

DIGITAL MARKETING TRANSFORMATION IN THE OTC DRUG INDUSTRY

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The IIHMR University, Jaipur

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Master of Business Administration (MBA)

in

Pharmaceutical Management

By

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Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Dr. Ashok Peepliwal

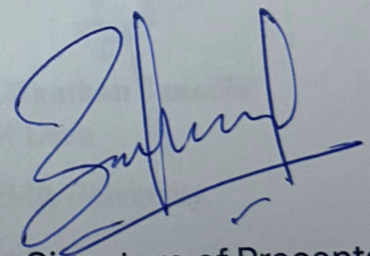
2024

CERTIFICATE

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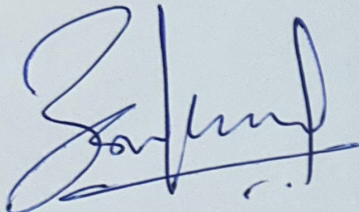
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Signature of Preceptor

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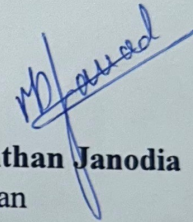
**Dr. Ashok Kumar Peepliwal**

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Date: 01/07/2024

DECLARATION BY STUDENT

In this declaration, I declare that the research for my dissertation, "*Digital Marketing Transformation in the OTC Drug Industry*," was carried out entirely on my own initiative.

I have not previously submitted this dissertation, in whole or in part, to any other academic body or institution for the award of any degree, diploma, or other qualification. It is the culmination of my own research.

In the preparation and making of this research paper, I have adhered to the highest standards of academic integrity. I have ensured that all information, data, and research findings sourced from both published and unpublished works have been appropriately cited and acknowledged. Where I have drawn upon the work of others, I have given full credit through detailed citations and references, thereby ensuring that the contributions of other scholars and researchers have been duly recognized.

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Acknowledgment

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Abstract

Nowadays for the OTC drugs pharmaceutical companies looking to increase market share and foster customer loyalty, it is essential to comprehend how these factors interact. This study looks at the different consumer education programmes and brand differentiation strategies used by over-the-counter pharmaceutical companies, based on case studies and industry research.

A new trend that has impacted many daily activities of people and businesses is digitization. With the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an even greater acceleration of digital adoption. Consequently, the industry has defined a new pattern of pharmaceutical marketing, known as pharmaceutical digital marketing (PDM), in a number of ways. Undoubtedly, the pharmaceutical industry's digital transformation has had the greatest impact on the over-the-counter drug category—that is, pharmaceuticals sold without a prescription.

We saw that Sales margins are coming under increasing pressure for pharmaceutical companies that operate in the over-the-counter medicine market. With the introduction of Web 2.0, Web 3.0, and many online social technologies, economical online marketing channels, such as e-commerce, have become available. Organisations must therefore adjust to the shifting environment brought about by the increasing use of social media and the internet.

The OTC medical sector is aware of the increasing importance of digital media for advertising. Its customer relationship management strategy now includes social media as a response. With this change, conventional marketing paradigms like Kotler's 4 Ps are abandoned.

There is a significant correlation found in qualitative research on the effects of social media and the internet on organisational change management in the over-the-counter pharmaceutical industry. The convergence of anchoring theory, data analysis, and practical insights highlights the importance of ensuring that research findings are in line with social media and internet best practices.

Chapter: 01

Introduction

Within the rapidly evolving pharmaceutical industry, digital marketing has emerged as a crucial tool for providing personalized services, fostering meaningful consumer relationships, and bolstering the reputation and longevity of companies. However, in developing countries like India, the full potential of digital marketing remains largely untapped, making it challenging to effectively reach and engage customers. Despite these challenges, social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram have become essential for establishing client relationships through interactive, cost-effective communication and global outreach. These platforms facilitate content marketing and individualised care, provide readily available information via websites and catalogues, and guarantee prompt responses all important for success in the digital sphere.

The global OTC drug market is estimated to be around US\$137.39 billion by 2024 and is growing at a CAGR of 3.49 percent to reach US\$163.10 billion by 2029.

One of the major factors contributing to this phenomenal growth of the over-the-counter drug market is the rapid surge in prescription drug prices. The rapidly rising healthcare cost seems to have resulted in customers tending to largely resort to self-medication with OTC drugs, and this factor appears as a cost-effective alternative to many different ailments.

It has various advantages in the pharmaceutical industry compared to the traditional techniques in use. It makes it possible to offer better service worldwide and easily reach out to the top experts, which may not be easy otherwise. This paper shall discuss the opportunities and challenges of digital marketing for the pharmaceutical industry and particularly for over-the-counter drugs. It shows how it can integrate user suggestions and expert views into digital marketing strategies, how audio and video reviews sell, and the way through which these techniques increase the product awareness.

With the readjustment of companies doing e-commerce, search optimization, mobile commerce, and other digital practices, what is happening in the OTC drug industry is rightfully the change brought about by digital marketing. Such assets are strong tools to remain competitive within a market with much suffering while it changes at break-neck rates. The purpose of this study is to understand how techniques of digital marketing can increase consumer awareness and engagement for the parcelable brainchild, thereby enhancing product visibility and customer confidence. In such a view, the research will strive to underline those digital marketing practices that are influencing the future of the Over-The-Counter Drug industry through the scrutiny of the existing layout and approaching trends.

In a pharma marketing scenario, digital marketing comprises not only a set of strategies aimed at reaching consumers' needs, developing and maintaining relationships, and creating brand awareness. It the need to improve and seek for efficient ways to communicate with the potential clients and customers that is leading to a shift away from familiar marketing tools.

Digital marketing also helps the businesses in the OTC drug sector to personalize their products and services to the clients thus acquiring more of their loyalty.

The use of the online platforms has hence come out strongly to effectively facilitate interaction of pharma companies with their clients. Applications such as the WhatsApp, twitter and Instagram do offer real time conversations hence customers complain can be well addressed or assisted promptly. These platforms also provide a way through which the companies can share useful information in the form of product information, health tips, opinion of an expert among others that creates trust.

To properly write content to be used in content marketing one needs to be highly skilled and this perhaps makes it a very vital tool in the marketing of pharmaceutical products through the internet. Thus, to increase the popularity of their products and attract new clients, companies need to generate and publish valuable content. Such content can be daily updates, articles, videos, infographics and as part of the wide-ranging strategy of digital marketing. Individualized content assists in reaching the appropriate audience and answering their concerns thus making promotional strategies efficient.

Customers' behaviour in the pharmaceutical sector has significantly changed due to the use of digital marketing. The electronic information sovereignty has empowered the consumer to make healthier choices when it comes to the products they use. Users have a chance to compare and decide on proper goods and service choices when there are other customer opinions, professionals' advice, and detailed descriptions available.

Increased interaction and building connections are also made possible by the interactive nature of digital marketing. Companies can build a sense of community and trust with their customers using social media and other digital platforms. Through answering questions, offering assistance, and disseminating insightful content, businesses can cultivate customer loyalty and promote recurring business.

A further significant aspect of digital marketing that has changed consumer behaviour is personalised marketing. Organisations are able to communicate offers and messages that are specifically tailored to each customer by utilising data analytics and customer feedback. This modification improves the client experience and raises the possibility of conversions.

Chapter: 02

Key Trends in the Pharmaceutical Industry

2.1 Artificial Intelligence in Pharma

- AI is rising significantly to upbeat the process related to drug formation and is revolutionizing the pharmaceutical complex. AI may help pharmaceutical companies to achieve better results and increase the speeds of the calculations at different stages of drug development. as opposed to conventional techniques, large data sets could be processed much more efficiently by different algorithms to recognise possible drug prospects reduced price of drug development and a shorter amount of time taken to get new drugs to the market.
- It is also enhancing the understanding of the correct population of patients for inclusion and the processes of clinical trials. Through the employment of machine learning models, physicians may proceed with the prescription of particular therapies in view of the specific requirements of such patients, so as to amplify the positive impacts of such treatments while at the same time minimising any adverse effects. AI may be useful in creating new over-the-counter drugs due to the effectiveness of data analysis in anticipating consumers' desires and shortcomings. Marketing strategies can be enhanced with the use of AI real-time platforms, which mainly targets customers, or gives specific recommendations for particular consumers.
- AI is also crucial in post-market safety of OTC products such as social media since it compiles real time data from various sources and promptly flags emerging safety concerns. It also helps in enhancing much needed confidence among the customers as well as assisting in the observation of utmost safety measures. In conclusion, the implementation of AI in the development of the pharmaceutical industry is providing comprehensive care over the counter products, along with better individualized healthcare solutions.

