

AN INDIAN START-UP BRAND'S ODYSSEY

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ABSTRACT

The case deals with the decision dilemma related to brand awareness of a vocational education digital start-up firm, Spreading Knowledge from India. The Indian market had a big demand for regional language based vocational education courses because of the diverse languages. There was no firm offering such courses in India. The founder of Spreading Knowledge, Mr. Paurus Deshpande identified such a need and started offering courses in Marathi language to people of Maharashtra and adjoining states. The firm started in 2020 during Covid times and gained good traction. To expand its offering and reach the target audience Mr. Deshpande realised there was a need to create brand awareness. He also knew from the participant feedback during the pilot test phase that print media was considered credible while social media offered faster reach to the target audience. He recognised that for branding, marketing communications would be required. Social media seemed to be a way to do this but with a limited budget of 3,500 \$, he was not sure of the choice of platforms. He wondered between the possibilities of using only Facebook as was being done currently or to club it with LinkedIn and Youtube along with regional newspaper.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, India, Start up, Marketing Communication.

INTRODUCTION

It was a hot and humid day in March 2021. Mr Paurus Deshpande, the founder and director of Spreading Knowledge was having his regular evening tea while watching the news on the television in Mumbai, the financial capital of India. At the same time, he pondered over how to promote his new entrepreneurial education venture, 'Spreading Knowledge' post Covid19. Spreading Knowledge offered vocational skill-based short term modular courses in the Marathi language through online mode. In a diverse emerging market, such as India, where the language was one of the sources of diversity not many such courses in regional languages were available though there was a huge demand for it and the online mode offered several benefits of convenience and access to both his firm and its customers. Paurus acknowledged that Covid 19 was not the reason but the catalyst in this process. However, to further build and sustain his venture he knew that now marketing communications would be required to create awareness about Spreading Knowledge and its' products. Social media seemed to be a way to do this but with a limited budget of \$3,500, he was not sure of the choice of platforms. He wondered about the possibilities of using only Facebook as was being done currently or to club it with LinkedIn and YouTube to maximize the reach. He also wondered if he would have to continue with regional print media as the Maharashtra audience still relied on newspapers more than social media as "*print had more credibility and was more pervasive*". He remembered his talk with one of his students who mentioned, "*I felt confident of Spreading Knowledge's courses once I saw it in Sakal*". Sakal was the largest selling Marathi language newspaper in Maharashtra.

The Niche

As per KPMG, India was the second-largest Edtech market with opportunities for growth India Brand Equity Foundation (2022). Pauras worked as a faculty in a vocational institute in Mumbai. The pandemic had forced people to look for new options to carry on work and remain financially stable. One such initiative was Spreading Knowledge for Pauras. Coming from Maharashtra he knew that there was a big employable population with around 21,000 vocational job vacancies (Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India, n.d.). in the state that would get benefited from employable skill-building vocational courses in Marathi such as office secretary, beautician, office maintenance, health care professionals etc. He remembered the discussions that happened in his college before the pandemic where he and his colleagues often wondered around, “*how to meet the demand for such courses?*” In the period from March to June 2020, he pilot tested the concept by conducting a few free sessions by experts in these subject areas in Marathi to check the relevance and acceptance of such a product. In July 2020 based on the positive feedback from more than 2000 participants, he realised that even though there were a large number of online courses available in India by platforms such as Coursera and Udemy but most of them were in English and did not cater to these kinds of job requirements. Participants of this program responded with statements such as, “*these courses were much desired*”, “*this is the need of the hour*”, “*at least somebody could offer these courses in Marathi*” and “*somebody cares for us*”. His experience as a faculty in a vocational institute and a talk with a few students further made him discover a niche market for short-term interactive online vocational courses in Marathi which made students job-ready. He also observed that the students required a lot of guidance and counselling when considering for a job opportunity. No such services were being offered in the market and he decided to add this component also as an additional value, that is, to offer customised counselling services to the students in Marathi. Also, the “*one to one*” attention to be offered in Spreading Knowledge was not offered by any of the bigger platforms. He got an overwhelming response in the pilot phase. He thus decided to leverage this opportunity by coming up with a formal full-fledged venture catering to this demand and supply gap Li & Lalani (2020).

