An Analysis of Employees Perception Towards Digital Marketing Factors for Customer Retention in Food and Beverage Outlet of Star Category Hotels

Vaibhav Kumar Vishwakarmaa*, Research Scholar, School of Hotel Management, Airlines and Tourism, CT University, Ludhiana, Punjab, India, kumar.vaibhav66@gmail.com

Dr. Ashutosh Sharmab , Head of School and Associate Professor, School of Hotel ManaGement, Airlines and Tourism, CT University, Ludhiana, Punjab, India, drashutosh18015@ctuniversity.in,

Abstract: The aim of the study is to analyse the employees perception towards the lead generation factors of digital marketing which influence customers to select food and beverage outlets and to analyse the employees perception towards lead conversion factors of digital marketing which influence customers to select food and beverage outlets. The researcher collected data from 423 employee workinG in star category hotels in Agra, Lucknow, Noida and Varanasi. Friedman test was performed to find out the results of the study. It was found that the social media, Outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy and the like, F&B outlet promoted by celebrity on FB, Insta, Pinterest on YouTube, F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey, Offers or wishes, redemption codes for a free or discounted meal on your special day are the top 5 lead generating techniques according to employees. The present research also concluded that that joints who are using Social media, F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey, Short online videos on food and ambiance, Infographics/images of the F&B outlet, outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy are the top 5 lead conversion factors from employees point of view.

Keywords: Employee Perception, Digital Marketing, Consumer Retention, Food and Beverage Outlets, Lead generation, Lead conversion

I. INTRODUCTION

In order to accommodate all types of travellers, numerous chain hotels have segmented themselves into different market groups and formed smaller brands for each of these sectors. The Indian hotel industry has seen significant growth in recent years. The food and beverage services industry has a substantial impact on the profitability of the hospitality industry. Due to the significance of business meetings and a variety of personal and social activities, customers frequent catering establishments. The professionals in the food and beverage industries strive tirelessly to improve customer experiences. F&B service providers offer food and drinks to their customers in a predetermined location, such as a hotel or restaurant, or at the customer's preferred location (off-premise). The competitive environment of today means that digitalization has a significant impact on business performance [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]. It influences how businesses and customers engage in the present. Customers spend more time going through the material on various social media networks and surfing those platforms [7], [8]. Customers' decision-making is influenced by digital advertising [10]. As a result, digital marketing has emerged as a crucial tool for businesses to gather and obtain consumer information and then assist clients in making purchasing decisions [11], [12].

The intended audience can be reached via digital marketing techniques. Millennials can be effectively influenced by using digital marketing techniques [13], [14]. Additionally, side-panel ads and online coupons are the most successful marketing tactics, although buyers dislike pop-up ads [13]. Numerous studies [15], [16] also point to the influence of digital marketing tactics on the performance of the company. Restaurants have been trying to find quick and inexpensive ways to reach their customers. Social media is a powerful instrument for marketing and advertising to a larger audience and for influencing their purchasing decisions [17], [18]. Before going out to eat, the majority of customers conduct research about the restaurant, and half of them visit the businesses' websites. Mobile devices are used to produce the majority of these queries. In addition, 3 out of 5 customers place an online meal order [19].

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 CONCEPT OF DIGITAL MARKETING

In their research article from [20] noted that digital marketing can leverage the Internet as a working and exhibiting environment. Perlado and Barwise [21] defined

digital marketing as the use of text and multimedia messaging as well as email, social media, and web-based advertising as marketing platforms. Sareno [22] found that the particular characteristics of digital marketing are due to seven operational duties, including personality, secrecy, customer service, the community, security, and sales promotion. Small firms can easily adapt digital marketing strategies without the assistance of a marketing team or agency, which is particularly advantageous for them, according to Harris and Rae's [23] research. Digital marketing, often known as online marketing, is the discipline of promoting companies using the internet and other digital communication channels, according to Chaffey and Smith [24]. A marketing initiative is fundamentally considered to be digital marketing if it makes use of digital communication, according to Muhammedrisaevna et al. [25]. Digital marketing enables brands to interact with their target audience and promote their goods and services.

