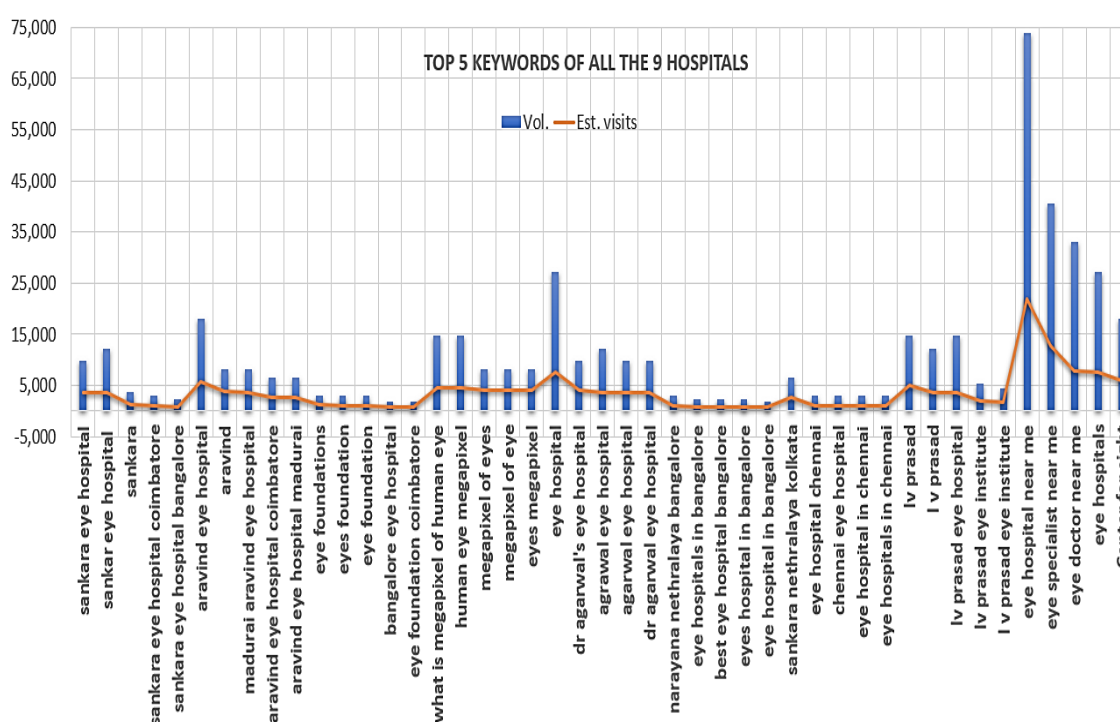


Figure 4.10: Top five keywords of all the selected Eye Hospitals

This study also undertakes the keyword assessment since Organic keywords are one important cornerstone of effective SEO. Figure 4.10 reveals that the volume for keywords like 'near me' and for long-tail keywords is very high i. e. number of searches for these type of keywords during a month is very high as compared to other keywords. Also a estimated traffic from google to the organisation's web page for these terms is very high. Singular keywords might appear to be the ultimate goal as they often have temptingly high search volume. However, they usually have extremely tough competition. On top of that strong competition, singular keywords can be infuriatingly vague. Long-tail keywords usually have more clearly defined intent. Also, long-tail keywords have less competition, with room for a smaller site to break in and make their mark on the SERPs. Out of all the competitors of SEFI, Centre for Sight followed by

Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital and Lotus Eye Hospital have nicely done the keywords optimisation among all the hospitals. Aravind Eye Hospital is also doing really well in keyword research. On the other hand, for Sankara Eye Foundation, there is further scope to improve.

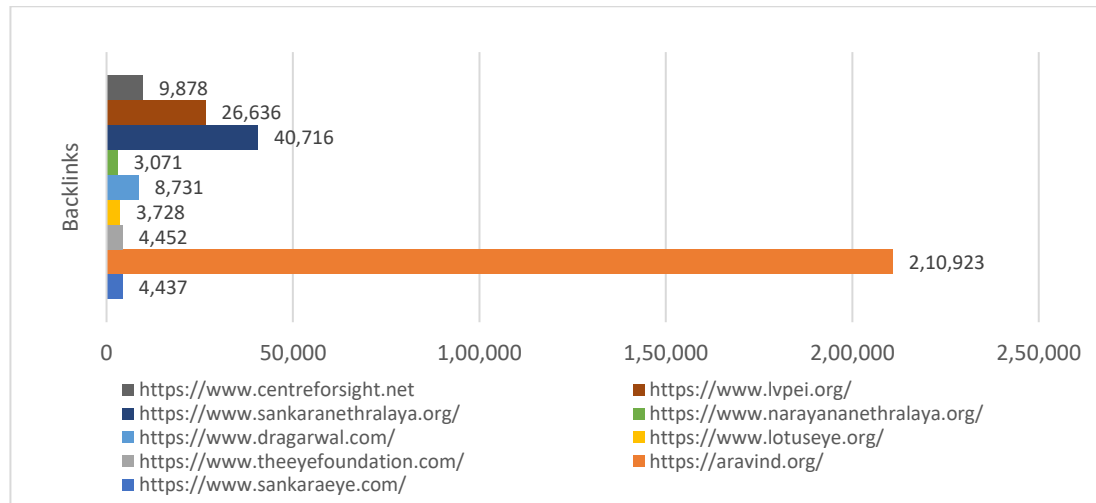


Figure 4.11: Backlinks comparison among selected Eye Hospitals

Backlinks are important for SEO because they signal to Google that another resource finds your content valuable enough to link to it within their own content. As a website earns additional backlinks, search engines infer that the website possesses valuable content worth ranking well on the SERPs.

Figure 4.11 demonstrates the backlink comparison for all the nine hospitals in study. It depicts that the incoming hyperlinks or inbound links from other websites to the domain of Aravind eye Hospital are highest i.e. 2,10,923 among all the hospitals followed by Sankara Nethralaya with 40715 backlinks, whereas Sankara Eye Foundation is positioned at 7th place with 4,437 backlinks. Among all the hospitals Narayana Nethralaya have least number of backlinks followed by Lotus Eye Hospital.