Even though the courses offered were online, the target region was in and around the state of Maharashtra in India such as Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. Due to the online nature of the courses and accessibility on digital devices, the Marathi customers who had digital devices and internet connections were the default target. Most of Spreading Knowledge’s courses were aimed at professional development. Owing to that the firm’s targeted audience included young, middle-aged, and elderly professionals in the age group of 18-60 years. Pauras was, “*surprised*” to find that more than 50 % of participants were above 40 years and among this 30% were above 50 years of age. 60% of the targeted audience were females. This meant that there was a demand for such courses on professional career development and enhancement from the middle-aged people in the age group of 40-55 years which was not being catered to at all in the Marathi language segment. There were no eligibility criteria for joining a course, however, for understanding concepts and getting skilled in courses, literate customers, with some primary education, were deemed fit. The target customers thus were not only youth but middle-aged and elderly as well including a good percentage of women. These people were largely occupied in informal sectors with no job security.

Business Model

Spreading Knowledge generated revenue through the fees from the course participants. For one-month courses, the fee was around \$100, and the batch size comprised of 15-20 enrolments. Participants were allowed to pay the fees in two instalments during the course duration. For one-week courses, the fee was \$10, and the batch size was 50 -70 enrolments with no instalments. The revenue turnaround was, therefore, larger and faster than the one-week courses. The firm offered a

total of 20 courses out of which 12 were one week and 8 were one-month courses.

Spreading Knowledge promoted each course independently. For a few courses, it partnered with a leading Marathi newspaper, Sakal. For the last year, he had done this for 8 one-week courses and 2 one-month courses. There was no clear basis for this decision but was based on his intuition and experience. 30% of the fees from such courses were dedicated to the promotion in print media for publicity. 50-60% of the fees were spent on expert remuneration. For the courses which were offered without collaborating with the newspaper, the firm would spend around 10 to 15% of that course's fee on paid advertisements on Facebook & Instagram towards payment to graphic and web designers for designing the brochures, pamphlets, and content to promote the courses on social media along with the platform charges. Sometimes, the firm would hire marketing agencies for advertising and promotion 5% of the fees was spent on miscellaneous expenses like internet connection bills, electricity bills, on devices like computers, software, printers, mobiles, etc Zhu & Chen (2015).

Corona Effect

Starting off and setting up a fresh venture like Spreading Knowledge in the Covid times had both pros and cons. With more people staying and working from home and several job layoffs the readiness and acceptance of online learning platforms showed an increase and internet penetration in India had also increased (Li and Lalani, 2020; Mathivanan et al. (2021); Dhingra & Kondirolli (2021). People were comfortable attending online meetings, webinars, and lectures even from their mobile devices. The sales of laptops, computers and smartphones had increased. With the government supporting start-ups, the number of fresh technology-based start-ups also had gone up since 2019. However, there were also some risks involved. It was difficult to ascertain if people would be able to take out time for online courses once things turned back to normal. There was no certainty about the success of these platforms which were at an inception stage right now Li & .

Pauras, *“was sure that things would not be the same as before covid and online learning was there to stay”* but he also realized that the market must know about the existence of such a product and for that rather than individual course-specific promotions he would need a dedicated strategy for creating awareness about Spreading Knowledge. Initially, the objective of the brand would be to create brand awareness amongst its target audience and rather than print which he utilized for several courses, social media would be a faster and more cost-effective way to do that. However he *“was not sure of which platforms to go ahead with”* amongst Facebook & Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube and what should be the way to create brand awareness that would be converted into customers for his courses. Since he had a limited budget of \$3,500, he could not hire a consultant for advising him on this decision, although he was sure to hire an agency for content development and deployment of social media campaigns. He also wondered how to balance social media options with print as his target audience considered print more credible and the regional Marathi newspaper Sakal had a good circulation of 1.2 million with a readership per copy of 3 against the average of 2.5. But advertising a quarter-page advertisement in Sakal would be around \$1,500.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING OPTIONS

Facebook Advertising

With nearly 3 billion active monthly users Facebook was the biggest platform available among the social media platforms. Businesses could create and post engaging content, turn client base into the community and promote new deals or offers on Facebook. It was very easy to use

platform. Facebook also offered integration with Instagram. To get returns on Facebook, the interaction had to be engineered for which an expert team had to be put in place. Also, it was more suited for smartphones based on the usage of the people. Facebook offered three options for advertising content; businesses could either pay based on the number of impressions or the number of clicks or the number of actions on their advertisements. In the case of impressions, businesses were charged a cost per thousand impressions of the advertisement. In India, the average cost per thousand impressions for the education industry was a little less than \$0.50 and in general, the cost per thousand impressions was \$0.67 AdCostly (2020). In the case of clicks, the average cost per click for the education industry was \$1.06, for customer services it was \$3.08 and for employment and job training it was \$2.72 Irvine (2020). The average click-through rate or the ratio of the number of clicks to impressions for the education industry was 0.73%, for customer services it was 0.62% and for employment and job training it was 0.47% Irvine (2020). In the case of actions, the average cost per action for the education industry was \$7.85, for customer services it was \$31.11 and for employment and job training it was \$23.24 Irvine (2020). Finally, when these clicks or actions were converted into orders, they were considered conversions. The average conversion rate or the percentage of conversions relative to the number of clicks for the education industry was 13.58%, for consumer services it was 9.96% and for employment & job training it was 11.73% Irvine (2020).