2.2 DIGITAL MARKETING IN RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

Belanger et al. [26] found that restaurant owners that continue to use digital marketing have significantly increased consumer relationships and trust, which leads to higher sales. Both Hassan et al. [17] and Sundararaj and Rejeesh [18] drew the conclusion that restaurants have been looking for quick and inexpensive ways to reach their customers in the course of their respective studies. Social media is an effective technique for advertising to a larger audience and influencing their purchasing choices. With an emphasis on great food quality, ambiance, and foodservice, Jeong and Jang [27] and Zhang et al. [28] concluded in their respective research studies that a favourable eWOM resulted in a positive perception of the brand. Digital marketing is vital for the restaurant industry as well [29]. Restaurants benefit from digital marketing that targets internet customers. Among marketing strategies, it also offers one of the finest returns on investment. In addition to increasing a restaurant's exposure to potential customers and lowering customer acquisition and retention costs, digital marketing also places F&B specialists in close proximity to customers.

2.3 ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DIGITAL MARKETING AND CUSTOMER RETENTION

Mariani [30] came to the conclusion that tailored message enables improved retention rates. By employing client information, it is possible to predict the offers that must be provided in the future to current customers in order to keep them alive and engaged with the company. According to Web strategies [31], companies should focus on implementing content advertising strategies to ensure frequent dissemination of useful information to clients or consumers so that they can eventually transform into loyal customers. A digital supply chain can improve customers' favourable opinions of brand loyalty. According to Khan and Islam [32], a loyalty programme is an essential step that

should be kept in mind for digital marketing in order to generate brand awareness in the eyes of consumers. Online platforms significantly boosted customer happiness and loyalty in the digital era. They also had a subdued effect on local economic development.

2.4 LEAD GENERATION AND LEAD CONVERSION FACTORS

In order to improve future sales, lead generation involves engaging potential consumers' interest. It is an essential step in many businesses' sales processes. In order to move leads through the sales funnel and convert them into paying customers, it can be crucial to understand lead generation and how to use it successfully [33]. The process of turning a lead into a customer is known as lead conversion. This process, which varies greatly between businesses and covers everything from sales strategies to marketing materials, is made up of numerous universally applicable principles [34].

III.   OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To analyse the employees perception towards the lead generation factors of digital marketing which influence customers to select food and beverage outlets.
- To analyse the employees perception towards lead conversion factors of digital marketing which influence customers to select food and beverage outlets.

IV.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research commences with an overview of the current chapter, followed by an exploration of the research design, research objectives, research framework, and research hypothesis. Subsequently, it delves into a comprehensive examination of the data collection process, sampling techniques, and instrumentation. After conducting a thorough literature review, specific research questions were formulated pertaining to Lead Generaton, Lead Concversion and Digital Marketing Initiatives in the questionnaire meant for Employee. These questions were designed to be answered using a 5-point Likert scale. Before final data collection process the questionnaire was reviewed by 3 experts from Hotel Industry and 3 experts from Digital Marketing and also few customers. Based on their review comments questions which were ambiguous were reframed. Collection of data was done using Surveys and Population of research will be Catering Industry. Employees who work in food and beverages outlets of 3 star and above category hotels belonging to Uttar Pradesh, specifically in Agra, Lucknow, Noida and Varanasi were chosen for collecting the data. Post questionnaire designing a pilot study was conducted on 50 employees. A pilot study in research refers to a small-scale preliminary investigation conducted before the main or larger study. By analyzing the data collected in the pilot phase, researchers determined the variability and

effective sizes of the variables, which inform the sample size calculation for achieving sufficient statistical power and thus, final questionnaire were developed. The researcher collected data from 423 employee for the present research. The primary source of data collection is structured questionnaire. Secondary sources of data collection are previous research papers, theses, newspapers, websites, international and national reports, Government and other related agencies reports etc.

