

# Building Experiences for Brands Using Digital Marketing in HORECA Sector

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**Abstract**— With technology taking giant strides, people are becoming more tech savvy. When it comes to digital world, standing out from the crowd is a challenge.

The goal of this paper is to understand how brands are building customer experiences with digital marketing in the Hospitality industry. We aim to focus on HORECA which means Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés, that is the Dutch version of the abbreviation unlike the English Abbreviation of Hotels, Restaurants and Catering.

We have curated this conceptual paper based on theoretical considerations, frameworks, models, etc. We are trying to conceptualize something new, something where there are limited number of theories available. The conceptual paper has normally no intentions to run specific analytical procedures, due to the lack of empirical data.

**Index Terms:** Experience, SEO, Digital Marketing, Trends, satisfaction, HORECA, Consumer Journey

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## 1 INTRODUCTION:

"It's no longer about #digitalmarketing, but marketing in a completely digital world."

With the advent of Internet, traditional advertising has gone through a big change. Today Online Advertising (online ads) forms an integral part of any firm's marketing efforts. Since Digital Marketing is not just a quickly developing power in today's world of marketing, it is set to be the eventual fate of marketing, and it seems that soon digital marketing will surpass all the traditional marketing manoeuvres. The biggest Advantage for digital marketing is that the audience can choose the content that they want to receive.

We would like to highlight some recent trends in the space of digital marketing According to [www.statista.com](http://www.statista.com),

- Revenue in the Digital Advertising market amounts to US\$311,398m in 2019.
- The market's largest segment is Search Advertising with a market volume of US\$104,052m in 2019.
- The retail industry accounts for the largest revenue share, that is 13.1% of Display Advertising revenues in 2019.

Every hotel chain, restaurants or Cafes now focus more on the service more than what they just offer at their outlet.

Gone, are the days when people used to visit an outlet for its famous dish, now it's the service, the ambience, the interiors, the technique, the Zomato gold, and so on and so forth.

The paradigm shift of the HORECA sector is seen evidently due to experiential marketing. Marketers are always looking for new and exciting ways to create unique experiences at experiential marketing events. But sometimes, brands can "wow" their guests simply by going back to the basics of hospitality.

It's the experience that stays longer and creates a long lasting impact. The experience sells more, and people might refer the particular service based on how they receive a particular experience.

With the trend of digital marketing now coming in, a lot of brands now focus on ONLINE as their medium. Aggregators like Trivago for Hotels and Zomato for restaurants and cafes provide as great search engine platforms for the respective. It's these that are now enabling all services to be more visible in the marketplace.

Now is it that we are trying to understand new ways in which marketers are actually building experiences.

The factors that the hospitality sector are based on, the hotels that benefit from it the most are those that adapt their guest experience to it the fastest:

- Seamless
- Personalized
- Transformative-travel-inspired
- Food-focused
- Eco-friendly

## 2 OBJECTIVES:

- The purpose of this study is to discover the various forms of digital marketing that play a role in building experiences in the hospitality sector, primarily HORECA.
- To understand the challenges faced in the HORECA sector
- To enlist various forms of digital marketing used by HORECA chains
- To Analyze which forms of social media prove the most beneficial and cause the maximum impact
- To discuss the emerging trends seen in the world of digital marketing

## 3 LIMITATIONS:

The overall objective of the research design is to discover how a brand uses the various forms of digital marketing available to provide a customer with an experience in the hospitality sector. The limitations of the study are:

This study focuses on :

1. The forms of digital marketing available
2. Consumer experience and its phases
3. Challenges faced by HORECA outlets
4. Trends in digital marketing

But will not cover details of what brands aren't doing correctly and how they should improve their online presence. Thus, conclusions on how effective the use of certain digital marketing tools by brands to create experiences for consumers are not possible.

## 3 METHODOLOGY:

Sources:

1. Working Papers
2. Publication Journals
3. Websites
4. Blogs
5. Newspaper Articles
6. Videos

Since, We are writing a conceptual paper, our entire research is based on secondary sources as depicted in the chart above. We also involve a conceptual framework and implications to give a conclusive outcome for the study.

## 4 LITERATURE REVIEW:

1. How to leverage the correct digital marketing platforms to attract suitable customers?
2. How to promote your content in order to get traffic to your sites so that your sales continue to rise?
3. Why should people dine at your restaurant/cafe or stay at your hotel? What unique experience are you providing?
4. How review sites can create an impact for HORECA outlets?
5. How HORECA outlets measure successes through various parameters?
6. Are brands able to define their stories correctly and identify their position so as to connect with consumers to ensure loyalty?

## 5 DISCUSSIONS :

Customer Experience Journey:

We always focus on customer experience but we forget that the end to end journey is what creates the remarkable experience. This becomes extremely important when it comes to the service sector. HORECA sector is all about service! If something goes wrong people instantly react and put it up on reviewing sites or on the social media and that creates a bigger coup to prove their point to the world. It's out there, everyone reads it and creates an impact Hence, they need to be very careful and cautious about the experience that they are creating for their customers.

According to Mckinsey,

"When most companies focus on customer experience they think about touchpoints—the individual transactions through which customers interact with parts of the business and its offerings. This is logical. It reflects organization and accountability, and is relatively easy to build into operations. Companies try to ensure that customers will be happy with the interaction when they connect with their product, customer service, sales staff, or marketing materials. But this siloed focus on individual touchpoints misses the bigger—and more important—picture: the customer's end-to-end experience. Only by looking at the customer's experience through his or her own eyes—along the entire journey taken—can you really begin to understand how to meaningfully improve performance.