2.2 Analytics and Big Data

- The use of big data and analytics as a tool in the pharmaceutical industry facilitates provision of deeper understanding on the nature of the patients' behavior, the performance of drugs and their distribution channels. Such insights are useful for better decisions and enhancing the marketing strategies that are used in relation to this concept.
- In case of context of OTC drugs, the concept of big data and analytics is especially useful. Ceteris paribus, volume implies that more information regarding the consumer's tastes and propensity to consume medicine can now be gathered. This makes it possible to determine the kind of OTC drugs to stock and sell depending on the consumers' wants and needs. Further, understanding of drug efficacy helps for the purposes of

formulating the products in the right way as well as increasing their efficacy, thus increasing consumer satisfaction and loyalty towards the given brand.

- Analysis is also used in the right supply chain for OTC drugs. This saves money as well as stocks for the company because by estimating the demand and stocking the product appropriately it means that the product will always be available for sale to the consumers at the desired time. This capability is particularly relevant in the case of OTC goods as these require an easy and swift accessibility.
- Furthermore, big data also plays a crucial role in improving marketing communication in that it helps determine the suitable those channels and copy to use in disseminating messages to the intended targets. Marketing promotions, advertisement, sales etc., can be targeted by preparing minute profiles of the consumers which results in more consumption and/or subscription. In general, the contribution of big data and analytics to the OTC drug market leads to enhanced decision-making processes and better operational outcomes, as well as the more effective marketing of offered products.

2.4 Flexible Production

- There is a growing trend towards the use of flexible production systems more so in the pharmaceutical sector where there is continuity sought in manufacturing supply chains. Seasonal trends, shifts in consumer preferences, and emergences of new health threats making it crucial for the producers of OTC to create products with flexibility.
- Flexible production also enables the manufacturers of OTC drugs to easily adapt the production and manufacturing of their products to meet varying demands. For instance, there could be an increase in the sales of OTC drugs like cough and cold medicines during the flu season. These drugs can be manufactured more fast by a more versatile production structure, and will be available when consumers require them.

2.3 Precision Medicine

- The use of genetic and molecular testing allows for the individualisation of treatments to boost the effectiveness of treatment while minimising its side effects hence improving patient outcomes and along with it the solutions offered in this healthcare system. This is called precision medicine.
- Some of the probable benefits of practicing medical precision principles include the possibility of developing better Over-The-Counter, drug products. By integrating genetic and molecular information, OTC drug manufacturers can develop formulations for consumers that are far more appropriate for certain categories. For instance, understanding how different genetic make-up affects the response to the commonly used OTC drugs such as pain killers and allergy medicines

2.4 3D Printing

- 3D Printing also known as Additive Manufacturing is widely adopted in the production of bespoke drug delivery systems and individualized medications. It allows the development of multiple-drug combinations and individualized dosing, improving treatment efficacy and compliance at the same time.
- In the case of OTC drugs, 3D printing brings the promise of individualized solutions to health care. For instance, 3D printing may be applied to develop OTC drugs that meet the demand of unique customers. This might include adjusted dosages according to existing individual's health information or new products that are more efficient in treating particular diseases.

2.5 Blockchain Technology

- Pharmaceutical supply chains, including OTC drugs, can be made secure, transparent, and efficient for management of supply chains through blockchain technology. This technology is a perfect fit for the OTC sector because it solves essential challenges like patient safety and product fakes. Therefore, through the use of blockchain technology, the pharmaceutical industry can enhance accountability in the supply chain of drugs.
- Every transaction that occurs in the block chain is recorded and the record cannot be altered in anyway. This way, all players in the supply chain have permission to information that is accurate and most current. For OTC drugs, this means that the consumers can afford to purchase the products without the fear of being sold counterfeit or substandard products. The clear structure of blockchain to prevent counterfeiting of medications is very helpful for both the manufacturers and the consumers.

2.6 Connecting Trends to Digital Marketing Transformation in OTC Drugs

The digitization of the OTC drug industry is an underlying factor in the innovation in the technology. This study found that COVID-19 has highly influenced digital advertising in the pharma sector, particularly in the sector of over-the-counter drugs. The over-the-counter products, consumers and their involvement have evolved through e-commerce integration, personalised marketing and better website marketing. Through influencing partnerships, social media, and the analysis of data consumers, businesses are able to target their masses, educate them and influence their decisions. This shift is empowering the industry and its competitiveness, serving as well as making the OTC drug marketing efforts more dynamic and adaptive to the new buyer behaviour.

Here are the key connections:

2.7.1 Impact of AI on Marketing Strategies

The consequences of implementing AI in marketing solutions

- Pharmaceutical firms benefit from the new-age analytic tools in order to execute a strategic and efficient marketing and promotion plan. AI can use large datasets to predict trends in consumer behaviour, allocate resources to advertising effectively, and

target marketing communications which, in turn, can boost external communications about OTC drug products.

- AI relies on large volumes of data to decipher patterns and trends that cannot be easily spotted through a diagrammatical approach. This can help to bring more accurate information and insights about consumers' preferences, needs, and behaviours, therefore, making the targeting of marketing communications more effective. For OTC drugs, this means that the specification in the marketing mix often matches the exact needs and preferences of particular segments of the population.
- Helping businesses identify the best channels and practices for promotion by analysing the cost of reaching the audience. Through analysing the effectiveness of different marketing and promotions strategies AI can tailor them to bringing the maximum value thus optimising its spend on marketing and promotions.
- The other advantage of using AI tools in marketing is that marketers can send customer-specific messages to the target consumers. Being able to provide tailored content that speaks directly to the specific target consumers can change the dynamics within the industry, thereby increasing affiliation with the consumers among pharmaceutical companies. Due to this kind of a strategy is being employed, there is a high chance that the consumers are likely to positively respond to OTC drug promotions hence improving competitiveness in sales and brand loyalty.

2.7.2 Leveraging Big Data for Consumer Insights

- By applying big data analytics, one is in a position to master consumer insights and patterns that are useful when creating a marketing plan. It increases marketing focus to meet the consumer's needs and increases the level of engagement and conversion.
- OTC drugs, the element of big data analytics is very significant for enhancing the marketing strategies. Big data means that conglomerates within the pharmaceutical industry can better comprehend the patterns the consumer displays when purchasing over the counter goods. Such insights lead to the development of focused marketing communication that appeals to such segments while addressing their needs.
- This is due to big data analytics where pharmaceutical manufacturers can be able to see trends and even fore see changes in consumer demand for over-the-counter drugs. By analysing vast sets of information organisations are able to capture new trends and changes in the market. This way, they get to adjust their marketing strategies and ensure that their adverts are still effective and relevant. Big data helps businesses address consumer demands, adapt to market trends and develop optimised goods and services. They can thus maintain a competitive edge and enhance their capability in meeting the new needs of the market.

2.7.3 E-commerce and Digital Platforms

Precision medicine and flexible production can also be achieved through the strong internet sites in reaching consumers in the pharmaceutical businesses. Thus, there is the ability to sell OTC drugs directly through electronic sales platforms and not through the conventional stores. Overall, this strategy is beneficial to customers as they get better access and convenience while to business it opens some control over their product distribution and pricing. Through the use of digital media, firms within the pharmaceutical industry are able to gather crucial consumer data to be able to better target their products and ultimately, better engage the target customers. Taking all of this into account, such platforms are crucial for the transformation of the pharmaceutical sector and meeting consumer expectations.

- Instead of this direct access to consumers, it also has several advantages in terms of distribution. Through sales of these OTC drugs over the internet, pharmaceutical companies are able to communicate with the consumers directly in order to learn from them the kind of drugs they require and the manner in which they use them. This makes it easier for companies to fine tune their marketing messages, segmentation and targeting, and product development to optimize satisfaction among consumers.
- The online environment is easier to monitor in terms of the sales and the feedback that one gets from the buyers. It allows pharmaceutical companies to track the sales related figures in real time, which help them to modify its production and market aspects. Thirdly, direct communication with consumers through e-commerce platforms enables quick addressing of customers' questions and complaints – something that builds confidence in brands.

2.7.4 Social Media and Online Advertising

Popular social networks are a significant aspect of OTC drugs' digital marketing strategies, acting as essential platforms for interaction with users and promotions. These platforms help to convey health-oriented information, allow companies to gather customer feedback, and contribute to the organization of engaging marketing promotions based on target audiences. The use of social media platforms to reach out to consumers is beneficial to pharmaceutical companies because of the direct consumer-company relationship it creates and the improved promotion of OTC drugs.

2.7.5 Transparency and Trust through Blockchain

Hence, guaranteeing the safety and uniqueness of the product, blockchain technology can significantly enhance consumer confidence in the over-the-counter drugs. Blockchain can help eliminate drug counterfeiting since data regarding the origin and handling of products can be accessed through the supply chain records. Marketing communications that address the possibility of supply chains' decentralization with the help of blockchain have a great potential for enhancing consumer trust and brand reputation. Emphasizing the value of this technology to safeguard health goods can assist brands to differentiate themselves in a fiat.