Cochran's formula is considered especially appropriate in situations with **large populations.** A sample of any given size provides more information about a smaller population than a larger one, so there's a 'correction' through which the number given by Cochran's formula can be reduced if the whole population is relatively small.

The Cochran formula is:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where:

- e is the desired level of precision (i.e. the margin of error),

- p is the (estimated) proportion of the population which has the attribute in question,

- q is $1 - p$.

The z-value is found in a Z table.

With confidence interval 95%, margin of error 5% and population 50% (since its unknown so 50%) is considered. Thus, the **sample size is calculated to be 385** responses.

The researcher collected data from **423 employee**, so that if some incomplete or ambiguous response gets collected, it can be discarded during data cleaning. The study employed a purposive sampling method to ensure that every member of the population or universe had an equitable and unbiased opportunity to be included. This non-probability sampling technique is characterized by its selective nature, as each sample is independently chosen for a specific purpose. The researcher utilised the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to determine whether a sample originates from a population with a given distribution, or the K-S test is performed to determine whether the data is normal. Friedman test was performed to find out which parameters are most important for the employees. The Friedman test is a nonparametric statistical test used to determine if there are differences among three or more related groups or treatments. It is designed to analyze data with repeated measures or matched samples. The test is suitable when the dependent variable is measured on an ordinal scale or when the assumptions of parametric tests, such as normality or homogeneity of variances, are not met.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF EMPLOYEES

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Employees

Variables		(%)
Gender	Male	67.8
	Female	32.2
Age	18-25 years	30.5
	26-31 years	28.4
	32-40 years	18.0
	41-50 Years	16.5
	51-60 Years	4.7
	Above 60 Years	1.9
Educational Qualifications	High School	.7
	Intermediate	1.9
	Undergraduates	10.9
	Graduate	45.6
	Postgraduate	22.2
	Doctorate	11.8
	Others	6.9
Annual Income	Less than 1 Lakh	7.1
	1-5 Lakhs	52.5
	6-10 Lakhs	29.1
	More than 10 Lakhs	11.3
Location	Agra	23.6
	Lucknow	24.6
	Noida	25.5
	Varanasi	26.2
Designation	Manager	20.6
	Executive	23.4
	Captain	18.2
	Others	37.8
Employee of FB Outlet	3 Star	31.0
	4 Star	25.1
	5 Star	38.5
	5 Star Above	5.4

Table 1 is indicating demographic profile of employees working in star category hotels of four selected cities. Out of 423 employees, 67.8% are males and 32.2% are females. 30.5% of the employees are 18-25 years of age, 28.4% are 26-31 years of age, 18% are 32-40 years of age, 4.7% are 51-60 years of age and 1.9% are above 60 years of age. 0.7% of the employees are high school passed out, 1.9% are 12th passed out, 10.9% are undergraduates, 45.6% are graduates, 22.2% are postgraduate and 11.8% are doctorates. 7.1% of the employees earn less than 1 Lakh, 52.5% earn 1-5 Lakh, 29.1% earn annual income of 6-10 lakhs and 11.3% employees earn annual income of more than 10 lakhs. 23.6% of the employees work in star category hotels of Agra city, 24.6% of the employees work in star category hotels of

Lucknow city, 25.5% of the employees work in star category hotels of Noida and 26.2% of the employees work in star category hotels of Varanasi. 20.6% of the employees are working as managers, 23.4% at executive level, 18.2% at supervisory level and 37.8% as other employees of the hotels. 31% of the employees works in 3 star hotels, 25.1% in 4 star, 38.5% in 5-star hotels and 5.4% at above 5-star hotels.