Customer journeys include many things that happen before, present, and after the experience of a product or service. Journeys can be long, stretching across multiple channels and touchpoints, and often lasting days or weeks. Bringing a new customer on board is a classic example. Another is resolving a technical issue, upgrading a product, or helping a customer to move a service to a new home. In our research, we've discovered that organizations that fail to appreciate the context of these situations and manage the cross-functional, end-to-end experiences that shape the customer's view of the business can prompt a downpour of negative consequences, from customer defection and dramatically higher call volumes to lost sales and lower employee morale. In contrast, those that provide the customer with the best experience from start to finish along the journey can expect to enhance customer satisfaction, improve sales and retention, reduce end-to-end service cost, and strengthen employee satisfaction.

There is an entire process of customer experience journey. We would now map it the way in which it would happen in the HORECA sector through digital marketing channels:

BEFORE - The phase that is happening before the actual consideration of shortlisting a product/service

1. Need Generation - We can call this the search phase and here is when our search engines come into place. People would browse over sites like Zomato, Trivago, Trip Advisor to search their ideal requirement. One needs to be present here in order to get noticed at first
2. Initial Consideration - Here, the chat box / live chat option with the channel partner comes into play. Customers would enquire with the partner about the particular HORECA outlet before actually approaching it. They might also consider checking out competitors at this point. The parameter of Open Rate is applicable here

PRESENT - This is the time when the service is ongoing with him. He is in the zone of experience.

3. Engagement - The Call to Action is taken here, either the customer would be satisfied and would make a reservation right there or he would investigate further. The latter happens most of the times, he would call or write an email and make his first interaction with the HORECA outlet. He would ask his queries regarding the place and get a quote for the outlet. The parameter to measure success for engagement can be Click Through Rate as he would be actually visiting the website or calling them for enquiry.

4. Evaluation - Here the customer studies the quote / proposal and compares it to other HORECA outlets offering it at a similar price. He compares the differences between them and may shortlist the best one. A service like Trivago comes very handy here which already gives a comparison at this point and shows all the results to the customers at the requested search.

AFTER- This denotes the completion of the service. Here the loop completes with the feedback.

5. Moment of Purchase - This is the spot where the transaction takes place, the reservation is made and a prospective visitor is turned into a customer. The parameter taken care of here is the Conversion Rate. It's this point that determines the actual sales happening. Conversion rates are important as they act as top line fields to determine success.
6. Delivery Installation - The Customer experience journey is coming to an end here, because the customer will not visit the particular HORECA outlet and use its service. It will feel the experience delivered by the outlet. The primary task here is that the particular HORECA must perform so that customers are left with a good impression.
7. Usage - In this case usage is a stage where the customer gets through the service and now has to justify his experience for the money he has paid for it. He might also wish to review the particular experience. HORECA outlets need to be wise enough to capture and be vigilant to get reviews. It's here where in they can up their game at the right time. They can also modify and deliver better at this point if possible. But Feedback/ reviews are essential as they complete the entire loop of Customer experience journey

Customer Experience –

Marketers who put the customer at the center of their marketing strategy and focus on improving the customer experience through engagement practice customer experience marketing. The goal is to stop selling products and services and start meeting customer expectations and delivering personalized experiences.

Hospitality sector is all about providing the right experiences to its customers through the various touchpoints of customer interaction. Customer experience are consisting of many things which can be observed through customer journey like service encounters, moment of truth, service delivery, after service delivery, multiple service interaction, multicultural service environment, word of mouth and customer satisfaction. It is seen that as incomes are rising, people are travelling more and are willing to spend on crafted experiences. People are ready to even pay for a luxurious experience. So why should the marketers not take advantage of this and provide hand crafted experiences. At the end of the day, experience is what gives value to the customers.

Brands –

A brand is at the starting point of the customer experience journey. They advertise to create awareness about themselves, about what they stand for and

what they promise to their customers, whereas a brand experience is about creating a proof of that promise. It's a group of things that a brand delivers to its customers. It could be tangible through activities in the real or digital world or could be intangible in terms of goodwill/reputation. It is very important for a brand to define its story because that helps to create the brand identity and uniqueness which would engage with the consumer on an emotional level. The brand's positioning should be in sync with its story so that it impacts the right type of audience. Brand create these experiences to create a bond with their customers. A customer most of the times is loyal with the brands that he associates to. And, thus its essential for companies to create a long lasting impression of their brand. This will ensure that the bond between the brand and the customer stays strong and continues ahead. Brands need to be up to date with the various digital marketing tools in order to interact with their consumers properly.

#### Digital Marketing –

- Internet Marketing:
  - a. Pop Up Ads
  - b. SEO
  - c. SEM
  - d. Pay Per Click Advertising
  - e. Email Marketing
  - f. Content Marketing
- Mobile Marketing:
  - a. Applications
  - b. SMS
  - c. MMS
  - d. Push Notifications
  - e. WhatsApp
  - f. Websites
- Social Media Marketing:
  - a. Facebook
  - b. Instagram
  - c. Twitter
  - d. Pinterest
  - e. Snapchat

The entire customer lifecycle is being transformed using digital marketing. Physical and traditional marketing are losing their ability to create an impact on customers and attract them to use their services. It's becoming more and more important to create experiences for consumers as they tend to get bored easily. Marketing is all about knowing what is trending and how easily one is able to adapt to the changing consumer mindset.