- The pharma is on an exciting inflection point where technology and digital marketing are no longer nice to have but imperative to succeed and sustain. The currents of AI, big data, flexible production, precision medicine, AM, and blockchain are creating new procedural and marketing paradigms for pharmaceutical organizations. In today's world, digital marketing plays a vital role in OTC drug sector to communicate and engage with the consumer.
- It is possible to leverage these trends to develop more targeted, effective and credible marketing campaigns in pharma. As the digital marketing practices progress in the future the above-discussed strategies will continue to open the door for the pharmaceutical industries to remain relevant to the consumer needs and technologies to deliver the connected and dynamic markets.
- Both authors recommend referring to the papers listed in the studies in order to gain more information and get a better understanding. These studies, therefore, give a sound understanding of how the pharmaceutical industry is set to revolutionaries its utilisation of digital marketing. They provide informed opinions on the shift in strategy, technologies, and customer behaviour that shapes the marketing of OTC products. By reading these papers, readers can find out the various opportunities, challenges and factors that operate within the current environment of the industry. There is potential for this investigation to help bring about better decision making and strategic planning for using digital advertising in the over-the-counter drug industry.

Chapter: 03

Literature Review

The use of digital marketing including social media in drug promotion is still under question, and the pharmaceutical industry has been often criticized for being a laggard to modern digital marketing methodologies. Most enterprises are still built on obsolete Web 1.0 technologies that cannot accommodate the needs of a modern digital world. This is further exacerbated by a lack of appropriate expertise within the pharmaceutical sector to drive digital transformation. But the tide is beginning to turn as many pharma companies are moving towards digital marketing. This move is being fuelled by the convenience of client interaction, shorter time to market and cost efficiencies. Thanks to social media, everyone can socially connect with one another and exchange information that will help the manufacturer-producer-retailer-end user circles communicate better.

Digital and social media marketing does facilitate their operations by not only improving healthcare information but also patient data accessibility, thus enabling better connections between patients and healthcare providers. That said, the digital and social media marketing in India landscape needs more nurturing to do justice to its advantages. This shows Indian Pharmaceutical Industry is not still utilizing the full potential of modern digital Marketing Techniques. Digital marketing can help pharmaceutical companies to gain benefits in terms that they will be able to understand and cater the needs of customers in a better way.

To be competitive, the pharmaceutical firm has to update itself by changing innovative business practices and new strategies that would attract customers. It can do so by using information technology in not only spreading awareness among the employees regarding the benefits of digital marketing and social media but also for how to use them in the best possible manner. Online workshops and conferences can play a very useful role in this regard for educating the employees and provoking interaction between physicians and clients through some digital means. Therefore, effective utilization of digital marketing practices is held as the principal determinant of the growth and competitiveness of the development of the pharmaceutical industry in India.

Literature therefore shows the presence of problems for digital marketing within the pharmaceutical industry at large. The identified problems are managerial, technical, and financial. Of importance to these factors is the reality that the available research on digital marketing practices is not specific to the pharmaceutical sector, particularly the OTC drugs area. The objective of this study was therefore to establish the factors that influence the adoption of digital marketing within the pharmaceutical industry.

Objectives

- To review the existing literature on digital pharmaceutical marketing and its impact.
- To identify and evaluate the factors influencing digital pharmaceutical marketing opportunities and challenges.
- To recommend best practices for gaining competitive advantages through digital marketing in India.

3.1 Research Gap	3.2 Need and Importance	3.3 Scope of the Study
The main objective of this study is to fill a significant research gap by focusing on the digital marketing strategies employed by pharmaceutical companies, with a specific emphasis on over-the-counter (OTC) medications. While there has been a ton of research conducted on digital marketing in general business contexts, very few studies have explored its application and impact within the pharmaceutical industry. Our research project aims to delve into the primary factors that drive the industry to embrace digital marketing tactics and assess the potential advantages and disadvantages associated with this approach. By identifying these variables, we hope to provide insights on how pharmaceutical companies can leverage digital platforms to promote OTC drugs, enhance customer satisfaction, and navigate regulatory restrictions. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the evolving landscape of digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry necessitates a thorough examination of this study, which sheds light on the potential benefits and challenges that shape strategy development and implementation in this specialized sector.	In current competitive landscape, gaining a competitive edge is essential for long-term sustainability. For the pharmaceutical sector, understanding and leveraging digital marketing is crucial as the world shifts from traditional to digital marketing strategies. Implementing digital marketing practices offers numerous benefits, including client-specific services, global reach, cost-effectiveness, value addition, transparency, and customer loyalty. This research aims to identify the motivating factors behind the adoption of digital marketing in the pharmaceutical industry and highlight its advantages.	The future of this study is confined to analysing the factors influencing digital marketing practices in the pharmaceutical industry, with a focus on the OTC drug market. The geographical scope is limited to Andhra Pradesh, as the majority of respondents are based in this region. The study will provide insights into the motivating factors driving the shift toward digital marketing in the pharmaceutical sector.

3.4 The Current State of Digital Marketing in the for OTC Drugs

Pharmaceutical companies, especially those in the business of over-the-counter drugs, have been pretty slow in jumping on the advanced digital marketing bandwagon. A lot of them are still stuck using outdated Web 1.0 technologies that just don't cut it for today's tech-savvy consumers. One big reason for this digital transformation lag is the lack of skilled folks who can actually implement and manage digital marketing initiatives. But hey, despite these challenges, the shift towards digital marketing is picking up speed. And you know what's driving it? It's the fact that digital marketing makes it super easy to interact with clients, reduces time to market, and saves a boatload of money.

Now let's talk about how social media platforms have turned the tables for pharmaceutical companies when it comes to communicating with their customers. Platforms like WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram have totally revolutionized the game. They allow for real-time, two-way interactions that are both cost-effective and have a global reach. And the cool thing is, these platforms make it possible to provide personalized care and do some killer content marketing. They ensure that important information is always at hand and allow for quick responses to customer queries.

3.5 Advantages and Challenges of Digital Marketing in the OTC Drug Sector

- Digital marketing offers a ton of benefits to the OTC drug sector. It's all about reaching a bigger audience and expanding market presence on a global scale. With improved customer engagement, OTC drug companies can have more personalized interactions with consumers, which helps build brand loyalty and trust. Plus, digital marketing lets them connect directly with leading experts and healthcare providers, so they can spread valuable information and build professional relationships. If OTC drug brands want to stay competitive in this fast-changing market, they got to use strategies like SEO and mobile commerce.
- But hey, it's not all sunshine and rainbows for the OTC drug sector when it comes to digital marketing. There are some challenges to overcome. For one, regulatory constraints can be a real pain. Companies have to navigate complex compliance requirements when promoting their products online. And let's not forget about the digital divide, which makes things even trickier. In developing economies like India, limited internet connectivity and digital literacy make it harder to engage with consumers. And on top of all that, OTC drug companies need specialized technical, managerial, and financial expertise to make the most of digital marketing.
- So, how do we tackle these challenges? Well, it's gonna take some innovative approaches and strategic investments. OTC drug companies need to prioritize compliance with regulations while developing their digital marketing campaigns. To bridge the digital divide, targeted initiatives that improve internet accessibility and

digital literacy are key. And let's not skimp on talent development either. Investing in partnerships with digital marketing experts will boost the industry's capabilities when it comes to using digital technologies for promotions.

3.6 Strategies for Effective Digital Marketing in the Pharmaceutical Sector

- To understand the complexities of digital marketing in the pharmaceutical sector, companies need to get creative. One core strategy is to use information technology to educate their staff about the benefits of digital marketing. This means fostering a culture of continuous learning through accessible online workshops, webinars, and conferences.
- When it comes to over-the-counter (OTC) pharmaceuticals, it's crucial to educate employees about the advantages of digital marketing. Online workshops and conferences provide valuable opportunities for ongoing education, helping teams stay up-to-date with the latest trends and techniques. This not only enhances their skills but also enables them to effectively implement and refine digital marketing strategies tailored to the unique nuances of the OTC market.
- In addition, developing high-quality, personalized content is essential for success. Pharmaceutical companies must understand the preferences of their OTC audience in order to create relevant and engaging content. This content can take various forms, such as informative blog posts, detailed articles, compelling videos, and visually appealing infographics. Each content format plays a critical role in a comprehensive digital marketing strategy aimed at promoting OTC products.
- By combining these strategies, companies can improve their brand reputation and communication with the OTC audience, instilling confidence along the way. Creating content that specifically caters to the needs and interests of OTC consumers strengthens the bond and encourages engagement and loyalty. Leveraging micro- and health-related influencers allows businesses to offer relatable and believable promotions. And by optimizing their digital presence through social media, SEO, and mobile-friendly platforms, they ensure convenience and accessibility for customers. Interactive tools like chatbots and user-generated content further engage customers, while ethical and transparent marketing techniques establish trust. The effectiveness of digital marketing initiatives in the OTC pharmaceutical industry lies in their ability to constantly adjust to new trends and insights based on data.
- By embracing these innovative tactics, pharmaceutical companies can overcome digital marketing challenges and capitalize on the opportunities within the OTC landscape. Leveraging information technology for employee education, fostering a culture of

continuous learning, and delivering top-quality, personalized content are essential steps in creating a robust digital marketing strategy tailored to the unique requirements of the OTC pharmaceutical market.

