



# The Role Of Digital Marketing During The COVID-19 Pandemic

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## Abstract

**Background:** The spread of novel coronavirus from Wuhan, China, globally began at the end of 2019. The SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome- Coronavirus) was declared a deadly disease and a contagion transmitting from one person to another. The disease has been considered a healthcare challenge and affected all areas of life, and no effective vaccination has yet been developed. The scarcity of information regarding COVID-19 has been a barrier to educating and informing populations at large about this disease. The current study aimed to assess online advertisements' role to integrate into people the awareness related to COVID-19. Additionally, the online advertisement capacity to change people's attitudes remained an essential concern of the study.

**Objective:** To assess the role of online advertisements, digital marketing in the face of COVID-19 pandemic.

**Method:** The methodology of the qualitative literature review was adopted to address the current research topic. The research's inclusion was based on relevancy, authenticity, and reliability of information extracted from publication journals, and exclusion was based on non-relevancy and lack of authentic research. The websites and blogs were not considered authentic and, therefore, not included in the selected literature.

**Results:** The current research findings indicated that information sharing through online ads, advertisement related to healthcare, and the spread of healthcare awareness were useful predictors in Digital Media Advertising for COVID-19 awareness, and in different pursuits.

**Conclusion:** The results were based on the information extracted from previous literature to assess digital media's role and effectiveness concerned with awareness of healthcare amidst COVID-19. This study has concluded that COVID-19 has encouraged different digital marketing methods and people have found digital marketing more feasible and convenient than traditional marketing style.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, digital marketing, advertisement, SARS-CoV-2.

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## Introduction:

The novel covid-19 spreads with great speed with a distinct composition in comparison with other globally spreading viral outbreaks. In the past twodecades, different categories of Coronaviruses surfaced and brought forth serious harm the overall population of the world. Coronavirus impacts the respiratory and central nervous system in humans, it is specifically associated to defects in the "respiratory tract". Reportedly, the Horseshoe species of bats were declared as the source through which the virus transmission took place in humans (Lau & Chan, 2015). The corona virus in redeveloped in 2019 in the city of Wuhan, China and spread very quickly due to the large number of populations in China. During the period of COVID-19, several different sectors

among the common public. Digital marketing is one such domain that highlighted the different aspects of the outbreak through social media awareness campaigns and digital advertisements. Several personal healthcare advertising campaigns were initiated after the onset of the pandemic to educate people about how fast the virus transmits and measures to avoid the transmission (Wang et al., 2020). Digital marketers make sure that important information is conveyed to the audience. If important statistical information is required to optimize the processes of digital marketing then researches and surveys are conducted accordingly.

In the initial period of the pandemic, there was massive confusion about the origin and

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important information regarding the viral outbreak in terms of its extent of fatality (Nooh et al., 2020). As (Fasola et al., 2018) has revealed the importance of health care based on digital media campaigns and emphasized on the importance of effective information. The majority of the population belonging to the rural areas, were unaware of the threats and fatalities regarding any existing health issue.

The corona virus spreads at a fast pace from person to person, hence the health care professionals suggested strict preventive measures with a list of practices that have to be avoided to limit the spread of the virus.

### Literature Review

Habes et al. (2020) discussed in the research article the importance of sharing information through social media, especially in newly contracted diseases such as COVID-19. It was also related to the sharing of information between countries, people and medical staff. Digital marketing acted as a tool to aware people regarding the spread of disease. Apart from that, access to information must be rapidly based on modern means of communication. The most popular social networking sites were considered, including YouTube, Twitter and Instagram (Bhaskaran et al., 2017). Due to the use of social media, the marketing approach changed with the introduction of many new techniques that were proved efficacious and highly persuasive. Social media marketing involved improved policies for advertisement and healthcare awareness. The data gathered from the interviews, field surveys, and social networking sites' content analysis indicated that they preferred digital network platforms to seek and assess healthcare information and increase awareness.