YouTube Advertising

YouTube had more than 2 billion monthly users and was the second largest search engine after Google. YouTube offered a wonderful place for businesses to advertise and reach new, qualified audiences. Apart from this, YouTube videos showed up in Google searches and could be cross-promoted on different social media platforms. Nevertheless, businesses needed to create high quality, entertaining and informative videos to gain traction. This required businesses to allocate a sufficient budget for content creation. A single such video would cost \$1,000 to \$20,000 depending upon the quality of graphics created. In YouTube ads, businesses had to pay based on the number of views of the advertisement. The average cost per view for YouTube ads was \$0.026 and in the case of the education industry, it was \$0.014 AdStage (2020). The average view rate for YouTube ads was 31.9%, and in the case of the education industry, it was 39.9% AdStage (2020). The average view click-through rate for YouTube ads was 0.51%, and in the case of the education industry, it was 0.73% AdStage (2020). The view rate and click per view also varied depending on the time of year and seasonal events. The view rate varied from 25.1% to 38.5% during the year. The click per view varied from \$0.022 to \$0.033 AdStage (2020).

LinkedIn Advertising

The LinkedIn platform had more than 610 million users and it was the best for professional networking and contact building as the users were primarily employees and business owners. It was more formal than other social platforms and had most influencers and decision-makers in the business world. Pauras considered this platform for building the firm's reputation and relation with the businesses that could offer placement opportunities for Spreading Knowledge's student base while also getting brand awareness from prospective job seekers. He also realized that LinkedIn offered less reach and interaction as compared to Facebook and YouTube. On LinkedIn, the average click-through rate only accounted for chargeable clicks for businesses, as all the clicks were not chargeable. The global average click-through rate for sponsored content was between 0.44% to 0.65% and varied drastically based on various parameters AdStage (2020). Based on the region, the average click-through rate in Asia-Pacific was 0.8% AdStage (2020). Based on users'

seniority, the average click-through rate of junior employees was 0.6% and that of senior decision-makers was 0.55% AdStage (2020). Based on industry, the average click-through rate in education was 0.42% and in corporate services, it was 0.5% AdStage (2020). Also, there was huge variation based on the type of content, the average click-through rate for single image content was 0.56%, for multiple image carousels it was 0.40%, for message ads it was 3% with 30% open rates and for text ads, it was only 0.02% AdStage (2020). LinkedIn also offered businesses the option to pay based on either the number of clicks or the number of impressions or the number of leads captured AdStage (2020). In the case of clicks, the average cost per click for junior employees was \$4.40, and for senior decision-makers, it was \$6.40 AdStage (2020). Based on different job functions, the average cost per click varied from \$4.90 to \$7.90 AdStage (2020). In the case of impressions, the average cost was \$33.80 per 1000 impressions AdStage (2020). In the case of leads, the average cost per lead or the cost an advertiser is paying to capture a lead ranges from \$15 to \$350 depending on the audience type, offer, and creative AdStage (2020). The average cost per lead in the Asia Pacific region was \$80, for the education industry it was \$64 and for corporate services, it was \$60 AdStage (2020). The conversion rate on LinkedIn varied from 5% to 15% AdStage (2020) Hoffman & Fodor (2010).

Present Status

The firm joined several (more than 50) Facebook groups related to education and training and posted the course advertisements there to gain visibility as Pauras said, “*Facebook is the place where you find people (target audience)*”. By tagging social media influencers, the firm managed to promote and create some buzz. However, Pauras had not monitored the effectiveness of such as he had just joined the Facebook Ad manager app that allowed him to track the advertisements. The app summarised the demographics, return on investment, region, and the number of people. In addition to Facebook Ads, the firm also used the Facebook event facility to promote the courses. With the boost function, by spending a little amount, the advertisement would appear on the top when visiting the event page on the app or the website. With Facebook events, people could see the events easily and join them. WhatsApp was linked with the accounts of these social media sites, so in the case of a query from a prospective customer, the query, or enquiry went directly to the Spreading Knowledge’s WhatsApp business account where the queries were answered and more detailed information about their courses and services provided. WhatsApp helped the firm to engage with customers and to keep records of the existing and prospective customers who had contacted the firm. Apart from the limitation of measuring results of Facebook advertisements the bigger concern for Pauras was that while the number of users was a plus for Facebook, the navigation through the web pages and advertisements was not easy plus there was a lot of competition present. On the contrary, YouTube viewers watched over a billion hours of video every day, so there were plenty of options to get the brand in front of them. He knew that marketers frequently ran video ad campaigns on YouTube before going on to other platforms since it was relatively simple to set up video advertising on YouTube, and they were also more engaging. Furthermore, YouTube advertisements were tailored to a user’s Google searches. This feature would provide him with more data for more precise targeting. He also investigated LinkedIn, which had a large professional database but low engagement with video adverts Kotler (2005).