In the name of being online a lot of hoteliers and restaurateurs just set up a dysfunctional website and may have got a listing on a review site. But digital marketing is incomplete without having a fully functioning website, Facebook page and listings on several review sites. Presence on sites such as Zomato, TripAdvisor, Trivago, MakeMyTrip, Clear trip and Easy dinner becomes utmost important.

- Requirements in Digital Marketing :
  1. Personalization of Content - Anything that appears personalized attracts a customers. Example - My grandmother gets a notification every two days on Facebook, "Lata, You have 5 friend requests, 2 events and 3 interested food articles to read through" and bam! My grandmother is elated with joy seeing that, she feels ohh really is Facebook tracking my name and sending me content specifically. This applies to all age groups..
  2. Call to Action - Implementing a call-to-action button is also necessary for the website so that people can understand what is supposed to be done next and can be guided. Through this they can satisfy their urge by ordering food or booking a table immediately.
  3. Personal Experiences - Millennials these days are looking out for personalized experiences and would not mind their online activity being tracked by HORECA outlets if it would lead to better more personal experiences.
  4. Engaging Content - People only want to read, hear stuff that is relevant and attractive to them. They would not waste time on something that's not helping them. Thus, it becomes essential for marketers that they create content in such a way that connects with the audience.
  5. Precise and Short - Marketers can't write stories and stories. The attention span of Customers is very less and in that we have to make that impression to catch their attention. The headline

needs to be good so that readers understand what message is being given and can get to the point where the action is to be performed.

6. **Appropriate Keywords** - Customers search via keywords and SEM works only on the relevant keywords searched for. Hence, it's important that a marketer understands the keywords and bids only on those that are relevant to his particular business and to those that he think his audience will search for in related content.
7. **Device Versatility** - Ads, Videos, text whatever be the form of digital marketing, all of them should be device versatile, which means that they should work on all kind of devices. Google's Screen Resolution with mobile increasing day by day, ads should be viewable on all kinds of devices.

□ **Trends in Digital Marketing:**

1. **Increase in Mobile Traffic** - There is an increase in the number of consumers using mobile phones to make bookings online. Mobile traffic is the fastest growing category in digital marketing and so in order to stay relevant to the market hotels should deploy a mobile solution.
2. **Vloggers and Bloggers** - Nowadays, you see anyone and everyone with a vlogging camera on the street and talking to themselves. And a generation like our parents wonder why, what are they doing just recording stuff ? But it's a common sight to see this and many of them are making money with it. Some of them have even quit their jobs and taken YouTube or blogs full time as a profession! Isn't it surreal? YouTube vlogs becoming such a hit! But that's true. Everybody wants to be a Youtuber and wants to feature on that device screen of people and become a hit. He wants to endorse brands and get people talking about him! Marketers can tap this trend and get their hands on to this trend!
3. **Challenges/Contest** - In today's day and age people love being challenged. It could be anything and people would readily join the bandwagon of posting on their social media accounts saying their doing the challenge and would subsequently challenge another set of their friends and the cycle would go on. Some popular examples of this are:  
The Kiki challenge, ALS ice bucket challenge, mannequin challenge, Kylie Jenner lip challenge etc. Brands also create challenges and contests for winning free stays, vouchers, exclusive event invites, tastings, launch parties etc.
4. **Videos** - Videos are a method through which a brand can showcase to the consumers what services and experiences it is offering. It is a kind of a proof that yes all this does exist. Videos are easy to make and are shareable. People prefer watching videos as compared to reading blogs and posts. Videos can be customized as per the platform. Example: Long videos are suitable for YouTube but shorter and more concise videos are used on Instagram/Facebook.
5. **YouTube Short Ads** - It's become so common, nowadays every video has some paid promotion video before the video begins, or it comes somewhere in between the ad. And sometimes these ads cannot be skipped also. Hoteliers can target and get their forced share of promotion so that people would have to watch it without skipping.
6. **Install Apps Pop up on YouTube** - Earlier when you would click the play button, then the button for install app would get loaded. But now, as soon as you open the video the button gets clicked. Bam! That's where the marketers get their click through rate!
7. **Location Based** - Marketers are targeting the location aspect to hit the right audience. Always a popup will appear when u visit a website for the first time. Example- Nykaa wants to know your location? It enables the portal to match the best results for you in the related area. Location based search is very essential on mobile devices as they can guide to the correct place.

This works the best for restaurants as they are able to get their customers by directing them towards

the restaurant. The second scenario is that restaurants ask addresses on the basis of the circle that they offer delivery in.