Earning backlinks organically is difficult, and while creating new content isn't guaranteed to generate backlinks, a strong content strategy will be crucial to building backlinks to website. Publishing content regularly and coordinating outreach via your network, customers, and social media is key to gaining traction with the audience. Backlinks are foundational to SEO and play an influential role in search engine ranking. If a website is trusted that receives backlinks from other sites, search engines like Google will also see it as trustworthy. This will give web pages better opportunity at

ranking well, improve content's discoverability by people and searchbots, and increase referral traffic.

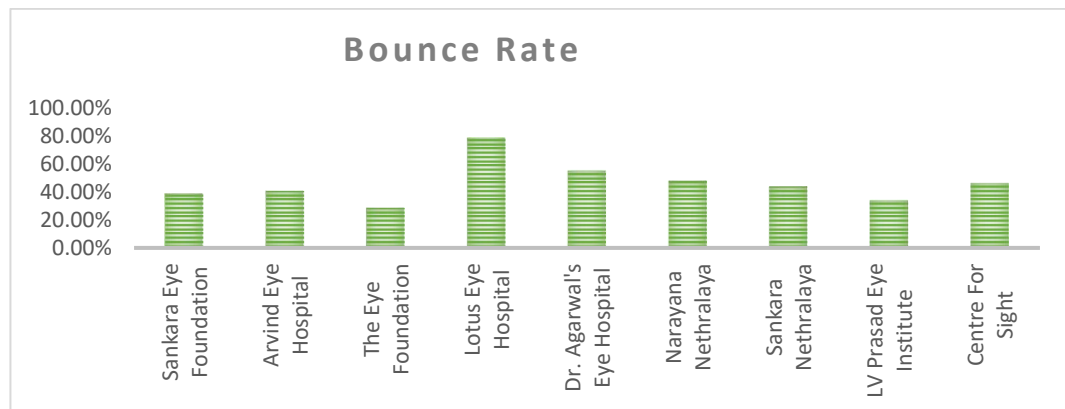


Figure 4.12: Bounce rate comparison among selected Eye Hospitals

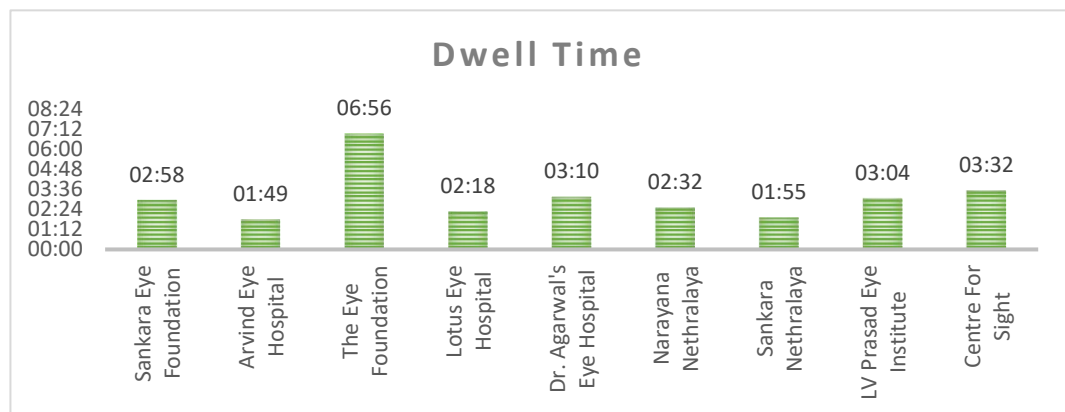


Figure 4.13: Dwell time comparison among selected Eye Hospitals

Figure 4.12 and 4.13 shows that the bounce rate for Sankara Eye Foundation is low and dwell time is average in comparison to other hospitals which clearly indicates that there's a need to improve user experience on the webpage. The eye foundation is way ahead in this aspect. They have highest dwell time i.e. 6 minutes and 56 seconds which is way more than other competitors. The Eye Foundation is also have a lowest bounce rate. This means that they have optimised their webpage enough to improve user experience. Centre for Sight and L V Prasad Eye Institute are also able to hold the audience on their webpage for quite a long time but on the other hand Aravind Eye Hospital is drastically lagging behind in this aspect. Instead of having good amount of organic traffic they are not able hold the audience on their webpage for long time. Dwell time is the amount of time a user takes analysing a web page before clicking back to search results. If a web page has a low dwell time, it likely means the page didn't match the user's search intent.

It's important to note, dwell time and bounce rate are two different things. Bounce rate is what happens when a user clicks on one page, and then almost immediately leaves the site. For it to be considered dwell time, on the other hand, the user needs to click on a page from the SERP, stay a while, and then either click back to the SERP or otherwise exit the page. High bounce rates are symptoms of deeper problems like user experience issues or poor targeting. Simply, if hospital's webpage has a high bounce rate, but users on your page also have a high dwell time. By taking dwell time into account, hospital can avoid unnecessarily optimizing for bounce rate. Though hospital should check following few SEO problems like slow loading speed of website, mismatch between content and keywords, poor mobile optimisation, low quality web page design etc. when your bounce rate is abnormally high.

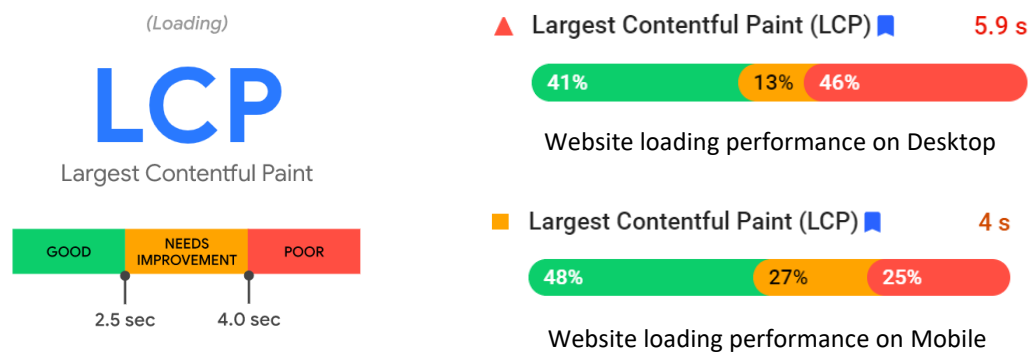


Figure 4.14: Website Loading Performance of SEFI
(Source: developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights)

Largest Contentful Paint (LCP) in the figure 4.14 is a measure of loading performance of website. It depicts that there is still a very large scope to work on websites's loading performance as it was found out that 59% elements responsible for website to load effectively in case of Desktop and 52% in case of mobile needs improvement. To provide a good user experience, LCP should occur within 2.5 seconds of when the page first starts loading which is not true in case of SEFI. It takes 5.9 seconds and 4 seconds for page to load in desktop and mobile respectively which is very high compared to the standard of 2.5 seconds.