The Way Forward

Pauras had planned to increase the number of existing one-week courses from 12 to 48 and continue with 8 one-month courses in the first year. Moving from the concept stage to full commercialization, he wondered about optimally balancing his advertising mix between social

media and traditional print media within a budget of \$3,500 so that he could maximize the brand awareness and reach. Would one social media option of Facebook work best or should he combine it with print media partner, Sakal, to better attain the target or an alternate combination of Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn be considered for the set objective were his three options from which he had to choose one Figure 1.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 List of Courses

One-week courses

1. MS Excel Training Course
2. Web Design & Animation Course
3. Graphics & Animation Design
4. MS Office in a Week
5. Beginners' English Language Course
6. Beginners' German Language Course
7. Beginners' French Language Course
8. Beginners' Spanish Language Course
9. Fast Track Beautician Course
10. Short Term Course on Diet Planning & Nutrition
11. Fast Track Course on Office Management
12. One-Week Secretarial Practice Course

One-month courses

1. Apprentice Course in Health Care
2. Apprentice Course in Hair Design
3. Yoga & Lifestyle Management Program
4. MS Office, Web Design & Graphics Course
5. Advanced English Language Course
6. Advanced German Language Course
7. Advanced French Language Course
8. Advanced Spanish Language Course

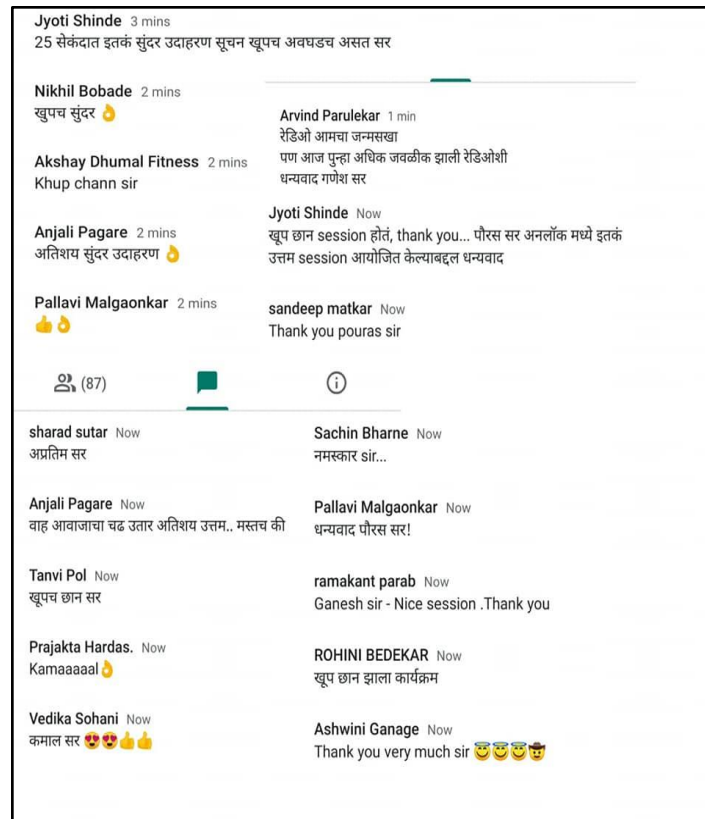


FIGURE 1
EXHIBIT 2 PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK
TEACHING NOTE

Synopsis

The case deals with the decision dilemma related to brand awareness of a vocational education digital start up firm, Spreading Knowledge from India. The Indian market had a big demand for regional language based vocational education courses because of the diverse languages. There was no firm offering such courses in India. The founder of Spreading Knowledge, Mr. Paurus Deshpande identified such a need and started offering courses in Marathi language to people of Maharashtra and adjoining states. The firm started in 2020 during Covid times and gained good traction. To expand its offering and reach the target audience Mr. Deshpande realised there was a need to create brand awareness. He also knew from the participant feedback during the pilot test phase that print media was considered credible while social media offered faster reach to the target audience. He recognised that for branding, marketing communications would be required. Social media seemed to be a way to do this but with a limited budget of 3,500 \$, he was not sure of the choice of platforms. He wondered between the possibilities of using only Facebook as was being done currently or to club it with LinkedIn and Youtube along with regional newspaper Gupta & Davin (2020).