The World Health Organization (WHO) laid stress on using communication technology, addressing the health problems' challenges. The responsibility of proper information dissemination was taken by social media and spread awareness to counter the COVID-19 outbreak. It became the leading role of the social networking platforms to distribute information, update the public regarding COVID-19 details, and add medical advice to social media platforms for people seeking help amidst the coronavirus pandemic. During

COVID-19, healthcare communities and international organizations relied on social media to inform the public (Habes et al., 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there were significant changes made in public and private lives and the services industry. The marketing that led to digital usage was also affected, and digital marketing prospects in the pandemic period were assessed from Islam's perspective in the research by (Junusi 2020). The previous literature on digital marketing was analyzed with a descriptive qualitative approach. The study's findings reported that development in technology was pivotal in the advances of digital marketing and the coronavirus pandemic. The categorization of digital marketing from an Islamic perspective opened new avenues and critical for future research practice.

Shifting the perspective to social media and digital marketing (creating brand awareness among people) as positive in COVID-19 pandemic was discussed in the research by (Fattah & Sujono, 2020). The pandemic was influential in creating many social changes, especially in communication. Ruangguru is an Indonesian digital-based learning company that facilitated the students staying at home through an online platform during COVID-19. The online communication messages were popular in @Ruangguru (Instagram). The social presence of Ruangguru in the audience was assessed through three dimensions of social reality: social context, online communication and interactivity. The use of digital social media was essential to research due to brands using social media as a primary communication tool encompassing brand engagement (Cui et al., 2013). Ruangguru's post on Instagram made the researchers observe that Ruangguru showed a positive and better social presence based on three social reality dimensions during the pandemic.

(Eldarrat & Eldarrat, 2020) The research article discussed some considerations regarding the economic recession (ER) caused by the current pandemic as affecting the consumer shopping habits significantly and shifted the firms' marketing strategies and performance considerably. In the last decades, marketing research provided insight into how economic recessions affected consumer behavior while



responding to the crisis. The current pandemic tested the efficacy and responsiveness (to the general public) of the social networks. The dissemination of information through social media resources, especially advertising, marked the importance of online marketing. The strong evidence suggested that social media awareness and importance during COVID-19 were critical. The messages passed through social media during COVID-19 added healthcare information and attitudinal change in public.

### Methodology

This study is based on a vast literature review concerning the role of digital marketing in the face of COVID-19, with the aim to provide a descriptive outlook on the application of social media. The inclusion criteria of this study involve the existing literature concerning the awareness programs and business development initiatives during COVID-19. However, the exclusion criteria are the studies focusing the epidemiology of COVID-19 pandemic. The data is collected from different databases and platforms including Google Scholar, PUBMED, etc. However, the data analysis includes the descriptive observation of the benefits of digital marketing in different pursuits. Nevertheless, the limitations of this study include the lack of mechanism concerning the implementation of new strategies in digital marketing and online businesses. On the whole, the literature methodology is adopted by this study to assess the role of digital marketing in COVID-19.

### Results and Discussion

Information sharing, healthcare advertisement and awareness are the powerful predictors in Digital Media Advertising concerning Covid-19 apprehension. Media-based advertising campaigns are used to spread information concerning the pertinent healthcare precautions. Coronavirus is highly contagious, in accordance with the healthcare department social distancing is the only precautionary measure to avoid the COVID-19 spread. Still many people are unaware concerning the importance of social distancing in the COVID-19 era, for this reason pertinent information concerning social distancing and other precautionary measures can be transmitted to a huge number of people around the globe, by the use of social media and digital

marketing(Alnaser et al., 2020).

In the face of COVID-19 digital media is assisting the healthcare services globally from the healthcare departments. Medical professionals with the advancement of digital marketing, are approaching public and increasing information concerning the healthcare issues. Consequently, social media is employed more for spreading awareness and information than direct information sources, and is also considered to be legitimate and expeditious as a substitute of long lag time confrontation. Moreover, social media is more favored for improved assessment of health issues and for living a healthy life style(Singh et al., 2016;Gamache-O'Leary & Grant, 2017).