□ Touch points for Customers through Digital Marketing:

1. Websites - It's the most basic thing that is required when one hears about a digital marketing platform. A website, is the starter to an online journey. Making a website has become easier these days but to maintain, upgrade and match with the current trends has become challenging. In the HORECA sector, Websites exist for Hotels most predominantly. For

Example, a website for Novotel group of Hotels, which allows to make reservations and view their services and events. Some websites also link to the social media pages. Restaurants and cafes too have websites, but it's mostly the chain outlets or the famous ones. Not all Restaurants or cafes prefer going live with a website. They would rather broadcast on a Social media page or a HORECA search engine page like a Zomato or Swiggy. These cater as food delivery and as HORECA search engine

An example of a search made on Google. We can clearly see that the first rank appears of Paid Ad search which is a part of the SEM strategy of the restaurant. Next that appears is the HORECA search engines to provide information about the particular restaurant. Next that appears are the Food Aggregators which are the delivery partners. And then later when we scroll down, then we can see the actual website of the restaurant.

Alongside that appears is the Google Business Listing which also gives a brief description. People rely on the information provided by the HORECA search engine. And don't actually bother to scroll down to visit the website unless looking for something specific.

2. Food Aggregators - They are commonly referred as food delivery partners. These applications let you order your favorite food anytime and from anywhere no matter what the limitations of time and geography are. But then again, is that not what every premium restaurant used to do? The specialty of these mobile applications lies in bringing all the restaurants to you at one virtual place. No customer will use your app if you have an awesome user experience interface but the food does not live up to the expectation. Food Aggregators cater to a very big audience. Food delivery boys are seen on bikes in the cities going hard pressed on time with parcels to deliver. Food Aggregators bring large business for delivery to the restaurants or cafes. There have been some recent goof ups in the delivery business, the parcels were delivered shabbily, food was eaten up, etc. Food aggregators are based entirely as a part of the Food - Tech industry. Some common food aggregators are Zomato, Swiggy, Fresh Menu, Faasos and Food Panda.
3. HORECA Search engines - These provide an insight to the HORECA outlets existing in and around a particular area. People can place their preferences about their choice of meals like Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner or the type of outlet that they would prefer Cafes, Pubs, Bars, etc. They also provide insights about the trending places of the Week. Users can post their reviews on these sights and provide information about places to other customers.
4. Email Marketing:
  - a) Via the aggregator / search engine - Zomato is a classic example that sends promotional emails about offers be it a 2 +2 on drinks or 1 +1 on food on Zomato Gold partner restaurants. Also, they send emails regarding the events happening at the particular outlet or place. Also, they send emails regarding Gold Membership offers to existing members.
  - b) Via the Restaurant / Hotel chain - This is via the original hotel chain. It can be regarding some offers for special reservations. Also, it might be regarding the special week discount for Summer season or After exams discount for school students.
5. Mobile Application (Apps) - The app version has become an essential requirement for an online campaign. People access apps more than the website as apps provide exclusive access. Mobile friendly approach is what users find easy to use. With Mobiles, people can search on the go and

get faster results. The App provides coupon codes for delivery options. Its primarily based on location to be delivered or restaurants searched for. Customers get a variety of options on various Restaurants and cafe outlets. Apps provide a variety of payment options like Mobile Wallets, Net banking, Pay Credits and Cash on Delivery as well.

6. Social Media Pages - Social Media gets anything viral. Right from the #Metoo Campaign in America to the Interim Budget 2019 in India all the way to the Virushka Wedding in Italy. Anything and everything is there on Social Media. It takes seconds to reach people. And people are quite active over there. Marketers make great use of Social Media. Pinterest for images, YouTube for Videos, Facebook for Events and Instagram for Pictures and mentioning people.

There is a picture provides an insight to the rate of creation of content. Content is being generated at every minute, every second. This is a chart showing last year's metrics and maybe now it's increased even more.

Marketers are tapping this aspect only. They want to broadcast themselves loud and clear through social media. Koffee with Karan ran a campaign on a similar basis where actors posted their pictures with the hashtag Koffee with Karan and the one with the maximum likes won!

In the HORECA sector, Starbucks ran a campaign where customers should post an image with a cup of coffee on Instagram on their visit. And the next visit they show that picture and get a discount for the coffee cup posted.

Polls are conducted by restaurants to decide which is the dish of the day.

An Udupi cafe like Cafe Mysore, Matunga goes viral on its Foundation day!! Why ?? because people post their bill pictures on social media which depicts the prices of the dishes which were charged back then!! Like 5 Rs. for Idly And bam! You see a queue outside Cafe Mysore ? can you see how impactful it is! That's the power of social media ! and Marketers should understand and make use of it in terms of HORECA.

7. Vlogs/ Blogs - Blogging and posting about food and places visited is a trend. It's a method of creating traffic and also tends to stay in people's minds. It's a great way to engage with customers and ensure that they keep coming back. This will help to keep the social media pages engaged. Through this you will be able to connect with bloggers and vloggers that post about your hotel and restaurant. It's a great way to promote your brand among the people. Reviews by influencers and bloggers if done correctly does wonders for a brand. People always tend to read reviews and blogs before going to a restaurant or visiting a new city. They tend to listen and believe their favorite blogger more than what they see on the actual hotel or restaurant site. Vlogs are becoming more popular and trendy these days.
8. Challenges - Another latest insight in the digital space is the usage of challenges, contests and campaigns by brands on social platforms to attract consumers. People like being challenged and being part of latest trends. By engaging in such activity you would become visible to the friends of your customers who would become part of your potential customers.
9. Videos - An important digital marketing strategy for HORECA outlets is creating videos. They can create interesting videos of their hotels interiors, restaurant kitchens and even parties, tag people in them and get them to share it. They are easy to make, fun to watch and are shareable. The more it is shared, the more visibility would be garnered for that specific brand and so the marketing plan becomes a big hit.
10. Display Ads - These are those small ads that are shown at the sides, top or bottom of your pages. Every display ad has a bid for its spot. Advertisers bid to get the place spot on the trending websites.