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the role played by marketing communications in advancing new product opportunities in emerging markets such as India.
2. To understand the steps followed in developing an effective marketing communication plan.

3. To understand the concept of integration in marketing communication through the use of traditional and digital media options to achieve the communications objective.

Target Audience

This case can be used for introductory course on marketing communications at post graduate level and marketing communications and digital marketing courses at undergraduate level. The case can be used in executive-level courses to illustrate IMC, growth, and social media marketing strategies for a start-up.

Research Method

The case is based on primary data, collected through interviews with the case protagonist. The case also uses secondary data to support the case facts Table 1.

Teaching Plan

Table 1 THE TIME DISTRIBUTION FOR A 90 MINUTES CLASS CAN BE AS BELOW:	
Q1a. What is the product for Spreading Knowledge? Q1b. What is the core value proposition for Spreading Knowledge? Q1c. What is the role of marketing communications in advancing new products for Spreading Knowledge?	20 minutes
Q2. Devise the marketing communication strategy for Spreading Knowledge, using the concept of customer journey.	20 minutes
Q3. How should Spreading Knowledge choose the social media platforms within the budget? Should it include print media also in its communication strategy?	25 minutes
Q4. Apart from marketing communication channels what would be the other success criteria which Spreading Knowledge must focus upon at this stage?	15 minutes
Summing Up	10 minutes

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Q1a. What is the product for Spreading Knowledge?

The instructor can start the discussion by asking this question with the underlying sense on what is the value that Spreading knowledge offers. The instructor can use the continuum of different market offerings based on their characteristics; search, experience and credence from the customer's ease of evaluation Scholz & Smith (2019) Figure 2.

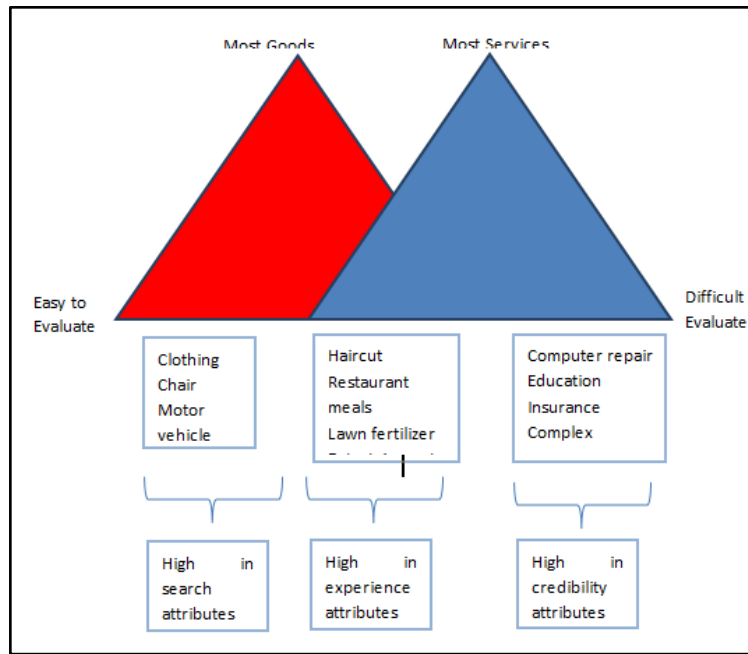


FIGURE 2
CUSTOMER’S EVALUATION OF PRODUCTS

Depending on whether they are rich in search qualities, experience attributes, or credence attributes, all items can be placed on a continuum ranging from "easy to evaluate" to "difficult to evaluate." The majority of physical products are found on the left side of the spectrum, whereas services are found on the centre or right. All features (tangible and intangible) of a good or service that may be evaluated by customers are referred to as product attributes.

The credibility part of the service can be highlighted by the instructor for which the experts at Spreading Knowledge become very important and that is also one of the major areas where the firm is spending and costs could not be cut there.

Q1b. What is the core value proposition for the firm?

To highlight the core value in the product the instructor can use the ‘perceived value’ concept with benefits and costs paid by the customer Figure 3 and Table 2.