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted particular changes concerning the marketing field, and has evolved the marketing strategies towards digital advancement. Therefore, digital marketing had used foremost to continue the marketing process during COVID-19 pandemic. During COVID-19 many companies had adopted digital transformation, online platforms including; Zoom's online meetings, video conferencing, etc., that had reported about 78% profit growth, and 60% increase in user traffic in a Google Meet Report, and approximately two billion minutes of social media meetings were reported daily during COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, digital marketing had found promising in replacing traditional corporate marketing culture (Junusi, 2020;Choudhury et al., 2020; Kim, 2020).

Digital marketing has transformed the business models by employing two methods; namely, recombination and invention. Recombination is associated with combination of new business models escorted by existing one in one or business model dimensions. However, invention is accomplished by the development of an unconditionally novel business model. Invention is settled via defining proposition value and subsequently by scheming other value dimensions. Accordingly, conventional methods of strategic planning cannot gain on the disruptive changes arising from the digital technologies, due to the fact that traditional planning lacks the incorporation of disruption occurs by the non-linear nature of technological evolution(Remane et al., 2017; Warner & Wäger, 2019).



COVID-19 is found to be the stimulatory factor of numerous long and temporary policy changes and essential for the theoretical and pragmatic observation of researchers. Social media marketing had to be propitious in further recent developments during COVID-19. Additionally, COVID-19 had impacted companies to initiate certain strategies in order to produce more irrepressible supply chains. Moreover, the companies had started more adjustable operation models for enabling more pliable methods with a regular risk management system. During the COVID-19 time period, new suggestions were made by the marketing industry for the refinement and production of portfolios, also need detail reviews for diminishing complexity of digital marketing (Verma & Gustafsson, 2020).

Okubo (2020) has demonstrated a unique survey concerning the teleworking transformed in Japan in the face of COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, it is found that certain professions are incompatible with the use of digital marketing and had affected by COVID-19 (Okubo, 2020). Reasonably, COVID-19 had massive, expeditious effects on the economies of every sector of life. And, the recovery of such economical crisis, novel adaptations concerning the use of digital marketing had been used during recent year.

Butu et al. (2020) concluded from his study that COVID-19 had persuaded massive changes in consumer purchasing pattern of fresh vegetables. In the face of COVID-19 consumers were found to be more determined in assigning online orders of fresh vegetables directly transported from producers. Considering the COVID-19 problem, approximately 12 percent of the dialogists from the quarantined area of Suceava had online shopping or marketing of fresh vegetables directly transported by the producers. About 60% of the respondents had asserted that they adapted the short food supply chains (SFSCs) of marketing as a result of COVID-19 crisis. The study has suggested that producers need to develop their own digital instruments in a creative way to increase the marketing value of their business. SFSCs is a novel and practical solution to the COVID-19 in buying and purchasing of different food products. Therefore, COVID-19 had encouraged the owners of agricultural

businesses to adapt new digital transformations, enactment of novel solutions concerning SFSCs, customer communication development, and also more attractive representation of the online products are initiated by the use of digital marketing during COVID-19 (Butu et al., 2020).

Consequently, during COVID-19 social media and digital marketing has played a vital role in different life sectors. Among, the benefits of COVID-19 are shopping, COVID-19 awareness programs, money transactions, retailing, etc. In the face of COVID-19 Facebook and Instagram has found to become online shopping centers. Moreover, COVID-19 had found in promoting different online platforms; including Zoom, video conferencing, etc. for the survival of different professions during COVID-129 to overcome economic crisis.

### Conclusion

COVID-19 pandemic has devastating effects on every sector of life, particularly on economy and marketing. Digital marketing has emerged as a novel solution for the recovery of financial, economic and other crisis occurred in the face of COVID-19. Moreover, digital marketing has massively used for spreading awareness concerning sign and symptoms, transmission and precautionary measures of COVID-19. Additionally, the spread of information via social media platforms, particularly advertising blemishes the importance of digital marketing as the most active and prominent tool for the advancement of different businesses. This study has demonstrated the role of digital marketing, its advantages and limitations, in order to deliver a deep insight concerning the digital marketing during COVID-19. This study has culminated that COVID-19 had stimulated different digital marketing techniques ranging from medical industry to agricultural business, public had found digital marketing more feasible and convenient than traditional marketing style. However, further studies are essential to highlight the mechanisms for the development of digital marketing in different pursuits.

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