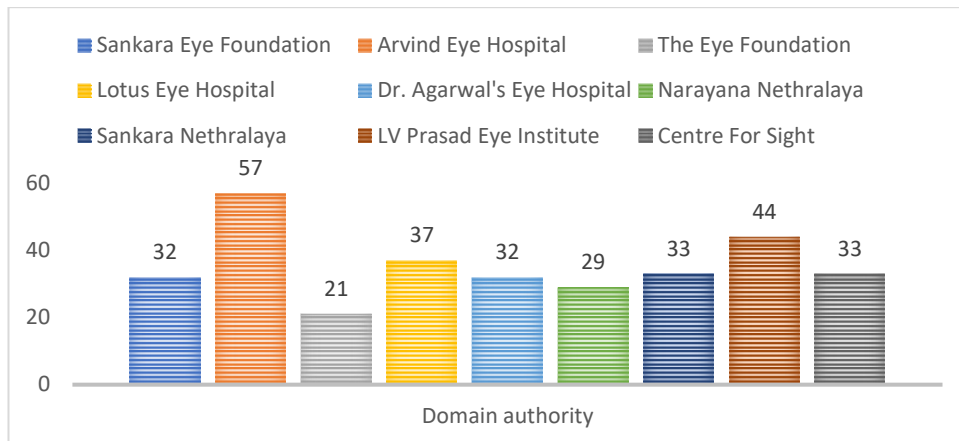


Figure 4.15: Comparison of Domain authority among selected Eye Hospitals

Figure 4.15 depicts that the Aravind Eye Hospital have the highest domain authority i.e. 57 among all the hospitals whereas it is least i.e. 21 for The Eye Foundation. SEFI stands at 7th place among all the hospitals for domain authority with a score of 32 which is not a bad score but can be improved.

Domain Authority predicts how likely a domain is to appear in the SERPs compared to its competitors. Google doesn't use Domain Authority as a ranking factor to decide how to rank websites. So it isn't a metric that will improve ranking in the search engine results page (SERPs). However, domain authority is a good indicator that will help to assess the performance of the website in relation to competitors.

Different SEO tools such as SEMrush have developed their own Authority metric — which is an algorithm that uses data from backlinks, referring domains, or search traffic, among others, to decide the Authority score. So, although it isn't an official ranking factor used by Google, it's a useful metric to know your site health in relation to your competitors. And according to the Figure 4.11, 4.14 and 4.1, it is very clear that site's health of SEFI is not good. Having very less number of backlinks, poorly optimised website for mobile, poor loading performance is contributing to the low domain authority score for SEFI.

4.4 Social Media Assessment

Table 4.2: Data for Facebook assessment of all the selected Eye hospitals
(Data- until May 2021)

Hospital	Name of the handle	Total likes	Total follows	No. of visits	Talkin g about this	Since year	Profile picture
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Sankara Eye Foundation	Sankara Eye Hospitals	5,227	5,339	186	204	04/08/2009 (11 years, 9 months)	
Arvind Eye Hospital	Aravid Eye Care System	7,173	8,188	NA	270	13/03/2015 (6 years, 2 months)	
The Eye Foundation	The Eye Foundation	16,646	16,796	273	29	19/09/2012 (8 years, 8 months)	
Lotus Eye Hospital	Lotus Eye Hospital and Institute (TN)	12,920	13,099	648	262	01/07/2014 (6 years, 10 months)	
Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital	Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital	3,05,000	3,05,000	189	NA	18/02/2012 (9 years, 3 months)	
Narayana Nethralaya	Narayana Nethralaya	17,820	18,673	2,741	612	01/08/2011 (9 years, 9 months)	
Sankara Nethralaya	SankaraNethralaya	91,162	91,768	4,852	1,225	28/11/2011 (9 years, 6 months)	
LV Prasad Eye Institute	L V Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI)	19,830	21,111	18,569	1,322	19/01/2011 (10 years, 4 months)	
Centre For Sight	Centre For Sight	2,93,752	2,95,504	1,550	211	14/05/2012 (9 years)	

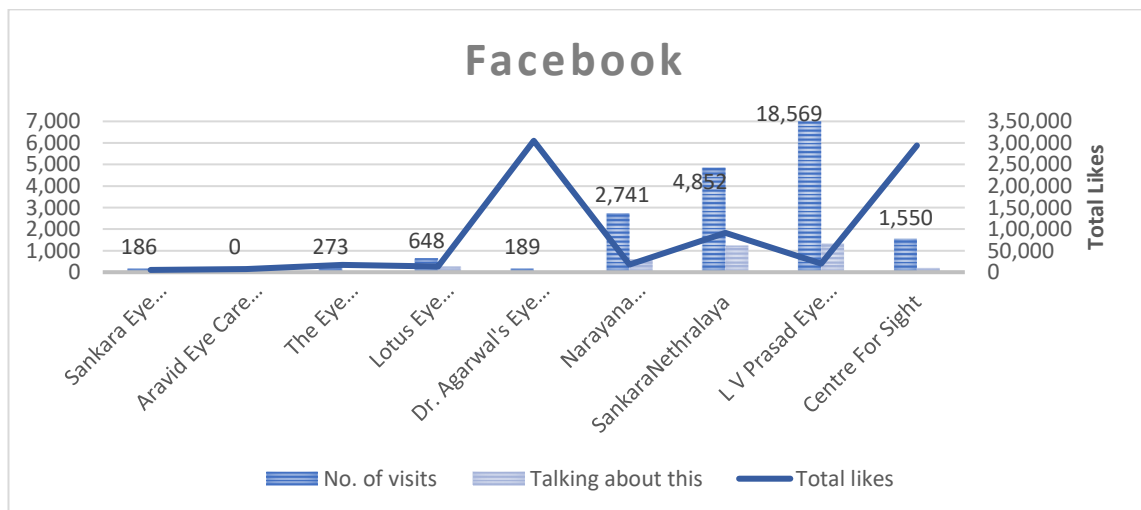


Figure 4.16: Performance of selected Eye Hospitals on Facebook

Table 4.2 and Figure 4.16 depicts that SEFI is struggling to engage the audience on Facebook in spite of the fact that SEFI's presence on this platform is longest. SEFI

stands at ninth position out of nine hospitals taken in this study. SEFI is not able to get as many likes, follows, visits or check-ins as anyone of its competitors. Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital is doing outstanding with more than 3 lakh likes and follows followed by Centre of Sight Hospital with 2,93,752 likes and follows. People like to post check-in for L V Prasad Eye Institute followed by Sankara Nethralaya.