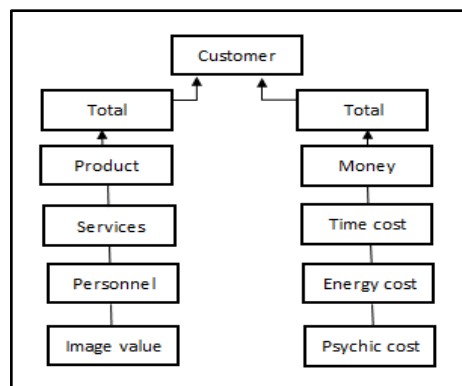


FIGURE 3
CUSTOMER PERCEIVED VALUE

Table 2 PERCEIVED VALUE FOR THE CUSTOMERS IN THE PRODUCT		
Dimensions of Perceived Value	Benefits	Costs
Product	Functional – professional development at mid career and entry stage aligned to job requirements, In Marathi language (known, English and Hindi was a limitation) Handled by Experts No such product in the market Convenience due to online	Monetary value in price \$10 for 1 week course and \$100 for 1 month course
Service	Customised career counselling and guidance	No additional costs
Personnel	Experts in subject area	No additional costs
Image	The firm relied on Exper’s image to bring credibility to the courses	No additional costs

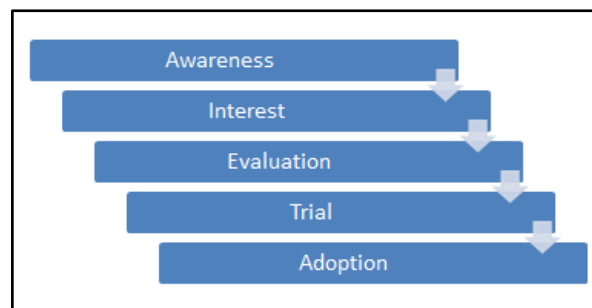
The students will realise through Table 1 that the benefits offered by the firm are unique. The firm has the option of charging for the additional dimensions apart from functional benefits but seems not to be doing so. This would make the prices reasonable and participants will be satisfied for a value for money kind of product. Though the case does not explicitly mention but in an emerging market such as India, applicants for informal jobs come from lower middle and lower income group with education mostly till the secondary level.

Q1c. What is the role of marketing communications in advancing new products?

The role of marketing communications in a firm is to inform, persuade, and remind customers about the products and brands they sell. Spreading Knowledge is at the introduction stage in terms of the product life cycle. The instructor can highlight that the customers in this stage are largely innovators and early adopters and need to be informed about the new product largely. The innovation adoption model can be used to explain how new products are adopted by the customers through different stages. The marketing communication tools and objectives align to these stages also referred to as buyer readiness stages.

Innovation-Adoption Model

Innovation-Adoption Model was developed by Rogers in 1995. He postulated various stages in which a target customer sails through from the stage of incognizance to purchase. The 5 stages of the Innovation-Adoption Model are Awareness, Interest, Evaluation, Trial, and Adoption Figure 4 Rogers (1962).



**FIGURE 4
INNOVATION ADOPTION MODEL**

Awareness

This is the primary stage of Innovation-Adoption Model. The consumer becomes aware of a brand or a product mostly through advertisements. This corresponds to the cognitive state of the customer. Brand recognition and brand recall (aided and unaided) are the measures used to monitor the effectiveness of the communication in the awareness stage.

Knowledge at present is in the awareness stage. The company has to create massive awareness at this stage through the use of traditional and / or social media. The existing customers can also be used for word of mouth on different media.

Interest

This is the second phase of the Innovation-Adoption Model. Once Spreading Knowledge reaches sufficient level of awareness i.e. at least the candidates for 20,000 state vocational jobs who have seen the advertisement and also clicked through it, interest needs to be generated. This is a stage in which the information about the brand or a product multiplies in the market and triggers the interest of the potential buyers of the product to gain more knowledge and information about the product. Spreading Knowledge will need to build a content management strategy for its social and traditional media options.

Since the firm is offering online courses and keeping social media in its communication strategy it will have to create maximum brand awareness in the first two months i.e. start with maximum impressions on social media and traditional media in the first month, which would be continued in the second month to be followed by targeted reach that means unique click through rates or unduplicated unique readers to generate interest in the second month itself. From the third month onwards the firm will have to start building steps to make the customer move through evaluation, trial and adoption stages. These stages are explained below.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the third stage of the Innovation-Adoption Model that supplements the necessary information regarding the product to the consumers. In this stage, the consumers evaluate and try to gain a deeper understanding of the product that stimulated interest in them.

Trial

In this stage, the customers try the product before making the final choice to purchase the product.

Adoption

Adoption is the final stage of the Innovation-Evaluation Model. In this stage, the customer accepts the product, makes a purchase decision and finally purchases the product.

In the Innovation-Evaluation Model, the Awareness happens at the Cognitive Stage, developing an interest and evaluation phases fall under the conviction phase, and the trial of the product and the actual adoption fall in the Behavioral phase.

Q2. Devise the marketing communication strategy for Spreading Knowledge, using the concept of customer journey.