5.2 IDENTIFICATION OF TOP 5 LEAD GENERATION FACTORS

Table 2: Mean rank of lead generation factors

	Mean Rank
Social media	10.92
Outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy and the like	10.88
F&B outlet promoted by celebrity on FB, Insta, Pinterest on YouTube	10.62
F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey	10.39
Offers or wishes, redemption codes for a free or discounted meal. On your special day	10.34
F&B outlet where you are able to give reviews of the food and beverages on websites and social media platform	10.33
Short online videos on food and ambiance	10.31
Google my business listing	10.17
Infographics/images of the F&B outlet	10.15
Podcasts on food and special menu	10.11
The F&B mobile app	9.99
Blogs about food and special delicacies of the outlet	9.93
Newsletter that you send	9.83
Webinar on food and quality of food or special	9.78
Web searches	9.76
These outlets when they hold online customer loyalty and reward programs or live events	9.65
Sms	9.54
Live chat	8.98
Website	8.33

In order to improve future sales, lead generation involves engaging potential consumers' interest. It is an essential step in many businesses' sales processes. In order to move leads through the sales funnel and convert them into paying customers, it can be crucial to understand lead generation. Friedman Rank test was performed to check which dimension of Lead generations which the employees found to be top 5 i.e what are the top 5 factors from employees point of view which can attract to customers towards food and beverage outlets. It was found that the social media, Outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy and the like, F&B outlet promoted by celebrity on FB, Insta, Pinterest on YouTube, F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey, Offers or wishes, redemption codes for a free or discounted meal on your special day are the top 5 lead generating techniques according to employees.

5.3 IDENTIFICATION OF TOP 5 LEAD CONVERSION FACTOR

Table 3: Mean rank of lead conversion factors

	Mean Rank
Social media	10.70
F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey	10.60
Short online videos on food and ambiance	10.44
Infographics/images of the F&B outlet	10.35
Outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy and the like	10.32
Google my business listing	10.30
Web searches	10.16
F&B outlet promoted by celebrity on FB, Insta, Pinterest on youtube	10.13
Webinar on food and quality of food or special	10.11
F&B outlet where you are able to give reviews of the food and beverages on websites and social media platform	10.03
Podcasts on food and special menu	9.98
Blogs about food and special delicacies of the outlet	9.92
Offers or wishes, redemption codes for a free or discounted meal. On your special day	9.90
The F&B mobile app	9.84
These outlets when they hold online customer loyalty and reward programs or live events	9.78
Live chat	9.72
Newsletter that you send	9.70
Sms	9.50
Website	8.52

The process of turning a lead into a customer is known as lead conversion. This process, which varies greatly between businesses and covers everything from sales strategies to marketing materials, is made up of numerous universally applicable principles. Again Friedman Rank test was performed to check which dimension of Lead conversion which the employees found to be top 5 i.e. what are the factors from employees point of view which can convert lead generation into actual customers of food and beverage outlets. It was found that joints who are using Social media, F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey, Short online videos on food and ambiance, Infographics/images of the F&B outlet, Outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy there is maximum lead conversion.

Thus, the objective to find out most significant digital marketing factors that retains the guest in the particular outlet was established.

VI.   CONCLUSION

Friedman Rank test was performed to check which dimension of Lead generations which the employees found to be top 5. It was found that the social media, Outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy and the like, F&B outlet promoted by celebrity on FB, Insta, Pinterest on YouTube, F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey, Offers or wishes, redemption codes for a free or discounted meal on your special day are the top 5 lead generating techniques according to employees.

Thus, professionals of hotel industry must adopt digital marketing strategies to attract potential customers towards their food and beverage outlets. Food and beverage outlets professionals must be present on various food selling platforms like zomato and swiggy to promote their outlets. They can also advertise products of their outlets with the assistance of promotion of outlet by the celebrity on facebook, instagram and other social media outlets. Professionals must take feedback of the customers about their likes and dislikes and must incorporate their suggestions in their products and services.