Now, 'talking about this' metric, it is very important matrix to look at, as this shows the page engagement which any organisation is more interested in. This metric tells the number of people who have created a story from your Page post. Stories include: When someone Likes your page, sharing, liking or commenting on post, answering a question, responding to an event, mentions the page, tags the page in a photo, etc. The lead in this domain is L V Prasad Eye Institute followed by Sankara Nethralaya.

In conclusion, It's very interesting to see that Sankara Nethralaya doing exceptionally well. Even though they do not have maximum number of followers, people want to post check-ins and also they are getting good overall engagement. Now, even though Centre of Sight Hospital have second highest number of followers among all the hospitals, they are lagging when it comes to engagement i.e. they are not able to convert the audience into a quality audience; whereas L V Prasad Eye Institute and Sankara Nethralaya are able to convert them.

**Table 4.3: Data for Twitter assessment of all the selected Eye hospitals
(Data- until May 2021)**

Hospital	Name of the handle	No. of followers	No. of tweets	Since year	Frequency of tweets	Profile picture
Sankara Eye Foundation	SankaraEyeFoundation [@SankaraV2020]	1,289	1,332	07/2009 (11 years, 10 months)	9-10 tweets/month	
Arvind Eye Hospital	AravindEyeFdn [@AravindEye]	1,421	529	11/2011 (9 years, 6 months)	4-5 tweets/month	
The Eye Foundation	The Eye Foundation [@eye_foundation]	39	276	05/2013 (8 years)	2-3 tweets/month	
Lotus Eye Hospital	LOTUS EYE HOSPITAL & INSTITUTE [@SkSundaramurthy]	388	643	04/2010 (11 years, 1 month)	4-5 tweets/month	
Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital	Dr.Agarwals [@dragarwals_eye]	1,144	5,602	03/2011 (10 years, 2 months)	45-46 tweets/month	

Narayana Nethralaya	Narayana Nethralaya [@Nnethralaya]	119	116	08/2011 (9 years, 9 months)	~1 tweet/month	
Sankara Nethralaya	Sankara Nethralaya [@Snethralaya]	14	1	09/2018 (2 years, 8 months)	NA	No profile pic!
LV Prasad Eye Institute	LVPEI [@lvprasadeye]	2,693	4,411	02/2010 (11 years, 3 months)	32-33 tweets/month	
Centre For Sight	Centre for Sight [@CentreForSight1]	5,904	3,981	05/2012 (9 years)	36-37 tweets/month	

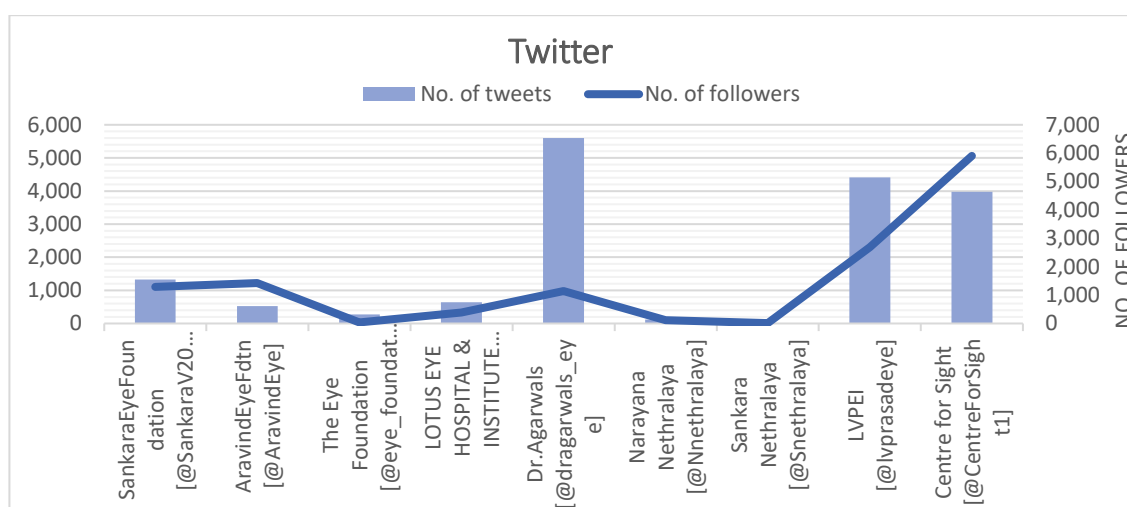


Figure 4.17: Performance of selected Eye Hospitals on Twitter

Table 4.3 and Figure 4.17 shows that Centre for Sight Hospital is very successful on Twitter with maximum number of followers i.e. 5,904. They are able to engage their audience effectively by posting quality tweets with average frequency of 36 to 37 tweets per months. L V Prasad Eye Institute followed by Aravind Eye Hospital is also doing good with 2,693 and average frequency of 32 to 33 tweets per month. Sankara Eye Hospital's presence on Twitter is longest among all the hospitals and yet they have very less number of followers i.e. 1,289 in comparison to competitors. Sankara Nethralaya and Narayana Nethralaya is almost inactive on twitter with 14 and 119 followers respectively and with less than 1 tweet per month. Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital is not able to gain good number of followers in spite of the fact that their average frequency of posting tweets is highest among all the hospitals i.e. 45 to 46 tweets per month. This clearly shows that the appealing tweets attract more followers.