The instructor can highlight the steps for framing an effective marketing communication strategy. These are

1. Identify target audience
2. Determine objectives of communication
3. Select communication channels and the marketing communications mix
4. Establish the budget
5. Design the message
6. Measure results
7. Manage the IMC process

The case deals with the first five steps of this program. It would be pertinent for the instructor to highlight the customer journey stages and the effectiveness of different marketing communications tools across these stages. With the proliferation of digital technologies the customer decision making stages commonly referred to as customer journey now include a mix of traditional and digital tools. This is highlighted as path to purchase in Figure 5.

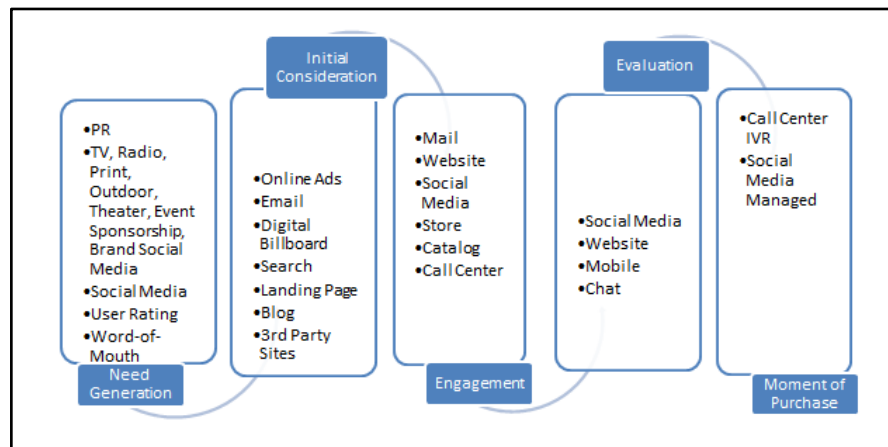


FIGURE 5
PATH TO PURCHASE

This is an important element for the student to understand as it is from here that the integration of tools and channels begin. The instructor can then elaborate on each of the five steps;

Identify Target Audience

As mentioned in the case, the target audience people were largely occupied in informal sectors with no job security. They ranged in the age group of 18 to 60 years which included youth looking for skills in vocational jobs and largely adults in the age group of 40-55 years who were looking for upgrading knowledge for growth in either present jobs or new jobs. Females represented a large proportion of the target audience. These people were largely Marathi speaking and could not take courses offered in Hindi or English.

Determine Objectives of Communication

Based on the first step it is clear that there was demand for Spreading Knowledge jobs as was also revealed in the pilot test. As discussed in the first question for any new product to diffuse through the customers, the audience first has to be made aware. The case protagonist has also identified 'brand awareness' as the objective of his decision to be taken on choice of platforms for marketing communications.

Select Communication Channels and the Marketing Communications Mix

At this stage the student can be informed of the several marketing communication channels and tools largely available to firms to make a choice from. The choice has to come from the communication objective selected, target audience reach and the budget.

The most common traditional marketing communication channels are print, which includes newspapers & magazines (regional & national); broadcast that includes television & radio (regional & national); out of home media including bill boards and interactive digital media.

The marketing communication tools available are; advertising, publicity, personal selling, direct marketing, internet based marketing such as search engine optimization, search engine marketing and social media marketing.

The advantages and disadvantages of each media and communication tool can be discussed. In case the instructor may want to leave this part if the students have already covered then he may do so.

The instructor can now emphasise that the communication objective selected for Spreading Knowledge is 'brand awareness' as the product is at the introductory stages of its lifecycle. The important point to be covered here would be that a different marketing communication mix would be required at each stage of the product life cycle and customer journey. Advertising and publicity are the most cost effective tools in the awareness stage of the customers. Spreading Knowledge thus has to focus on advertising. The decision on choice of media is taken in detail in question number 3.

Establish the Budget

The budget in this case has already been established by the firm at \$1,500.

At this stage the instructor may go to question number 3 to discuss the analysis and results for the choice of media decision. The remaining three steps on designing the message, measuring results and manage the IMC process may be discussed theoretically by the instructor as the case does not deal with that.

Q3. How should Spreading Knowledge choose the social media platforms within the budget? Should it include print media also in its communication strategy?

This is the key decision to be taken by the Paurus Deshpande. Before choosing the media options the communication objective needs to be framed as outlined in question number 2. The product is a new product and at the awareness stage. The communication objective thus would be creating maximum brand awareness and some action within the available budget.

The first question here to be analysed by the students would be;

Whether Print Media would be required or can be Dropped and \$1,500 is diverted to Social Media?