3.7 Future Trends and Recommendations

- A plethora of exciting bets lies in the future digital landscape for over-the-counter drug sectors and more. One of the many ways - especially in a long-term view - is the growth and proliferation of AI and ml. Companies are exploring the use of these advanced technologies to process huge amounts of data even patterns, improve ad targeting and/or enhance productivity. The AI technology can account for the shifting consumers' behaviour and then it creates different marketing plans adaptable to this consumer like tailor-made marketing messages, making campaign more efficient in return; it's thus quite an emergent discovery as far as the online drug store industry is concerned where consumer needs and preferences are different
- A distinct but significant trend is the adoption of Virtual Reality (VR) and/or Augmented Reality (AR) technology. These are some of the most compelling tools for conducting good demonstrations which will enable the consumer to experience the benefits and usage of their OTC drugs in better ways creating an engaging experience. Beyond that, VR and AR could be used as an educational tool to provide an overview of drug potency and proper dosage, thus aiding customer understanding and trust.
- Growing in the domestic over-the-counter drug market, influencer marketing is another significant trend. Influencers (especially those with a health and wellness focus) can help a brand to reach a larger, or more targeted, audience. Influencer authenticity could be essential for such products as OTC drugs, that are driven by consumer choice where they're available without a necessity of prescription.
- Over-the-Counter Drugs Companies need to maintain themselves updated with the current trends and technologies in order to remain relevant in the face of a forever-transforming market. In that way, through new-and-improved digital marketing tactics, OTC drugs companies can ensure long-lasting longevity, an improved image, and a stronger follower base. Credible community voices can create legitimacy for brands, monitor advancements in technology, and weave more immersive personalised experiences for consumers. This strategy not only helps businesses keep pace in a rapidly changing market, it also builds customer trust and loyalty. OTC drug companies can remain competitive in their market and build lasting success through the following practices
- What this study aims at on one hand is understanding online advertising as a way of addressing current challenges OTC pharmaceuticals face in this ever-changing digital landscape, on the other providing nice-to-read-at&tips for OTC drug companies with the intention of using it for their practice. And all that while meeting changing consumer needs, increasing sales and keeping a step ahead, via a variety of strategies that are

fashionable today. An important requirement is to further develop the digital presence, content and personalised marketing, also to improve mobile and ecommerce solutions, and public trust - all of them relevant to OTC. Additionally, harnessing the power of both micro- and health-influencers can help brands increase credibility and engagement. OTC companies can succeed in an ever-shifting digital world by integrating these strategies.

Chapter: 04

Research Methodology

- Designed to gain insight, this methodology employs Google Forms in which a beneficial survey on assessing the impact of digital marketing on consumer awareness and consumer purchasing behaviours with specific regard of over-the-counter drugs in the pharmaceutical industry. The survey was prepared with a bifurcation to gain detailed responses from varying demographics and roles from the participants.
- This approach involves using Google Forms to create a detailed survey evaluating the linkages between digital marketing and consumer purchase behaviour in OTC drugs segment within the pharmaceutical sector. The survey was separated into two sections to obtain in-depth feedback from a variety of demographics and user roles
- In the primary section of the survey, demographic questions were utilized to obtain specific information related to participants such as their names, age, gender, occupation etc. Researchers were able to segregate their responses effectively in order to ensure a diversified representation according to different age groups, genders, the occupation held by the participants followed with roles including medical representatives, healthcare professionals, industry personnel, and the general public
- The subsequent part of the survey concentrated on digital marketing practices in pharmaceutical. The survey questions would test respondents' habits related things such as using social media platforms, what tools they have for technology in marketing, which side of the line they fall on, and which platforms they use to achieve their objectives from a digital call. The survey also checked the level of awareness participants had about the digital marketing campaigns being designed specifically for the pharmaceutical industry.
- Finally, a sizeable set of questions probed participants about the primary sources of information to educate themselves about OTC medications, how they shop for OTC medications, and the different kinds of OTC medications they are familiar with. This segment provided insights into how digital marketing channels influence customer decision-making processes related to OTC drugs as well as create awareness.

- The survey data was cleaned and organized using standard procedures to get meaningful insights from the data. Quantitative tools were used to review the responses of the participants, study the correlations between the digital marketing that they had been exposed to and their reactions/conversions, as well as to establish the effectiveness of such strategies in increasing the OTC drug sales and awareness.
- The study provided valuable insights as a significant contribution towards developing marketing strategies pharmaceutical companies by establishing the value of using digital marketing to complement traditional forms of healthcare delivery in reaching both providers and patients.
- Digging deep into these aspects of healthcare industries will allow for more effective mechanisms like those available through digital marketing activities and a better understanding among consumers when evaluating prescribed medications vs OTC products online. This research sought to provide meaningful insights that could guide the execution of a sales and marketing strategy, showing the necessity of the theoretical integration within the hospital industry between digital marketing and traditional marketing in order to address both practitioners and their patients.

4.1 Need of study:

- OTC drugs are fundamental to public health, providing accessible remedies for a variety of common medical conditions. Online sales of OTC medications have surged since the pandemic, as customers turned to e-commerce over brick-and-mortar stores because of the convenience and cost-effectiveness. The challenge facing OTC brands is to meet the customer where they are and show them what problems they solve, as shoppers are inclined to research online before making a purchase.
- Building stronger relationships with your customers through various channels, such as social media and your website, is made possible by digital marketing. Furthermore, digital marketing tools allow you to target particular consumer segments based on their demographics, behaviours, and interests. They improve relevance and engagement by making it possible to create personalised messaging and product recommendations. Furthermore, OTC brands can precisely track engagement, conversions, and return on investment (ROI) with strong analytics, and they can also continuously refine their approach based on performance data.
- OTC brands need to stand out from the competition as eCommerce upends traditional retail by providing unique digital brand experiences, content, and consumer value-adds that their rivals might not offer.
- Moreover, we compared to traditional channels, digital marketing can be much more affordable while still allowing over-the-counter brands to reach a far wider audience through earned, owned, paid, and organic media strategies.

4.2 Research Design:

In pharma marketing, the impact of digital marketing channels on conventional marketing strategies with an emphasis on over-the-counter drugs will be better understood thanks to the quantitative research process. This procedure places a strong emphasis on experimental research methods, correlational research, and causal research design.

To compile and analyse comprehensive data about marketing initiatives, descriptive analysis is employed. This entails gathering the data, assembling it, tabulating it, and presenting and explaining it. Pie charts, bar graphs, and graphs are examples of visual aids that are used to improve data presentation and reader comprehension. In addition, graphical representations are analysed and the various viewpoints of respondents are recorded using a descriptive research design.

2nd method of the study will be the observational study, its main objective is to examine digital marketing strategies used by the over-the-counter medication sector. This study intends to comprehend the influence, efficacy, and reach of digital marketing initiatives on OTC drug promotion in light of the growing shift from traditional to digital marketing strategies.

4.3 Study population:

People are coming in the criteria, are included in the study population for the purpose of analysing trends in digital marketing within the over-the-counter drug industry

Participants in the age group of 18 years and above are taken in study, total I have taken 70 people in my research study

- OTC Drug consumer: People who, within the last year, have purchased or utilised over-the-counter medications.
- Digital Literacy: Individuals who possess a basic understanding of digital literacy, such as internet usage and social media access.
- Healthcare Professionals: Excludes healthcare professionals (doctors, pharmacists) who might have different perspectives due to their expertise

4.4 Scope of study:

- Pharma companies used to rely on conventional marketing techniques, like sending medical representatives to directly promote their products to physicians in person. But the start of the COVID-19 pandemic made it clear that pharmaceutical companies needed to adopt digital marketing strategies instead of traditional ones. The public can now receive basic medical education and counselling through digital marketing, especially through social media handles, which improves health literacy and raises awareness of disease prevention.
- Objective of this study is to investigate how digital marketing affects traditional marketing strategies, particularly when it comes to the promotion of over-the-counter

medications. Pharmaceutical firms may be able to create a more thorough marketing strategy by fusing traditional tactics with digital marketing tactics. This strategy not only targets medical professionals but also informs the broader public about product details, dosage information, and indications for OTC drugs.