Table 4.4: Data for YouTube assessment of all the selected Eye hospitals
(Data- until May 2021)

Hospital	Name of the handle	No. of subscribers	No. of views	No. of uploads	Since year	Frequency of posts	Post with max. no. of views
Sankara Eye Foundation	Sankara Eye Foundation India	2,360	1,94,983	224	18/06/2013 (7 years, 11 months)	2-3 post/month	Post-operative Eye Cleaning- 13,756 views
Arvind Eye Hospital	Aravind Eye Care System	4,730	2,05,793	242	01/04/2010 (11 years, 1 month)	1-2 posts/month	Special address by the District Collector Mr. U. Sagayam- 16,285 views
The Eye Foundation	The Eye Foundation Patient Information	591	2,32,528	52	05/08/2013 (7 years, 9 months)	~1 post/month	Eye Foundation Salem Promo Video 2- 56,228 views
Lotus Eye Hospital	Lotus Eye Hospital and Institute (KL)	776	67,144	85	25/01/2015 (6 years, 4 months)	1-2 post/month	What to do in case of cataracts? Dr. Savithri speaks- 13,111 views
Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital	Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital, Registered Office	1510	1,21,892	56	18/09/2015 (5 years, 8 months)	~1 post/month	Retina surgery video- 31,701 views
Narayana Nethralaya	Narayana Nethralaya	7,210	6,90,482	515	08/09/2014 (6 years, 8 months)	6-7 posts/month	Best Foods to Boost Your Eye Health Narayana Nethralaya- 1,69,320 views
Sankara Nethralaya	Sankara Nethralaya	15,600	16,14,919	173	16/06/2007 (13 years, 11 months)	1-2 post/month	Mahatria Ra the spiritualist wakes up his audience to the 'realities' of life- 3,39,543 views
LV Prasad Eye Institute	L V Prasad Eye Institute	7,530	6,80,223	509	21/12/2011 (9 years, 5 months)	4-5 post/month	Cataract eye surgery- 37,027 views
Centre For Sight	Centre For Sight	2,800	11,70,367	96	15/05/2012 (9 years)	~1 post/month	Centre for Sight, North India's best private eye care hospital now in Kanpur- 2,98,010 views

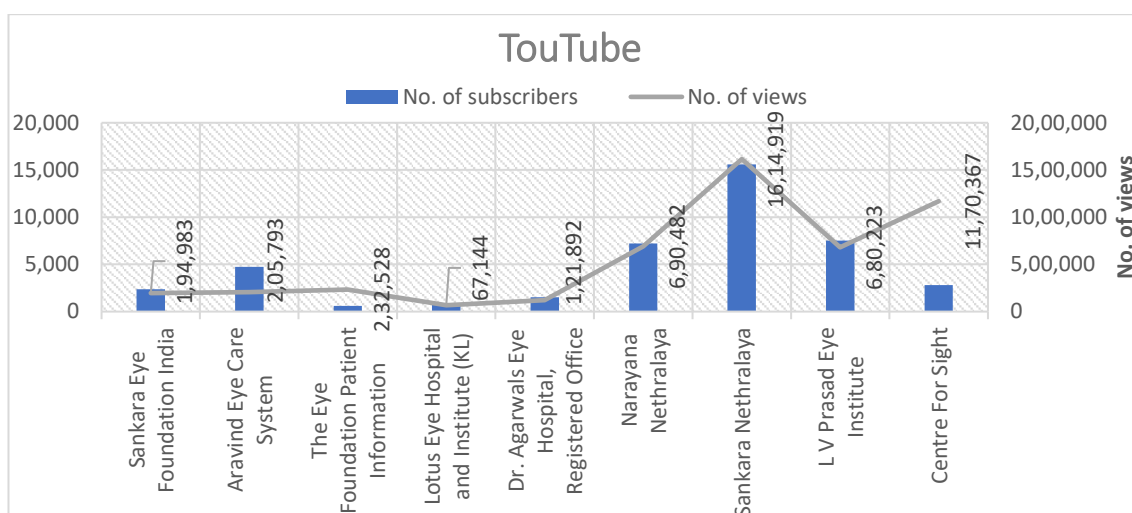


Figure 4.18: Performance of selected Eye Hospitals on YouTube

Table 4.4 and Figure 4.18 demonstrates that the top three performing hospitals for YouTube are Sankara Nethralaya followed by L V Prasad Eye Institute and Narayana Nethralaya with 15600, 7530 and 7210 subscribers. Sankara Nethralaya without a doubt tops the chart as the engagement they are getting is also highest among all the hospitals. If we further see the posts with maximum number of like for all the hospitals, Sankara Nethralaya have got highest views i.e. 339543. Even though their average frequency of post is only 1 to 2 posts per month. The quality of content matters a lot in video marketing and that is what they are doing. They have the longest presence on YouTube among all the hospitals.

On the other hand Sankara Eye Foundation is not able to perform well on YouTube. With 2360 subscribers they stands at sixth place out of nine hospitals taken in study. SEFI's frequency of posting on YouTube is 2 to 3 posts per month and their post with maximum number of views have got 13756 views. This shows that SEFI needs to strategize their social media marketing plan. They need to figure out what kind of content audience wants to see. The Eye Foundation, Lotus Eye Hospital and Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospitals are not very active on YouTube.

Table 4.5: Data for Instagram assessment of all the selected Eye hospitals (Data-until May 2021)

Hospital	Name of the handle	No. of followers	No. of posts	Year since (1st post)	Frequency of posts	Post with max. no. of likes
Sankara Eye Foundation	sankaraeye hospitals	1,282	312	20-06-2017 (3 years, 11 months)	6-7 posts/month	Mucormycosis Awareness (Video)- 1634 likes

Arvind Eye Hospital	aravindeye foundation	716	23	31/05/2020 (1 year)	1-2 posts/month	Inauguration of 82nd Vision Center- 37 likes
The Eye Foundation	theeyefoundation	314	181	02/03/2020 (1 year, 2 months)	12-13 posts/month	Raising awareness about glaucoma and eye disease at TEF- 58 likes
Lotus Eye Hospital	lotuseyehospital.kochi	1073	367	31/10/2016 (4 years, 6 months)	6-7 posts/month	Eye diseases and remedies in children Importance of Vision Screening- 50 likes
Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital	dragarwalseye	1,415	298	13/12/2019 (1 year, 5 months)	17-18 posts/month	Fighting Black Fungus - Mucormycosis with Dr. Amar Agarwal (Video)- 2585 views
Narayana Nethralaya	narayananeethralaya	1,137	850	13/07/2017 (3 years, 10 months)	18-19 posts/month	Flash Mob on Glaucoma Awareness in Orion Mall, Bangalore (Video)- 1036 views
Sankara Nethralaya	Not using!					
LV Prasad Eye Institute	lvprasadeyeinstitute	2,290	310	09/03/2020 (1 year, 2 months)	22-23 posts/month	Sai Life Sciences Eye Centre, LVPEI's 3rd #CityCentre in #Telangana, inaugurated at Alwal, Secunderabad- 869 views
Centre For Sight	centreforsight1	10,300	1,375	02/02/2016 (5 years, 3 months)	21-22 posts/month	At CFS, we are ready to address all your queries and concerns, all under our eye experts' guidance- 29170 views