It seems like my research content topics are tracked a lot. Ha-ha! A very prominent example of Display Ads. MakeMyTrip has sent me this ad with clear call to action... BOOK NOW! With an incentive of 25% off. It would encourage customers to click this button and go ahead to complete their booking. But you see it's coming on an unrelated topic platform. Watching Teri Meri Baatein from Piku has no connection to me booking a hotel/flight unless Google Analytics thought that looking at the journey, I



would want to go there. Jokes apart, but there's a constant battle for ad space on websites and platforms. And the one that is relevant with a good bid price and gets a High ad Rank and wins to get the ad space.

[ Ad rank = Bid (max cost per click) \* quality score ]

Display ads should be more appealing and with a call to action. They can appear as pop up ads, banners or buttons. Hotels can use it in terms of making reservations while restaurants can place the order now button! To attract more customers.

11. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - Commonly known as Organic Search. It's a marketing strategy that helps improving rankings on search engine pages. If a person is searching for something example "luxury hotels" . They will normally go through the results that appear on the first page. It's important for a brand to rank in the first page in order to get a reasonable amount of traffic. In order for that to happen the brand needs to know the keywords being used by the consumer. Their website needs to contain those relevant keywords and the headings/subheadings should make it easy for search engines to locate and display the brands website.
12. Search Engine Marketing (SEM) or Paid Ads - Going the old fashion way you can use paid ads to target customers. Geo-targeted ads on every social media platform allow you to target your audience through age, gender, location, preferences etc. In this manner you can ensure that the ad is being viewed by the relevant people.
13. Google Business Listing - Google Business Listing is a way which businesses display a brief snapshot about themselves. It includes their Address, Working hours, Phone Number , Maps, Website URL, Address, images and Reviews by Google Users. It's a great way to get your outlet more visibility. Once the directions option, call-to-action option, menu, ratings and reviews are set up then the HORECA outlet will have a better visibility as it would show up in the nearby options when people are searching places on Google Maps.

Apart from good prices and deals consumers look for fun and different experiences as well. Consumers have become tech savvy and tend to use several websites and social media platforms while making bookings and so it is very important for the brand to have a strong and bold online presence. A variety of newly emerged travel sites and online travel agencies also tend to influence a consumers decision.

An added benefit of using digital marketing is that the brand can record and analyze consumers reaction in great detail to the various activations organized by them. With new technology comes an opportunity to experiment and implement new marketing strategies. There is no history to base the results on and so you may never know what cuts through the noise and attracts more consumers.

#### HORECA Sector

HORECA meaning Hotels, Restaurants and Cafes. This is the Dutch version of the abbreviation. The hospitality industry may seem glorious but is extremely difficult to handle and with the onset of technology things seem to only get tougher. Apart from having a complete knowledge of the industry one also needs to know how to market themselves and use social media effectively. Competition is stiff and in order to stay relevant to the constantly changing market it is necessary to do the marketing right, be it offline or online whether you are a hotel, restaurant or cafe.

Online marketing has a huge reach and can put you in touch with current as well as potential customers. It also acts as a medium for the hotels, restaurants and cafes to showcase their various marketing campaigns. Being active on social media is extremely useful, as they can not only be in touch with their customers but also understand customers grievances and potential customers needs and wants. With the feedback, comments, reviews received, these HORECA outlets are able to constantly upgrade themselves with the input from customers.

A great example to this is when restaurants receive constructive feedback at the end of the service or at the time of payments. This serves multiple purposes :

1. Feedback received during billing - genuine feedback ensures that the customer is fully aware of what he or she is marking on the feedback and is not giving feedback just for the sake of it
2. The HORECA reviewer quickly scans through the feedback received in real time and is able to instantly provide relevant feedback to his staff
3. The HORECA outlet gets to store Customer data on their database which can be used for further marketing opportunities like promotional offers and deals

Hence technology is widening the scope of marketing opportunities and growth in the hospitality sector, word of mouth now has a broader meaning and is constantly evolving. Digital Marketing for HORECA outlets is about visibility. Engaging with consumers by replying to tweets, posts and comments is a must as it shows that the brand is aware of what its consumers are saying, what they are liking and what needs improvement.

□ Challenges in the HORECA Sector:

1. Reliability - The restaurant industries has its reliance on third party reviewers and word of mouth.
2. Attrition - Restaurants have the fastest rates of closure and many legacy brands fall for what's trending and how well they adapt to rapidly changing consumer mindset. Because there is poor differentiation between restaurants, there is a stumbling amount of attrition where customers churn out of the pot every week or so, looking for that next big exciting place to try out.
3. Mood Dependent - There are personal favorites though. Choosing a restaurant/bar is also mood dependent. If you're in Juhu and you're in the mood for a fine dining experience, you will visit Ruka at JW Marriott. If you're looking for a street food experience you'd go to Gupta Pani Puri at Matunga. These two offer differently priced items and experiences and are significantly mood-dependent.
4. Online World - With the advent of the internet, restaurants have a greater challenge with marketing and brand positioning as they constantly have to strive for perfection when it comes to preserving their brand image and dictating their own brand story.