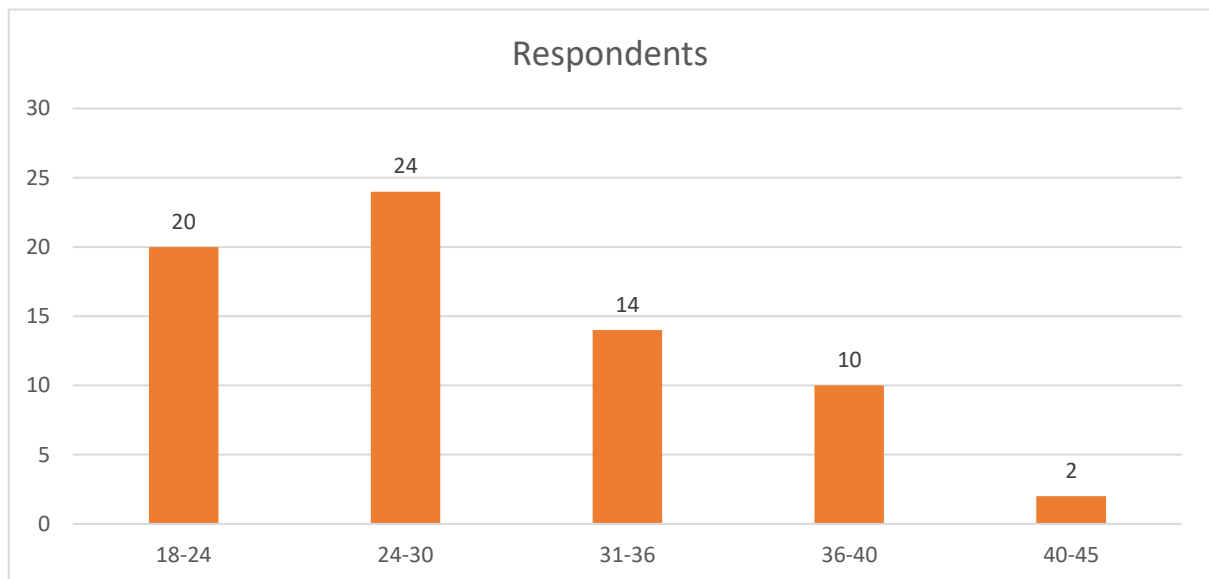
- The study's target population comprises seventy individuals, comprising medical representatives, physicians, industry personnel, and members of the general public. Based on their involvement with and interest in over-the-counter medications and digital marketing strategies, participants were chosen. Google questionnaires were used to collect data on age, gender, and occupation among other demographics. The survey's main objectives were to find out how individuals used social media on a personal level, what kinds of platforms they used, how organisations used social media for marketing, how aware they were of digital marketing channels, and how they thought social media would change traditional pharmaceutical industry marketing practices.

Chapter: 05

Results and discussion

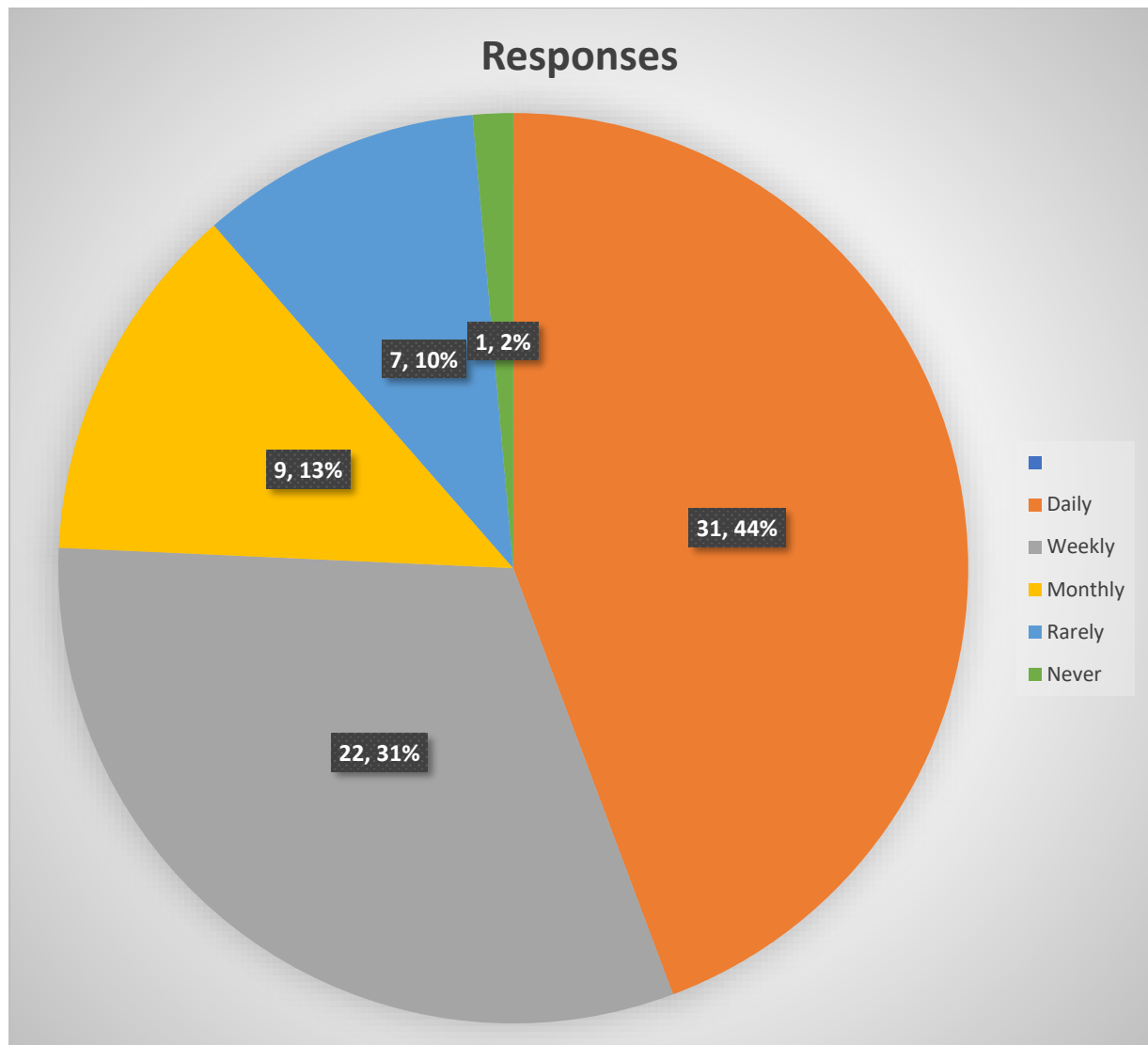
5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS:

S.no	Age	Respondents	%e to Total
1	18-24	20	29
2	24-30	24	34
3	31-36	14	20
4	36-40	10	14
5	40-45	2	3
		70	



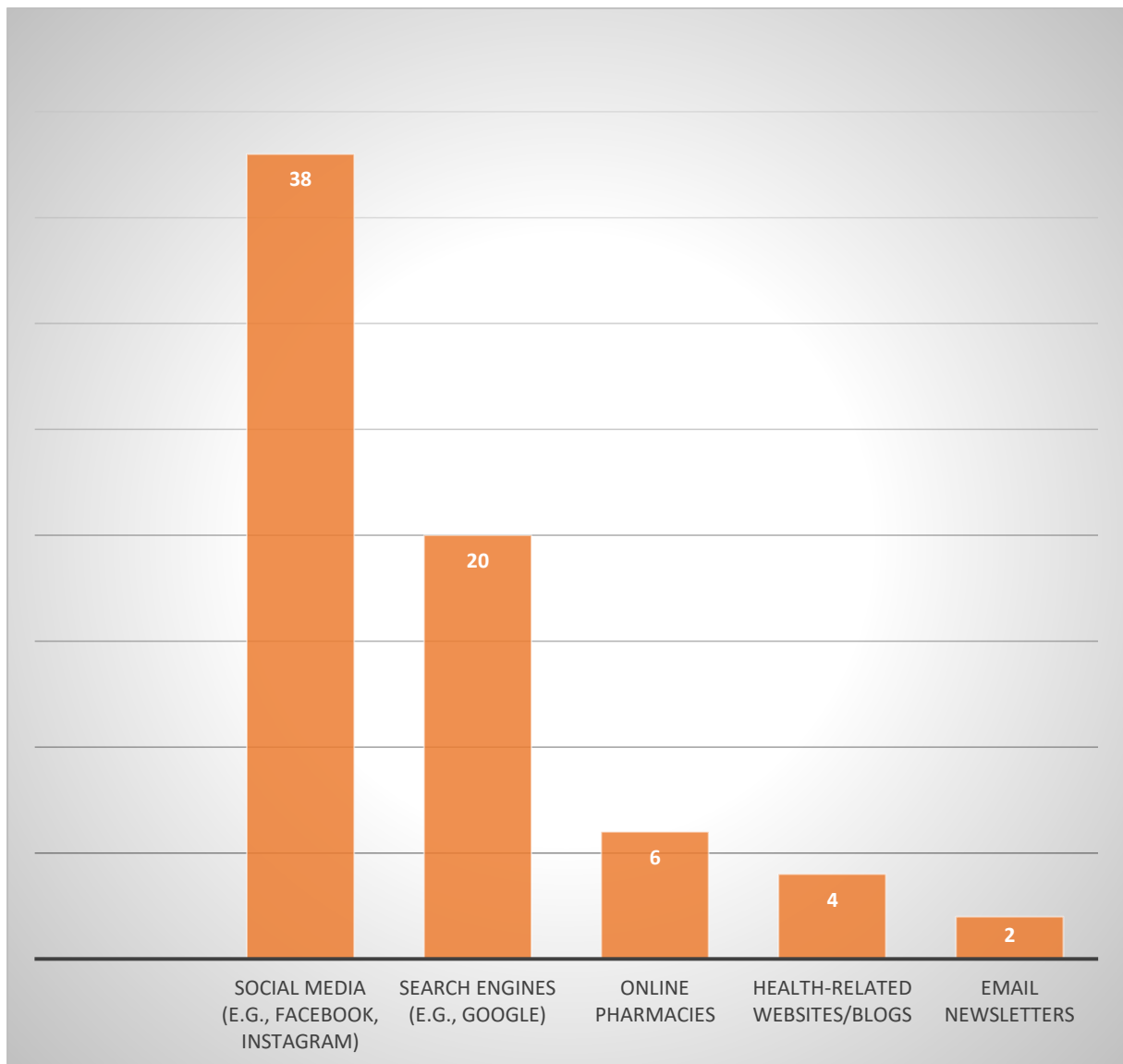
Analysis: The analysis reveals that younger adults (18-30) are the most engaged with OTC drugs and digital marketing, representing 63% of respondents. Middle-aged groups show moderate engagement, while the oldest group (40-45) has the lowest engagement, indicating a need for tailored marketing strategies.