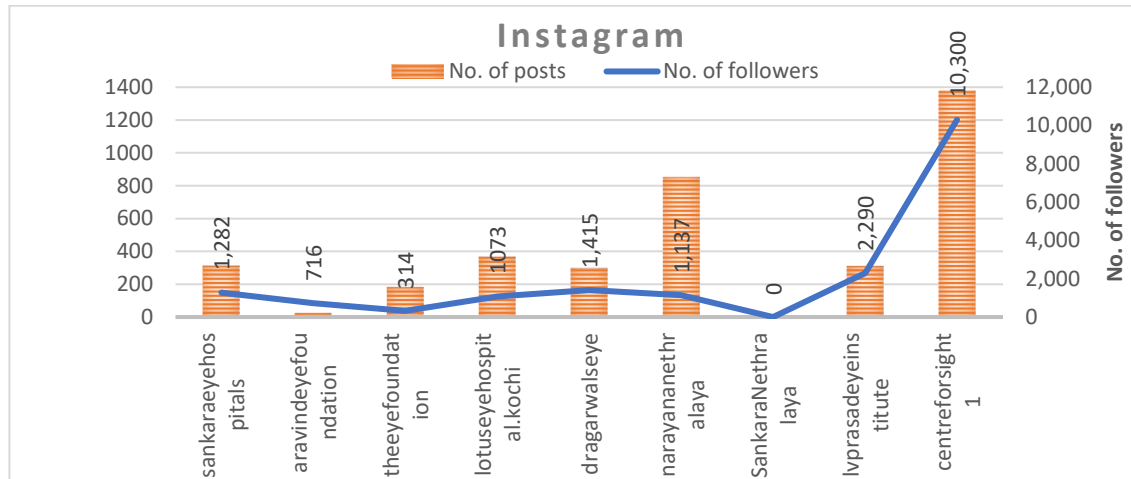


Figure 4.19: Performance of selected Eye Hospitals on Instagram

Table 4.5 and figure 4.19 depicts that Centre for Sight Hospital have performed exceptionally well on Instagram. With 10300 followers this hospital have secured first place out of 9 hospitals taken in study. They post content on Instagram with a frequency of 21 to 22 posts per month. Having longest presence on Instagram among all the

hospitals they have posted maximum i.e. 1375 posts in 5 years and 3 months. Their post with maximum number of views have highest i.e. 29170 views among all the hospitals. So, without a doubt Centre for Sight Hospital is way ahead than other hospitals taken in study. This hospital is ahead by 8010 followers than L V Prasad Eye Institute which stands at second place. But It is interesting to note that L V Prasad Eye Institute have gained 2290 followers in just 1 year and 2 months. They are also posting almost 22 to 23 posts per month.

On the other hand Sankara Eye Foundation is positioned at fourth place with 1282 followers. Although, Sankara Eye Foundation is performing better on Instagram than on Facebook, Twitter or YouTube, they have to increase the frequency of post in order to engage more followers.

Table 4.6: Data for LinkedIn assessment of all the selected Eye hospitals
(Data- until May 2021)

Hospital	Name of the handle	No. of followers	Profile pic
Sankara Eye Foundation	Sankara Eye Foundation , India	311	
Arvind Eye Hospital	ARAVIND EYE CARE SYSTEM	778	
The Eye Foundation	The Eye Foundation	89	
Lotus Eye Hospital	Lotus Eye Hospital & Institute. Kerala & Tamilnadu	88	
Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital	Dr.Agarwal's Eye Hospital	6,607	
Narayana Nethralaya	Narayana Nethralaya Eye Hospital	2,330	
Sankara Nethralaya	Sankara Nethralaya - India	197	No profile pic!
LV Prasad Eye Institute	L V PRASAD EYE INSTITUTE	5,243	
Centre For Sight	Centre for Sight	13,235	

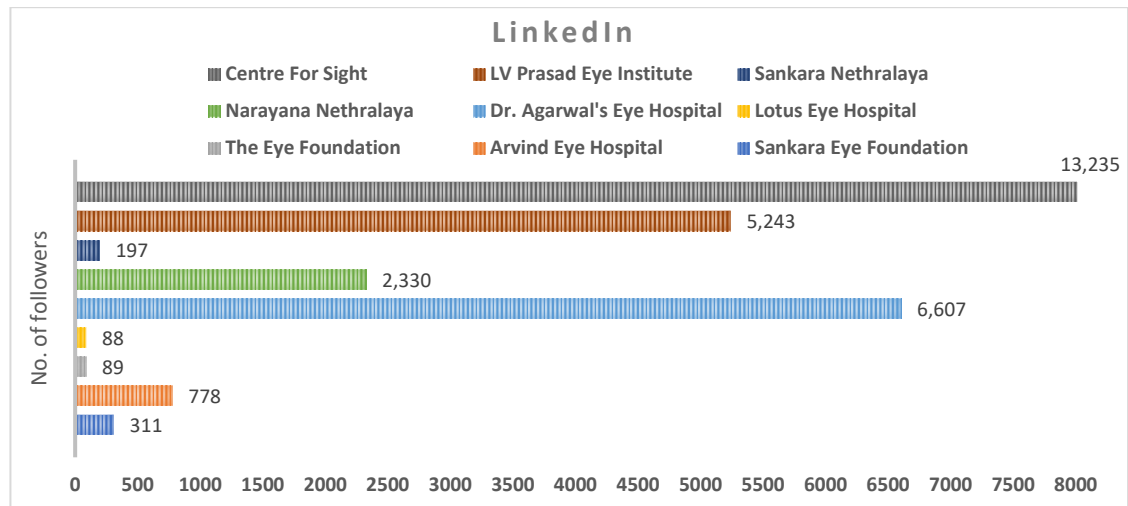


Figure 4.20: Performance of selected Eye Hospitals on LinkedIn

Table 4.6 and figure 4.20 shows that Centre for Sight hospital is able to gain maximum number of followers i.e. 13235 on LinkedIn. Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital and L V Prasad Eye Institute is also performing well on LinkedIn with 6607 and 5243 followers respectively. On the contrary Sankara Eye Foundation is not very active on LinkedIn. They have only 311 followers. Based on the 2015 social media marketing industry report, in the current scenario, LinkedIn has now crossed Facebook as the most important platform for B2B companies and marketers. In addition, around 21% B2C marketers suggested that LinkedIn is their most preferred platform compared to 41% of B2B marketers. Hence, it is safe to say that B2B marketers and companies have now prioritized LinkedIn marketing strategies over Facebook.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1- Discussion

This study on Digital marketing practices adopted by selected Eye Hospitals reveals that SEFI is doing well in terms of gaining positive reviews on online rating platforms like Facebook, Google and Justdial. For Social Media Marketing, it was found that SEFI is achieving good results in terms of engagement rate per post but falling a little short in reaching number of new followers. SEFI is performing well on Instagram when compared with other social media platforms.