Again Friedman Rank test was performed to check which dimension of Lead conversion which the employees found to be top 5 i.e. what are the factors from employees point of view which can convert lead generation into actual customers of food and beverage outlets. It was found that joints who are using Social media, F&B outlet which takes regular customer satisfaction survey, Short online videos on food and ambiance, Infographics/images of the F&B outlet, Outlet on various platforms like Zomato, Dine out, Swiggy there is maximum lead conversion. Lead conversion is all about converting potential customer into actual customers. Professionals of hotels must make strategies to be constantly make available their food and beverage on social media platforms as it converts potential customers into actual customers. They must upload videos and images of their outlets ambiance, special features, products and services on their websites and other social media platforms as it has significant impact on customers to visit food and beverage outlets.

REFERENCES

[1]. Mozeik, C. K., Beldona, S., Cobanoglu, C., & Poorani, A. (2009). The adoption of restaurant-based e-service. Journal of Foodservice Business Research, 12(3), 247–265.

[2]. Poisson, D. C. (2018). The effectiveness of coupons on the restaurant consumers' purchase decision. Journal of Foodservice Business Research, 21(3), 280–296.

[3]. Bouwman, H., Nikou, S., & de Reuver, M. (2019). Digitalization, business models, and SMEs: How do business model innovation practices improve performance of digitalizing SMEs? Telecommunications Policy, 43(9), 101828.

[4]. Sharma, A., Motta, V., & Martinez, L. (2019). Effectiveness of short videos to enhance HACCP information for consumers. Journal of Foodservice Business Research, 22(6), 549–562.

[5]. Martín-Peña, M. L., Sánchez-López, J. M., & Díaz-Garrido, E. (2019). Servitization and digitalization in manufacturing: the influence on firm performance. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, *35*(3), 564-574.

[6]. Dixit, S., Singh, S., Dhir, S., & Dhir, S. (2021). Antecedents of strategic thinking and its impact on competitive advantage. Journal of Indian Business Research, 13(4), 437–458.

[7]. Brandtzæg, P. B., & Heim, J. (2009). Why people use social networking sites. In *Online Communities and Social Computing: Third International Conference, OCSC 2009, Held as Part of HCI International 2009, San Diego, CA, USA, July 19-24, 2009. Proceedings 3* (pp. 143-152). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.

[8]. Wu, T. H., Weng, S. J., Lin, Y. T., Kim, S. H., & Gotcher, D. (2020). Investigating the importance and cognitive satisfaction attributes of service quality in restaurant business-a case study of TASTy steakhouse in Taiwan. Journal of Foodservice Business Research, 23(4), 263–284.

[9]. Pelletier M J, Krallman A, Adams F G and Hancock T. (2020). One size doesn't fit all: a uses and gratifications analysis of social media platforms. JRIM, 14(2), 269–284.

[10]. Poulis, A., Rizomyliotis, I., & Konstantoulaki, K. (2019). Do firms still need to be social? Firm generated content in social media. Information Technology & People, 32(2), 387–404.

[11]. Saura, J. R., Palos-Sánchez, P., & Cerdá Suárez, L. M. (2017). Understanding the digital marketing environment with KPIs and web analytics. Future Internet, 9(4), 1–13.

[12]. Kurnia, K., & Rifani, R. (2020). The personal selling & digital marketing on purchase decision of insurance policy. Economics and Digital Business Review, 1(2), 120–128.

[13]. Smith, K. T. (2012). Longitudinal study of digital marketing strategies targeting Millennials. Journal of Consumer Marketing, 29(2), 86–92. https://doi.org/10.1108/0736 37 612 11206339

[14]. Sundaram, R., Sharma, D., & Shakya, D. (2020). Power of digital marketing in building brands: A review of social media advertisement. International Journal of Management, 11(4), 244–254.

[15]. Lee, H., & Cho, C. H. (2020). Digital advertising: Present and future prospects. International Journal of Advertising, 39(3), 332–341.