5.2 How often do you encounter digital marketing campaigns for OTC drugs?



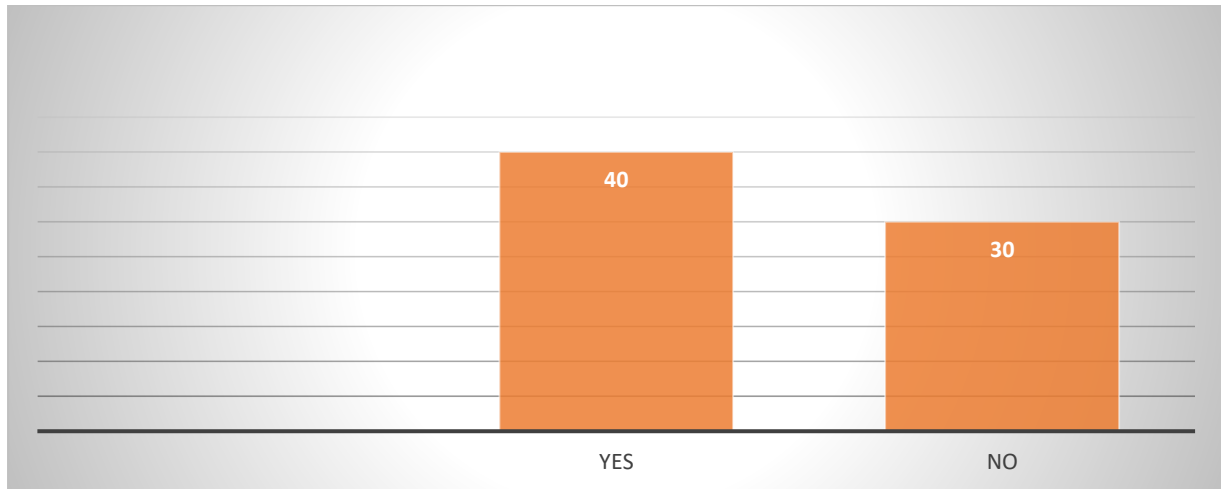
Analysis: From research data we saw that 13 respondents reported daily exposure to digital marketing for over-the-counter drugs, while 22 reported weekly exposure. Monthly exposure is 9, and infrequent exposure is 7. The fact that only one respondent has never seen this kind of marketing indicates how common place it is.

5.3 Which digital platforms do you most frequently use to get information about OTC drugs? (Select all that apply)



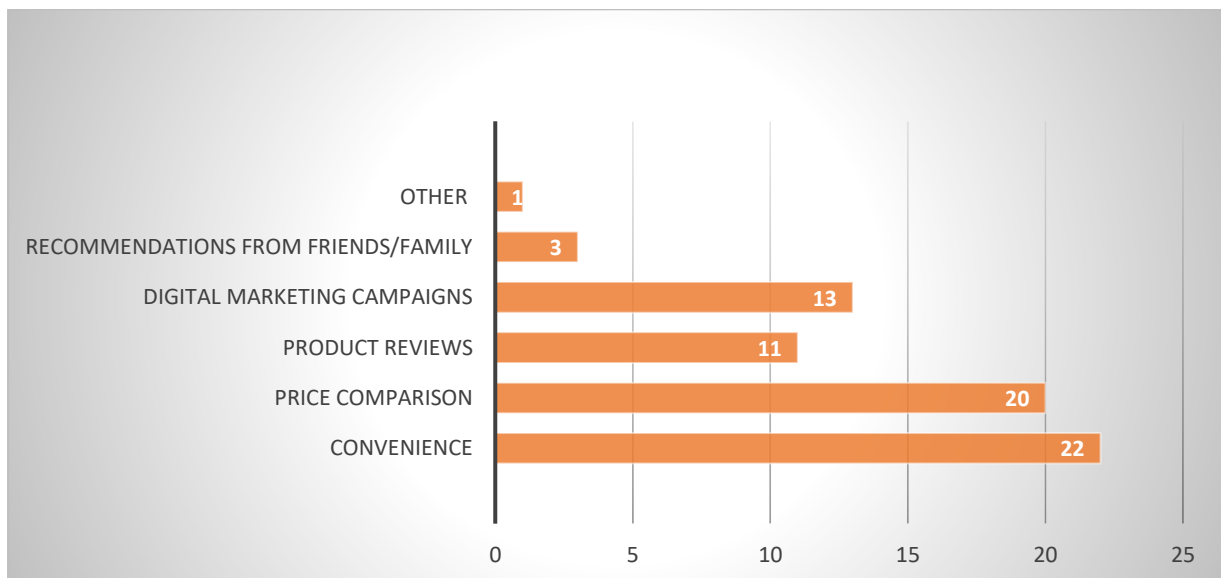
Analysis: From finding data, Search engines (20) are the second most popular source of information about over-the-counter drugs, after social media (38). Websites pertaining to health (4) and online pharmacies (6) are less prevalent.

5.4 Have you ever purchased OTC drugs online?



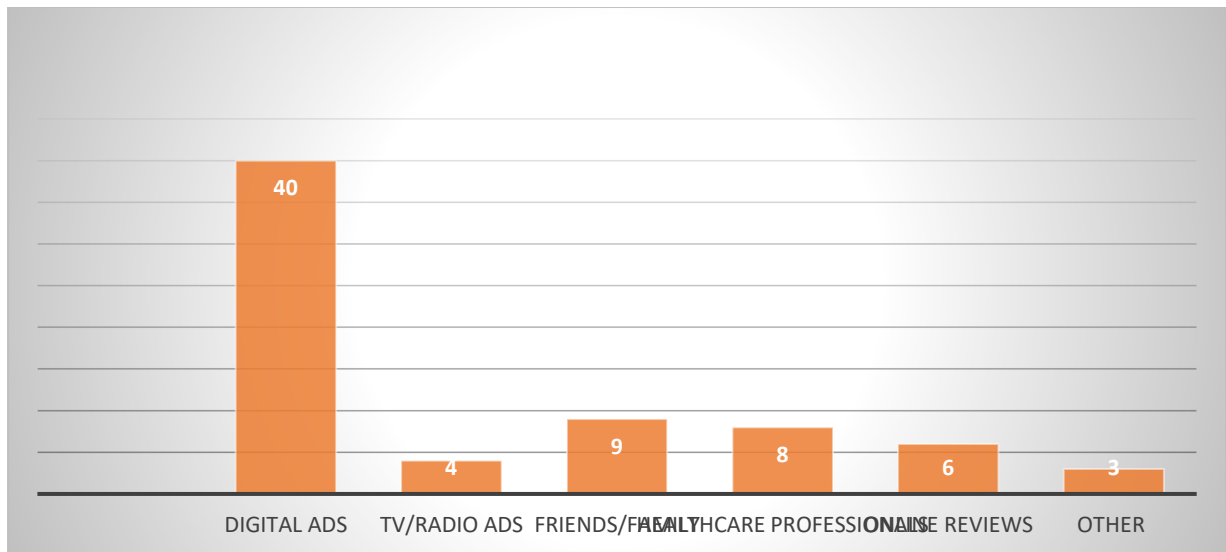
Analysis: There are 30 respondents have not made any online purchases, indicating room for further market growth. The majority of respondents (40) have purchased over-the-counter drugs online, indicating a significant adoption of online purchasing