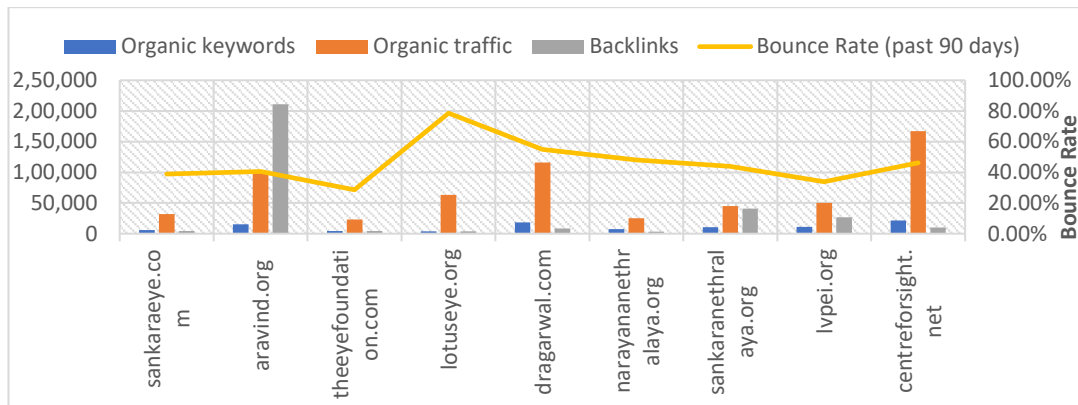


Figure 5.1: SEO performance of selected Eye Hospitals

Also, study revealed that there is a further scope to improve for SEFI in SEO. Organic traffic can be improved further by working on keywords and backlinks. It was found that to provide a good user experience, LCP should occur within 2.5 seconds of when the page first starts loading which is not true in case of SEFI. It takes 5.9 seconds and 4 seconds for page to load in desktop and mobile respectively which is very high compared to the standard of 2.5 seconds, which contributes to the low performance of SEFI's website in many ways. Results of the study have depicted that SEFI stands at seventh place for Search Engine Optimisation out of nine Eye Hospitals in study. For Social Media, SEFI is performing slightly well on Instagram when compared with SEFI's own other social media platforms but when compared with competitors it was not the case. There is a tough competition to SEFI in digital space especially from Centre for Sight, L V Prasad Eye Institute and in case of SEO, Aravind Eye Hospital, Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital and Centre for Sight.

Literature suggests that, for a marketer, it is essential to provide patients with appropriate knowledge and gain their trust through digital strategies such as branding, social media, email marketing, content marketing, video marketing, search engine optimization, web design, app development, mobile marketing, affiliate marketing, influencer marketing and search engine marketing (Burgess et al., 2015)

Literature provides the study with evidence that social media provides large opportunity for health promotion, enabling health professionals to reach out far and wide and directly to the public on multiple health issues and at the same time its cautious use is imperative to prevent colossal damage. Social media, a communication boon for the healthcare Industry has the potential to promote and change many health-related behaviours and issues particularly in times of crisis. (Anita Gupta, 2013)

Literature reveals that Digital Marketing helps organizations to promote products/services via multiple forms of electronic channels and methods which help to reach their target audiences more accurately and these marketing campaigns can be evaluated in real time using consumer behaviour insights (Kannan, 2017). There is a quantum leap in use of DM and electronic trade by companies today, building an interactive two-way connection between the company and consumers (Parsons, 1998). The main aim of DM is serving consumers instantly and acquiring consumer feedback at minimal costs, DM also creates close relationships with consumers to achieve long term organisational objectives (Ratchford et al., 2007).

Literature also highlights that, In hospital, two-way communication is a necessary element that requires deliberation to gain the trust of the patients. Patients as customers always look for better healthcare services. Thus, building and maintaining relationships with patient customers is an obligatory step for hospitals. The DM mix is an innovative concept that deals with the integrated relationship with customers which primarily focuses on determining 3 critical aspects -add value to build effective content, allow feasibility to get product response and integrated communication with the customer (Varadarajan and Yadav, 2009). The mix supports in developing a strong relationship with customers which is a huge advantage for healthcare organisations and also takes into account the needs and requirement of customers. Hinsberg and Maandi (2018) discuss that health services messages should be educational, trustworthy and yet simple to understand. While it is important to remain reliable, the information provided should not use too many complex terms. Hinsberg (2018) suggests using visuals to get the message across, especially for online communication. Infographics could be a great way to create a figurative understanding of health-care information among the target audience.

5.2- Limitations

The study is limited to the sector of healthcare hence cannot be generalised to the other sectors. Due to unavailability of paid version of online visibility management tool only certain metric have been taken into consideration for the study. Also since the free software were used, only recent few months data was available. There is further scope of conducting a detailed study in each sector. Due to time factor only few metrics of digital marketing techniques were considered for this study. However, there is tremendous scope for conducting detailed study in each digital marketing technique.

There is a further scope of conducting research in evaluating the feasibility of digital marketing techniques exclusively for Sankara Eye Foundation, India.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1- Conclusion

Results of the study indicates that Sankara Eye Foundation needs to strategize the plan for search engine optimisation as well as Social Media Marketing. Present strategy does not seem to be successful in fetching traffic, hold audience for long on their page and engaging with them. Some of the factors responsible for this are Slow loading speed, low-quality webpage design, mismatch between content and keywords, poor mobile optimization. They have very less number of keywords and backlinks. And as a result the traffic is also very less. The use of digital marketing strategies has a direct impact on profit margins and the ability of a hospital business to grow. Having a proper social media posting schedule, content strategy considering the demand of population, website with optimised user experience, etc. is must in order to engage population.