[16]. Pelsmacker, P. D., Van Tilburg, S., & Holthof, C. (2018). Digital marketing strategies, online reviews and hotel performance. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 72(1), 47–55.

[17]. Hassan, S., Nadzim, S., & Shiratuddin, N. (2015). Strategic use of social media for small business based on the AIDA model. Procedia - Social And Behavioral Sciences, 172(1), 262–269. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.363

[18]. Sundararaj, V., & Rejeesh, M. R. (2021). A detailed behavioral analysis on consumer and customer changing behavior with respect to social networking sites. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 58(1), 102190.

[19]. Everett, H. (2020). Digital marketing for restaurants: How to get found online. Upserve. Retrieved June 12, 2023,

fromhttps://upserve.com/restaurant-insider/digital-marketing-restaurants/Global Business and Competitiveness, 15(2), 121–135.

[20]. Kalyanam, K., & McIntyre, S. (2002). The e-marketing mix: a contribution of the e-tailing wars. Journal of the academy of marketing science, 30(4), 487-499.

[21]. Perlado, V. R., & Barwise, P. (2004). Mobile advertising. *Advertising, promotion, and new media*, 261.

[22]. Sareno Solutions. (2005) Digital Marketing Agency, e-marketing strategy: 7 dimensions to consider (the e-marketing mix). Retrieved December 23, 2022 from https://www.sarenosolutions. Com/e-marketing-strategy-7-dimensions-to-consider-the e-marketing-mix/

[23]. Harris, L., & Rae, A. (2009). Social networks: the future of marketing for small business. Journal of business strategy.

[24]. Chaffey, D., & Smith, P. R. (2022). *Digital marketing excellence: planning, optimizing and integrating online marketing*. Taylor & Francis.

[25]. Muhammedrisaevna, T. M., Mubinovna, R. F., & Kizi, M. N. U. (2020). The role of information technology in organization and management in tourism. *Academy*, (4 (55)), 34-35.

[26]. Belanger, F., Fan, W., Schaupp, L. C., Krishen, A., Everhart, J., Poteet, D., & Nakamoto, K. (2006). Web site success metrics. Communications of the ACM, 49(12), 114–116. https://doi.org/10.1145/1183236.1183256

[27]. Jeong, E., & Jang, S. S. (2011). Restaurant experiences triggering positive electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) motivations. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 30(2), 356-366.

[28]. Zhang, Y., Zhang, J., & Liu, C. (2022). Motives for employees communicate positive electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on social network sites: Exploring moderating mechanisms. Australasian Marketing Journal, 30(1), 60-73.

[29]. Singh, S., Singh, G., & Dhir, S. (2022). Impact of digital marketing on the competitiveness of the restaurant industry. Journal of Foodservice Business Research, 1-29.

[30]. Mariani, O. (2015). Want Loyal Customers? Humanize Your Digital Marketing Programs. Available:http://www.market-bridge.com/2015/06/29/want-loyal-customers-humanize-your-digital-marketing-programs/. Last accessed 21st March, 2023.

[31]. Web strategies. (2016). Digital Marketing: The 7 Different Types of Online Marketing. Available:http://webstrategies.com/digital-marketing-7-different-types/. Last accessed 18 March, 2023

[32]. Khan, A., & Islam, M. (2017). The impact of digital marketing on increasing customer loyalty: a study on Dhaka city, Bangladesh. International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management, 5(4).

[33]. Bondarenko, S., Laburtseva, O., Sadchenko, O., Lebedieva, V., Haidukova, O., & Kharchenko, T. (2019). Modern lead generation in internet marketing for the development of enterprise potential.

[34]. Banerjee, S., & Bhardwaj, P. (2019). Aligning marketing and sales in multi-channel marketing: Compensation design for online lead generation and offline sales conversion. *Journal of Business Research*, *105*, 293-305.