5.5 If yes, what influenced your decision to purchase OTC drugs online?



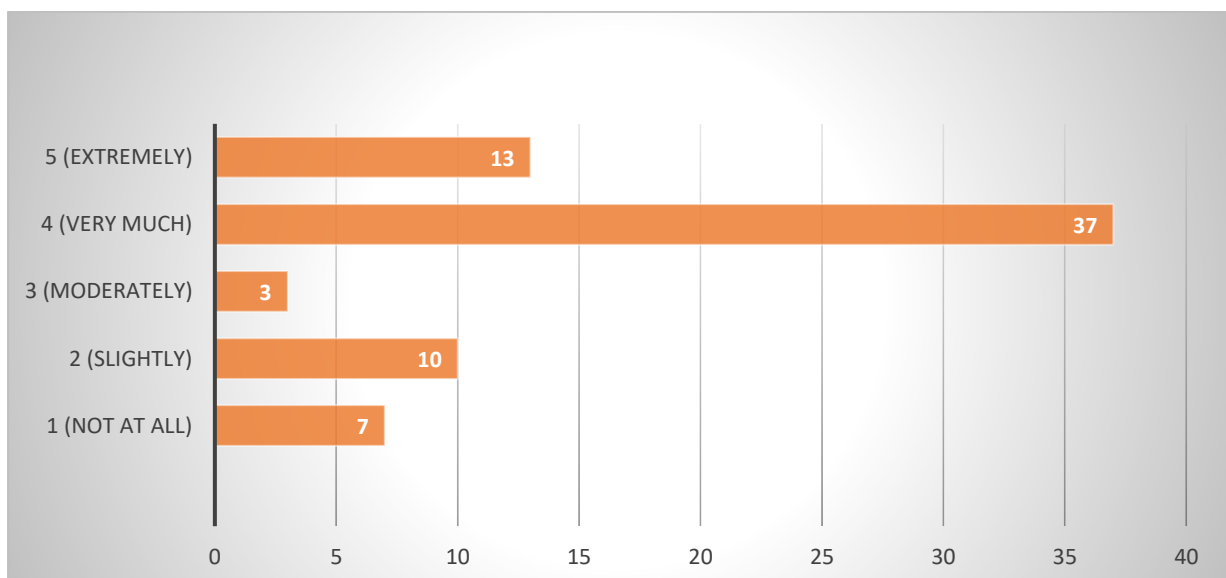
Analysis: According to survey responses, convenience and price comparison are the main factors influencing people's decisions to buy over-the-counter medications online. These elements demonstrate a preference for affordability and convenience when selecting online retailers for these kinds of transactions.

5.6 When learning about new over-the-counter medications, how do you typically find out?



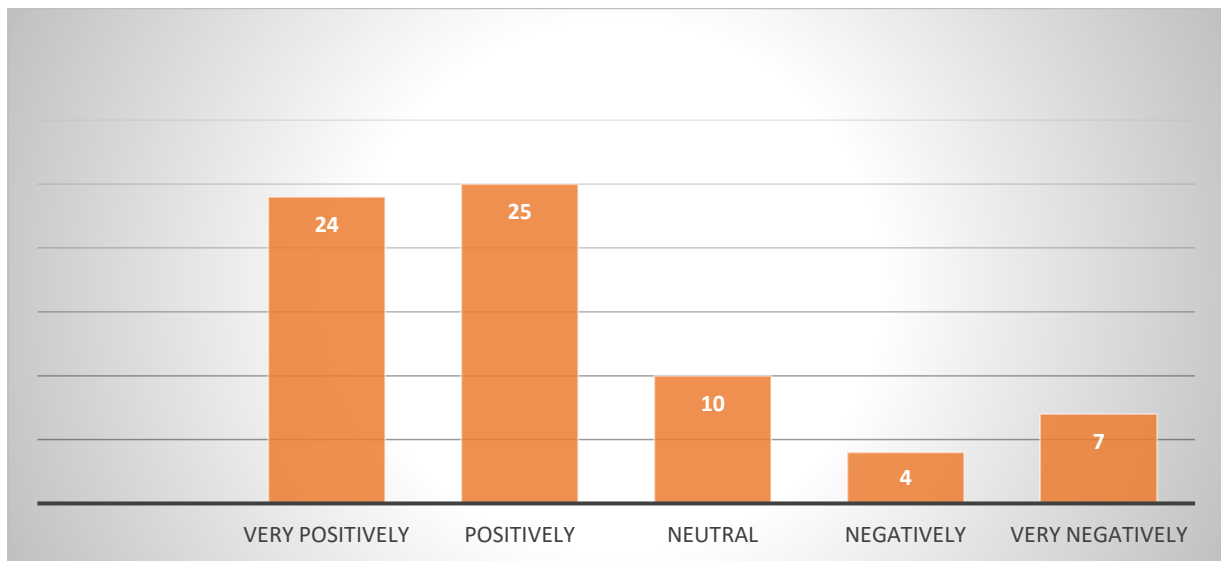
Analysis: Comparing online advertising to traditional media channels, the majority of respondents say they learned about new over-the-counter medications through these ads, demonstrating the increasing impact of online advertising on consumer health awareness and product education.

5.7 How much, on a 1–5 scale, do online marketing campaigns affect your decisions to buy over-the-counter medications?



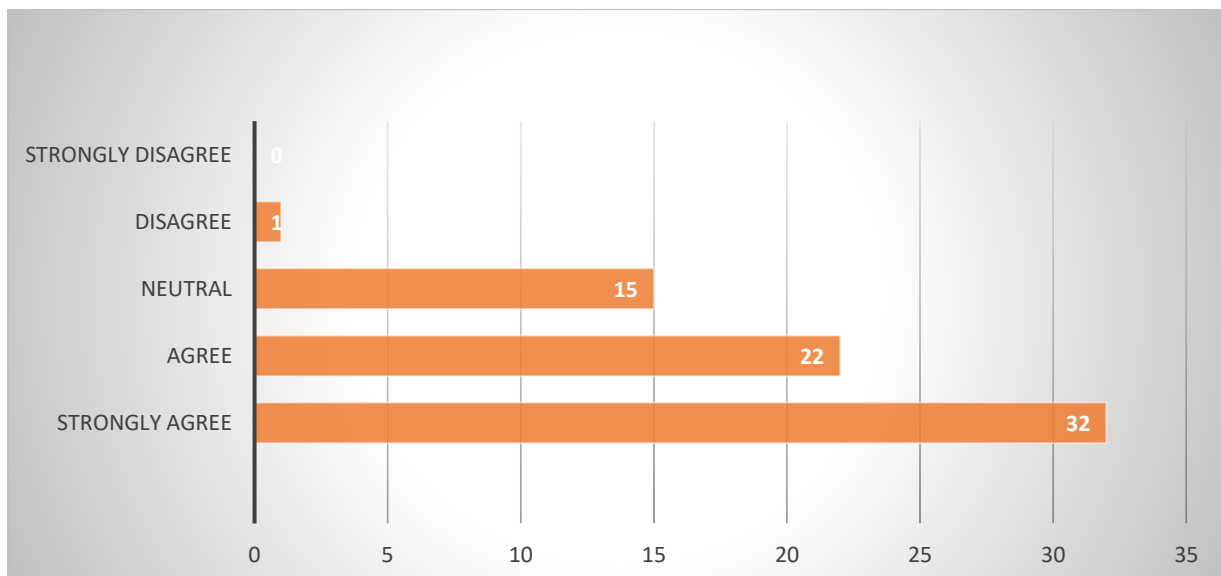
Analysis: OTC drug purchases are heavily influenced by digital marketing campaigns; most respondents rated this influence as very high or extremely high. This emphasises how targeted digital strategies work well when it comes to helping consumers make decisions.

5.8 How has digital marketing impacted your overall perception of OTC drug brands?



Analysis: According to finding from data, OTC drug brands have benefited greatly from digital marketing, as seen by the high percentage of people who feel very positively or positively about them. Few respondents mentioned negative effects, indicating that digital channels can effectively engage brands.

5.9 Do you think OTC drugs are now easier to get and more convenient to use because of digital marketing?



Analysis: Most respondents agree or strongly agree that OTC medications are now more easily accessible and convenient thanks to digital marketing. This illustrates how consumers can now obtain health-related products with greater ease and accessibility thanks to digital platforms.

Discussion:

- From gathered data we saw that digital marketing campaigns for over-the-counter drugs are encountered by a significant proportion of respondents (31%) on a daily basis, and another 22% on a weekly basis. This suggests that there has been a lot of exposure to this domain's digital marketing initiatives.
- Recommended Digital Information Platforms
we find that 38 respondents said that social media sites like Facebook and Instagram are the ones they use the most to find information about over-the-counter medications. Twenty respondents indicated that search engines like Google are also a popular choice
- Online drugs buying Patterns
Most respondents (40) have bought over-the-counter medications online. Convenience (22 respondents) and price comparison (20 respondents) are the main factors influencing online purchases, with digital marketing campaigns coming in second (13 respondents)
- For studying of new OTC Drugs to customers
Every one of the 40 respondents chose digital advertisements as their primary source of information about new over-the-counter medications. This demonstrates how important digital advertising is to this industry's consumer introduction of new products
- Can be digital marketing's effect on purchase decisions
from the data 13 respondents gave digital marketing campaigns a 5 (very much) rating, while 37 respondents gave it a 4 (very much) rating, indicating a significant impact on OTC drug purchase decisions. This indicates how consumer behaviour in this market is greatly influenced by digital marketing
- Convenience and Accessibility:
we saw that the majority of respondents (54), who strongly agree or agree, feel that digital marketing has improved consumer access to health-related products by making over-the-counter drugs more convenient and accessible
- Effect on how OTC drug brands are seen
OTC drug brands are viewed more favourably than they were a year ago, according to 25 respondents and 24 very positively, respectively, as a result of digital marketing initiatives.