Proposed Conceptual Framework:

Moving on to the conceptual framework, it is developed on two models:

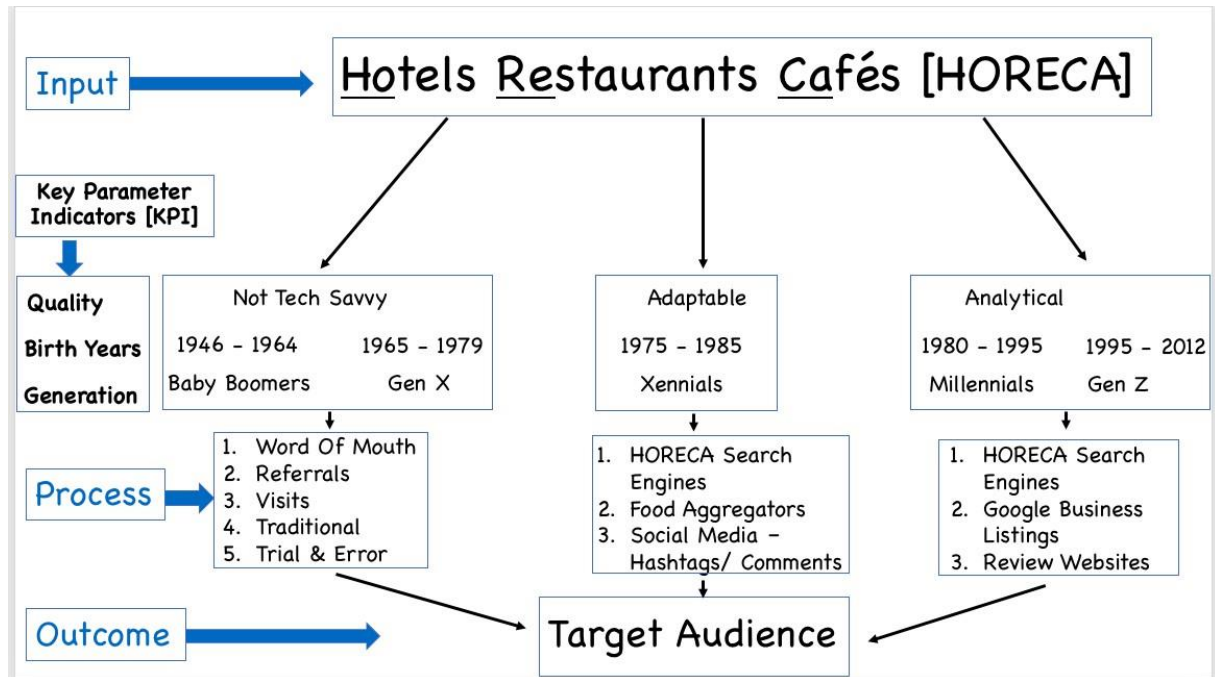
1. The Target Audience - We have classified our target audience on the basis of the generation that they belong to:
2. Service Action Route - A customer is the most significant guest in the hospitality business. This business is entirely depending on the customer. The service sector is based on one model which can be depicted as:

Input ----> Process ----- > Outcomes

Now, on the basis of these two models, we PROPOSE our own framework to work out the digital marketing strategy under the HORECA sector

The name that we have curated for this approach is called the 'GENTA' which signifies the 'Generation Target Audience' approach. Hence, our proposed framework for the purpose of conceptual paper is as follows :

GENTA MODEL



Implications:

The working of the framework can be described as follows:

1. The framework runs parallel with 2 models, the service action route and the target audience.
2. The Words and arrows in black mention the first Model of The Target Audience.
3. The Words and arrows in blue mention the second Model of Service Action Route.
4. The INPUT for our research is the HORECA outlets, it begins at how these outlets provide their services. Customers will either visit the outlets or order food. But, it will all happen when they like a particular place for its food and ambience. They must be able to satisfy the needs of the customer.
5. The outlets should be known for the cuisine they provide and people must be wanting to visit them again and again. Also, on the basis of the first group of people visiting the place, they will recommend it to more people.
6. The second in line comes the KPI's. Our framework shows the need that the HORECA outlets must identify KPIs with respect to the Target Audience that they want to segment in.
7. We have identified 3 main groups for the target audience. They depict quality, birth years, and the generation.
8. Every group has different behavioral pattern for HORECA outlets. The generations identified here begin after The Silent Generation, because the youngest age is 74 and the oldest is 94. This generation is quite into themselves and do not venture out for HORECA, due to lack of interest or health problems
9. The Classification begins from the Baby Boomers up to the Gen Z. The Gen Alpha are kids whose youngest age is 1 and oldest is 6. Hence, anything above baby boomers and anything below Gen Z isn't part of our target audience.
10. The third part of the framework is the PROCESS.