Although SEFI is getting a good number of positive reviews on consumer based online rating sites, earning more positive Google reviews can spur hospital to the top of the world's most popular search engine. In order for hospital to be able to receive (and benefit from) Google reviews, Google My Business profile can be optimised.

Digital Marketing strategies provide a unique value proposition for each hospital and customer segmentation, enabling medical institutions to effectively focus on their target segment, examples include speciality treatments, brand image, word of mouth and search engine optimizations (Kannan, 2017)

Digital marketing offers accessible and affordable marketing options for the organizations. Online marketing efforts provide immediate feedback for the marketing effort through to online analytics. Online marketing can also be a cost-effective way of marketing and the immediate analytics allow the organization to allocate resources in an effective way. However, it is important to consider the human and financial resources that digital marketing requires. Although easily accessible, digital marketing still requires knowledge, time and financial resources in order to be planned and implemented effectively. It would be important to set specific objectives and monitor

the results when implementing any digital marketing activity in order to use resources effectively.

6.2- Recommendations

Having established a good brand name within a industry SEFI should opt to make a statement in digital world. Currently SEFI is lagging behind in many aspects of Digital Marketing space. A holistic approach to marketing would help to make that happen for Sankara Eye Foundation, India. By taking holistic approach i.e. 360-degree approach to marketing SEFI can avoid leaving any gaps.

The concept of a 360-degree marketing plan refers to a marketing campaign that reaches customers at all possible points of contact. Successfully putting together such a plan is important because it will enables SEFI to maximize the chances of finding new potential customers and engaging them in a wide variety of ways.²⁸

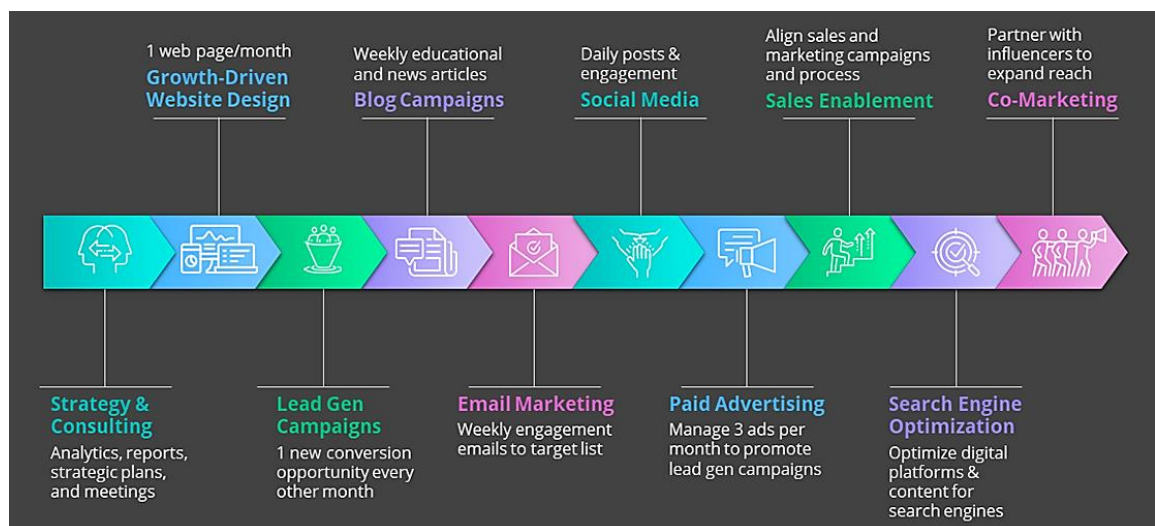


Figure 6.1: Example of Holistic Digital Marketing Plan

Advantages:

- It ensures consistency in messaging and design, which leads to brand recognition.
- It allows prospects to engage where and how they want, which improves lead generation.
- It provides more comprehensive data, which shows what's working and what's not.
- It delivers greater exposure, which gives companies an edge over the competition.
- It helps nurture existing customers, which increases retention and brand advocacy.

Putting such a plan into action means the organisation is not relying on a single method of reaching potential customers. It makes the organisation more flexible and quicker to adapt to market trends. Moreover, it allows the organisation to pivot with ease when customer needs and preferences change.

Strategy recommendations:

Some important SEO strategies for SEFI based on results of the study-

- ✓ Optimize Images
- ✓ Optimize Page Speed
- ✓ Use Internal Linking
- ✓ Improve the User Experience on Website by having good content strategy in place and website speed optimisation on Desktop as well as mobile device.
- ✓ Focus on Getting More Authoritative Backlinks by creating linkable assets and doing link reclamation.

SEO Content Strategy-

- ✓ Make a list of topics and long-tail keywords based on these topics
- ✓ Build pages for each topic
- ✓ Set up a blog
- ✓ Create a consistent blogging schedule
- ✓ Create a link-building plan
- ✓ Compress media files before uploading them to site
- ✓ Measure and track your content's success

Deploying these SEO strategies will help SEFI to increase rank in search engine results pages, giving more exposure to brand and this leads to more clicks, more website traffic, and eventually, more patient footfall.

Social Media strategies-

- ✓ Plan Social Content and Choose Formats- There is a need to balance different formats to ensure getting your key message across effectively, and some of the more popular formats are user-generated content, live streams, contests & competitions, case studies, etc.
- ✓ Create a Content Calendar
- ✓ Post documented content on social media that could be shared by the patients who have received the treatment. Engaging or educational content could bring extra value to the clients.
- ✓ Analyse and Measure Your Content's Performance

Email marketing is recommended for sending out monthly newsletters that included event schedule for the following month. In addition to providing more exposure for the events, this could be a good way of staying in contact with the professional community

of the organization. Email-follow up after treatment in order to increase the number of return customers.

Whether SEFI should outsource it or not?

Often, few organisations fail to consider the potential return from digital marketing and that they are likely to receive their investment back, potentially many-fold.

There is time commitment necessary to research SEO strategies, how to run PPC campaigns, how to do keyword research, how to write effective content, and even some basics on using Wordpress to the extent the practitioner will be posting his or her own content. While hiring a digital marketing specialist or agency may seem like a needless expense, a good company can cause the organisation's practice to grow beyond the expectations. Whether an organisation decides to implement a comprehensive digital marketing campaign that they manage through their own efforts or delegate the responsibilities to a digital marketing specialist, it is imperative that their practice develop an online presence or face the very real possibility of being rendered obsolete.

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