Chapter: 06

Conclusion

This paper presents connections between anchoring theory, data analysis, and theoretical returns in the manner of relating research findings, real-world initiatives, internet and social media operating guidelines, and the marketing of over-the-counter pharmaceuticals.

Putting a focus on over-the-counter medications, the research paper "Digital Marketing Transformation in the OTC Drug Industry" offers a thorough examination of how the pharmaceutical industry has changed in response to digital marketing trends. This study offers important insights into the impact of digital marketing on the over-the-counter drug market through an examination of significant industry trends, a synthesis of pertinent literature, a thorough research methodology, and perceptive findings and discussions.

Fast growing movement toward digital marketing impact significantly on the pharmaceutical industry. A report from Dec, 2018 highlights that OTC drug market is expected to reach \$163.10 billion by 2029, with a CAGR of 3.49 percent. Prescription drug costs are blamed most for the growth because it forces poor individuals to take OTC drugs resulting in self-medication and affordability. To promote products, service, or even people, there are a plethora of benefits to digital marketing over traditional marketing in pharmaceutical sectors. It can allow for more effective customer interactions, an international reach, and make one's products more salient in the market. (A Bridges between Online and Offline Marketing).

In the study, the major insights derived include assessing the pivotal role of digimark in boosting the over-the-counter (OTC) drug industry with product awareness, certified views, and multimedia contents. Pharmaceutical marketers can keep pace in a rapidly evolving space with new tools like mobile commerce, SEO, e-commerce and others. By using digital marketing strategy it is not only interested to make a consumer aware about the products/brands/firms but also to cultivate reliable and trust-based customer loyalty which in turn helps to provide a favourable position to the firm in its market share.

The study indicates that in the digital conversion of the pharmaceutical industry, the OTC drug category has undergone tectonic shifts. Marketing tactics have also adapted under the influence of digital marketing in the pharmaceutical's domain, and the backdrop of the ongoing COVID19 pandemic has added to the sense of corporate urgency within pharma companies to digitise marketing. This analysis is important to better understand the rising customer-centric pharmaceutical industry and the ways new marketing and pricing tactics are disrupting the traditional pharma-marketing strategy.

According to the study, the over-the-counter drug market has been transformed by the ongoing digital progression of the pharmaceutical industry. Given that online marketing channels often cost less, this is something that pharmaceutical businesses need to acknowledge and adjust to if they hope to secure their future in the global market. Overcoming complexities in digital marketing through theory and data analysis-based proper digital best practices is crucial for any Over the Counter drug manufacturer to create successful advertising strategies. By

leveraging online advertising well, companies can build brand recognition, boost customer interaction, and eventually increase sales. Pharmaceutical manufacturers will have to digitalise in the coming years in order to stay updated with the market.

Doing so, they can have the best of both worlds: capitalising on the wave of online advertising benefits while still engaging in friendly competition with traditional channels adopting more sophisticated methods. In the ever-evolving OTC drug market, these actions are a requirement if firms want sustainably forward and stay successful. This research shows that digital marketing is changing how over-the-counter drugs are marketed.

Through an exploration of current practices through real-world experimentation and the effective application of various digital marketing techniques, this study advances the understanding of the changing landscape for today's pharmaceutical industry. It offers recommendations for helping companies successfully compete in an aggressive digital marketplace to engage today's buyers. The pharmaceutical sector has undergone tremendous transformation in recent years, which is in part attributable to the rise of ecommerce and social advertising.

As digital channels have forever changed what buyers expect from their brand interactions, it is vital that pharma enterprises get smarter in how they interact with their target audience, how they deliver their education and marketing messages, and how they capitalize on the myriad opportunities that the digital world offers—beginning with these findings. This study indicates that it is critical for pharma firms to use digital media in their promotional strategy in a way that will help them compete in an ever-changing OTC market.

Chapter: 07

Recommendations and suggestions

Some suggestions and recommendations have been made regarding the digital trends in over-the-counter marketing, which could aid with enhancing them.

7.1 Enhance Your Online presence

- Optimize content and product pages to increase search engine accessibility in over-the-counter drug products. This comes in the combination of having SEO-friendly structure on your website, putting out high-quality content, and utilizing the right keywords. Proper SEO strategy can improve your website's organic reach, traffic, and visibility to potential customers.
- Get on various social media platforms and talk to clients, pass out informational content and build a community around health. To keep people reading, make sure to put out educational articles, advice and content that is interactive. Review social media analytics to identify audience preferences that can lead changes in content direction. Leveraging strong social media engagement can drive traffic to your website or online store and help improve brand visibility and trust.

7.2 Personalized Advertising

- The importance of understanding consumer behaviour and preferences in relation to data analytics, largely cannot be underestimated. This leads to the mitigation of brand-customer relationships, any deviation in performing consumer preferences effectively can lead to customer churn.
- Moreover, businesses are able to satisfy not only the minimum customer satisfaction through their individual purchase history, online interactions, and the customer feedback, they are able to upskill services, they offer to the client.
- Targeted advertising team helps you to reach the right audience in using demographic, geographic, psychographic data. These companies can test different consumer groups with different ad copy and determine what is relevant. This practice proves that the company as a product owner possesses the appropriate business acumen and takes the right decision to accelerate its success to reach the end audience.

7.3 Promotion with Material:

- Create and promote educational resources in terms of general health and wellness as well as the content of the video is varied and can be practical with supporting data or experimental with results derived from application. But a good way of enhancing health education is by creating an educational video with high-definition animations that are interactive and have built-in summaries. These resources are all critical in helping customers research and make informed decisions about addressing their individual health concerns.

- Encourage happy customers to leave reviews and share reviews of health products sold. Content will resonate on an individual basis. Remember at this stage, not to focus on the product itself, but what is related to your content and what you can do to make certain that they are receiving the current and most reliable information – which will build their trust with your company.
- Feedback from mums on your baby product can also play an important role in developing a one-on-one relationship with them.

7.4 Collaboration of E-Commerce

- Working with established e-commerce platforms that have achieved global saturation is fundamental for the greater digital transformation of the OTC industry. Users, with these functional and intuitive interfaces that guarantee smooth transaction, are guaranteed a fuss-free experience when they shop on the web. Thanks to an online arena that has been abridged to an oversized degree, the ease with which customers find, appraise, and obtain over-the-counter therapeutic products gives rise to great consumer contentment and perpetuates their repeat business. This could even expand the reach of established brick-and-mortar players that are unable to go the DNVB direct-to-consumer route given their resources or market size. The features that augment the OTC industry's growth in the past, result in perpetuation and exacerbation of malpractices too.
- Signing up for a subscription service for OTC products could boost consumer convenience significantly. This makes these services the first of their kind in the over-the-counter medication sector. You get your favourite medications delivered right at your door every month. So for medicines that are consumed regularly, all the customer needs to do is log onto the app once. For a company, this creates a profitable customer base which practically hands over money each month in a reliable manner. Subscription services revolutionized product distribution and increased profitability for the entire consumer goods industry! Specifically, the OTC drug industry can satisfy modern-day consumers' demands to further capitalize on growth and maintain a competitive advantage in the digital marketplace, through subscription services and seamless incorporation of e-commerce!

7.4 Influenced Associations

- Partner with Instagram health influencers who have large followings to promote OTC products. These influencers can help the audience they influence learn about the benefits of proper self-medication by providing reliable feedback and information on the proper use of non-prescription medication. Knowledge is power, and such authoritative backing to medications not only vouch by its credibility, but also that added authority works like a recipe for increasing the persuasiveness and efficacy of any marketing campaigns.
- Communicate with micro influencers with fewer but super loyal followers, to help you build an even stronger community amongst existing audiences. Micro-influencers are

considered to be a lot more relatable and trustworthy owing to their personal and direct contact with their audience. With the right influencer, promote dialogue about your OTC-products in a sincere way and not come across as just wanting one to buy it. Since micro-influencers engage well with their followers, even a lesser amount, partnering with them is cost-effective for marketers all while reaping the benefits of marketing on social media in its full capacity.

Chapter: 08

Limitation of Study

- There exists a possibility that the responses given by the participants could be skewed.
- Projections are not used in the analysis; real data is.
- The accuracy was impacted by the limited time available.
- The research was carried out exclusively in Jaipur.

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