- a) The first group includes the Baby Boomers (1946 - 1964) and Gen X (1965 - 1979). Their prominent quality is Not Tech Savvy. These are the people who are just getting used to technology. Some of them are even getting their first phones at the age of 65. They are slow learners. Its most of the times that they are learning about all this from their grandchildren...!!! For them, food isn't about experimentation, but it's about Standardization or traditional food. A big factor for them is providing food which is value for money, if they find something too expensive for a very common dish, they will not buy that dish. If they like a particular dish at a particular outlet, for example Shiv Sagar ka Pav Bhaji or Thackers ka Thali, they would restrict to that place only.
- b) The Second group includes Xennials (1975 - 1985). Their quality is adaptable. The thing that is very evident of this group is that they are slaughtered between the two groups. In most cases the first group are their parents and the third group are their kids. Hence, most of the times they have to listen to both their groups and make a balance between the two. The youngest age today is 34 and the oldest is 44. These people are in their middle ages. They have seen the transformation, born in the 70's, growing up in the 90's and seeing their kids grow up in the millennial age. These people are well versed with technology. The interesting fact about this group is that they are active on social media. They spend their time on social media in their office breaks or while travelling or after office. They have maintained good profiles on social media. Hence, for them to use HORECA search engines or food aggregators becomes easier. These people look out for a variety of cuisines and places on HORECA search engines. They are seen to be ordering as well from food aggregators. This is a growing segment to tap on.
- c) The third group includes Millennials (1980 - 1994) and Gen Z (1995 - 2012). This the most Tech group of the entire target audience. This group knows the entire how? What? Why? They are very analytical. They will only believe something when they feel it's actually worth it. They critically evaluate their options after hearing other people's opinions. This group first hits the HORECA search engines to know about a particular hotel, restaurant or cafe. Then they check the google business listing of the particular place to see its actual validity and ratings. If the place is approved and shown correctly on Google. Next for further more clarity they move on to the Reviewing websites like Reddit.com, Quora.com, etc. Such sites provide a great platform for reviews where people openly appreciate and criticize things as and when needed. Most of the times things discussed here are relevant and true.

In terms of Ordering from food aggregators, this particular group is very efficient and used to doing this. The common terminology they use is "Arre Swiggy pe hai na, Swiggy kar de!" Ordering, exploring options is something that they do quite often. The interesting fact here is that with the coming of digital payments and wallets, it's become even more easier for this group to order food. This group of audience is quite a hot favorite for marketers to lure with offers and discounts.

## 6 ANALYSIS:

A customer will find an experience **unique** when something different is delivered to him, otherwise it would be **routine** for him. From the customer point of view, they always want the reasonable price and good quality of products according to their need and expectation. For this reason, delivering value in the form of value proposition is important. Day by day Social Media is growing and so networks are growing, people are connecting to people via people.

If one shares a picture it gets shared within his network and then in the related network it also gets shared even more amongst those people to some other people in some other network. This interlinking continues and that's how things become viral. Viral marketing has become such an important strategy that its taught as a full-fledged module at University of Pennsylvania.

Influencers are a big part of the social media because they are able to create an impact on people. People follow their trends as they feel associated with their favorite YouTuber/ Blogger. Example - When Sejal

Kumar shares a picture at Deepaul's at Greater Kailash, it becomes so hit! That everyone wants to visit that place and explore. I am one of those who wants to actually visit Deepaul's and try the cold coffee.

## 7 CONCLUSION:

Digital marketing is the greatest need of the hour and is only becoming more complex day by day. Hoteliers and various agencies in the hospitality industry apart from having to differentiate themselves in terms of their services and earning profits they are now having to expand their brands online and compete with others for guests through new channels of digital communication every day. There are far too many channels one can use to get noticed but it depends on the brand, how well they leverage their tools in order to get the best possible outcome.

The amount of options and flexibility offered by digital marketing makes it the preferred and obvious choice when compared with traditional marketing considering today's tech savvy generation. To end, we can surely say that

there's a lot of disruption expected in the digital marketing world which would open many more opportunities for HORECA as well as for other industries.

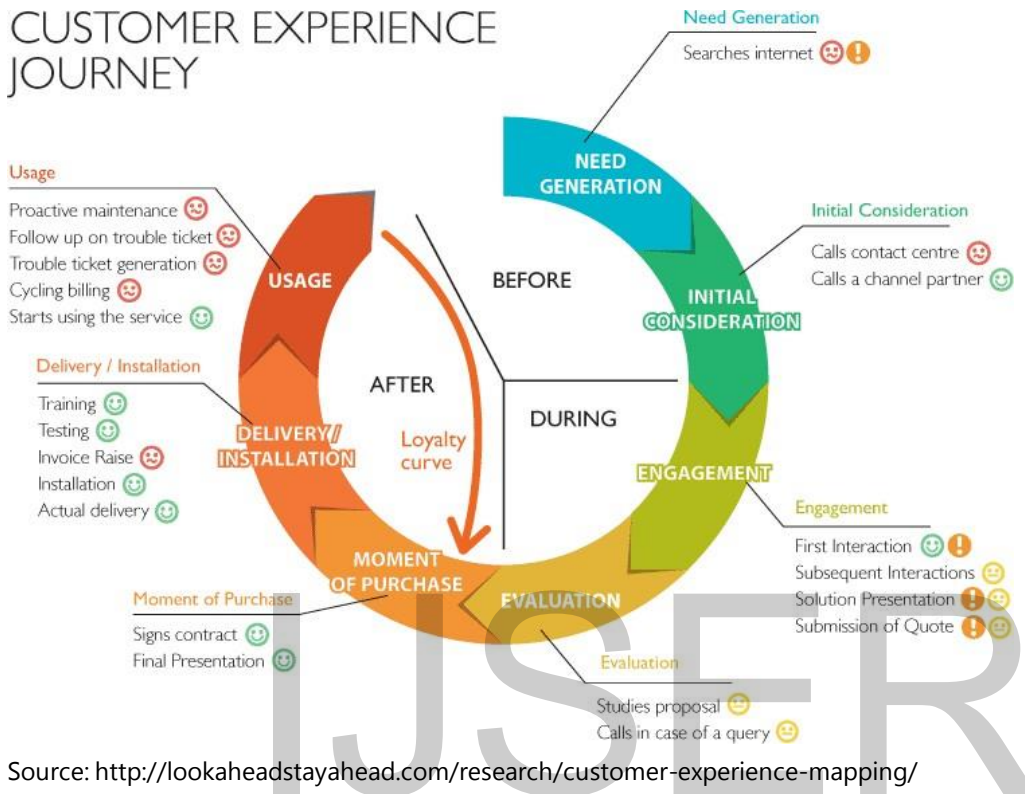
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## 9 ANNEXURES:

### 1. Customer Experience Journey – Mc Kinsey



### 2. Paid Ads

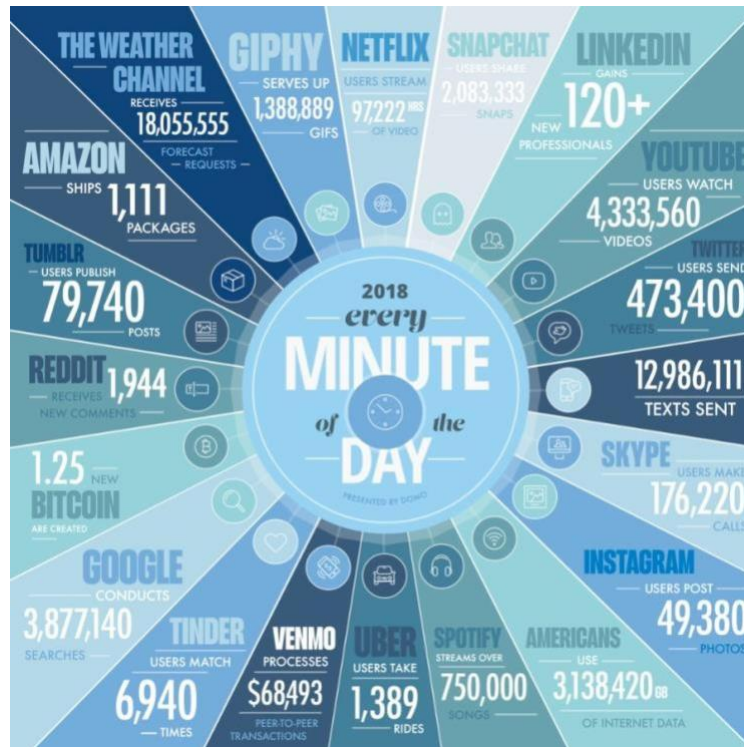
The screenshot shows a Google search for "elco bandra". The search results include:

- Elco | Home delivery | Order online | Hill Road, Bandra West** (www.swiggy.com/Food-Order-Mumbai)
- Elco, Hill Road, Bandra West, Mumbai - Zomato** (www.zomato.com) with a rating of 3.8 and price range of ₹450.
- Elco Menu, Menu for Elco, Hill Road, Bandra West, Mumbai - Zomato** (www.zomato.com)
- Menu of Elco, Bandra West, Mumbai | Dineout discovery** (www.dineout.co.in)

The right side of the image shows a Google Maps listing for **Elco Restaurant** with a 3.9 rating and 5,232 reviews. The address is 2/A, Elco Market, Ramdas Nayak Marg, Bandra West, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400050.

### 3. Data Every Minute





Source: <https://www.domo.com/blog/data-never-sleeps-6/>

#### 4. Paid Ads

The screenshot shows a YouTube video player interface. The video title is "Teri Meri Baatein - Full Video | Piku | Amitabh Bachchan, Irrfan Khan & Deepika Padukone" with 2,726,619 views. A "make my trip" advertisement is displayed above the video player, offering a "GRAB 25% OFF" on makemytrip.com. The video player shows a road scene. The right sidebar contains a list of recommended videos, including "Bezubaan - Piku | Anupam Roy | Amitabh Bachchan, Irrfan Kha..." and "Mix - Teri Meri Baatein - Full Video | Piku | Amitabh Bachchan, Irrfan...".



5. Timeline for Generations

### Which Generation are You?

Generation Name	Births Start	Births End	Youngest Age Today*	Oldest Age Today*
<b>The Lost Generation</b> <b>The Generation of 1914</b>	1890	1915	104	129
<b>The Interbellum Generation</b>	1901	1913	106	118
<b>The Greatest Generation</b>	1910	1924	95	109
<b>The Silent Generation</b>	1925	1945	74	94
<b>Baby Boomer Generation</b>	1946	1964	55	73
<b>Generation X (Baby Bust)</b>	1965	1979	40	54
<b>Xennials</b>	1975	1985	34	44
<b>Millennials</b> <b>Generation Y, Gen Next</b>	1980	1994	25	39
<b>iGen / Gen Z</b>	1995	2012	7	24
<b>Gen Alpha</b>	2013	2025	1	6

Source:- <https://www.careerplanner.com/Career-Articles/Generations.cfm>