For a product at introduction stage while social media does offer benefits of fast reach, newspapers is more pervasive in India and in Maharashtra it is mentioned that people still consider print more credible. Sakal is the most read Marathi language newspaper in Maharashtra as given in the case, with a circulation of 1.2 million and readership per circulation (rpc) of 3. On an average the rpc of newspapers is 2.5. Newspaper and television have generally been considered as the most pervasive mass media options especially to be considered for creating exposure / visibility. Therefore, Sakal needs to be included in the communication strategy along with social media.

Sakal would bring an exposure of $1.2\text{million} * 3 = 3.6\text{million}$.

At this point the instructor can bring in the point of integrated marketing communication. Integrated marketing communication (IMC) can be defined as the process used to unify marketing communication elements, such as advertising, sales promotion, public relation digital & social

media into a brand identity that remains consistent across distinct media channels.

The next decision to be taken is whether to consider cost per thousand impressions (cpm) or cost per click (cpc) as a metric to analyse the social media options. Social media advertising is typically priced based on one of two models. In the cpm model, the client pays number of times the advertisement is shown, like traditional advertising. The cpc model is based on pay-for-performance. The client only has to pay when the advertisement gets clicked. In this case since the objective is set on creating brand awareness cpm would be a better choice at this stage.

The participants can use the data in the case to arrive at the following analysis for the three options. The available budget is 2000 \$ for the year Table 3.

	FaceBook	Linkedin	Youtube	
	Monthly Budget \$167	Monthly Budget \$167	Video content would need a minimum of \$1000 so only \$1000 is left for adspend Monthly Budget \$83	
Metric for Facebook and LinkedIn	Daily Budget \$6	Daily Budget \$6	Daily Budget \$3	Metric for Youtube
CPM	\$ 0.5 *	\$ 34**	₹0.014*	CPV
Daily Impressions	11,133	164	197,619	Daily Views
Monthly Impressions	334000	4,912	5,928,571	Monthly Views
Yearly Impressions	4008000	58,941	71,142,857	Yearly Views
CTR	0.73%*	0.42%**	0.73%*	View CTR
Clicks	29,258	248	519,343	Clicks
CVR	9.96%	9.96%	4.00%	CVR
Leads	2,914	25	20,774	Leads
Order CVR	9.96%	9.96%	9.96%	Order CVR
Orders	290	2	2,069	Orders

* education industry.

* industry average as data for education industry was not available.

It may be seen that Youtube emerges out as the best option in the given budget. Therefore Spreading Knowledge must include regional newspaper Sakal along with Youtube. This will give the firm the maximum exposure and number of orders @ of 53% of the proposed capacity in the first year.

Total number of one week courses proposed = $12 \times 4 = 48$

Total number of seats @ 60 per course = $48 \times 60 = 2880$

Total number of one month courses proposed = 8

Total number of seats @ 30 per course = $8 \times 30 = 240$

Total number of seats = 3840

Orders through Youtube = $2069 / 3840 \times 100 = 53\%$

Linkedin offered less reach and interaction as compared to Facebook and YouTube and also the number of orders would be negligible. Therefore LinkedIn may not be included in the consideration of platforms. The budget for the next year can be increased as revenues start flushing in. Spreading Knowledge could then leverage Facebook for engagement with existing customers and continue with Sakal and Youtube.

The instructor may outline the benefit of using Youtube as video content is something that each and every modern content strategy must include because it is much interesting to watch a video than read boring product description. YouTube now allows advertisers to use search history to target their audience, and therefore YouTube ads are more useful than ever before.

CONCLUSION

Facebook instead tries to keep viewers on their own website when clicking on ads, so they could get higher traffic and more clicks.

Both Youtube and Facebook offer multiple kind of advertisements. Though it is not within the scope of discussion in this case students must not be limited by this and should explore further to advance their understanding.

As already mentioned there are a lot of metrics given for the three social media options. This has been done because this is how in reality the information would be available to the decision maker. The participant must be able to identify the correct metric(s) for the decision. Additionally, while the above analysis has used education industry metrics, scenarios with other metrics can be created as consumer services and employment and job training are also inherently embedded in the nature of the product from Spreading Knowledge. A high and low scenario can also be created to choose from amongst the best.

The instructor can bring the discussion to a closure by highlighting the integrated marketing communications approach as suggested for the Spreading Knowledge's decision on choice of media.

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Received: 12-Sep-2022, Manuscript No. AMSJ-22-12550; **Editor assigned:** 14-Sep-2022, PreQC No. AMSJ-22-12550(PQ); **Reviewed:** 28-Sep-2022, QC No. AMSJ-22-12550; **Revised:** 28-Oct-2022, Manuscript No. AMSJ-22-12550(R); **Published:** 10-Nov-2022