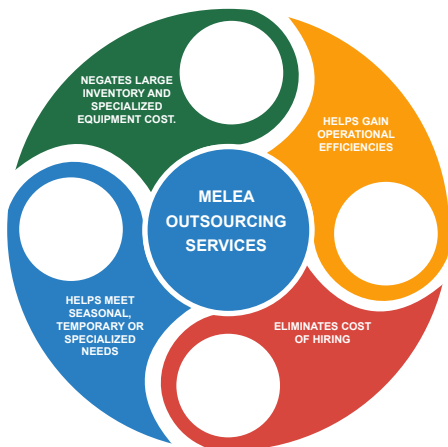




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Social Media – Trends in 2016

The past few years have revealed that the digital and social media landscape has continued to grow in attracting, engaging and transacting with customers. The study conducted by E and Y shows that entrepreneurs understand the importance of digital and social media presence in order to have customer engagement.

The reasons that have driven the growth of social media are the need to create brand awareness, to build a community and to engage with customers. Companies use the information gathered from the social media analysis to gain better customer insights, improve customer experience and also for new product development.

With more emphasis being given to social media and mobiles, it is noteworthy that leading brands still feel the most effective way to engage with their customers is their website. The survey conducted revealed 72 per cent of the leading brands have a mobile app or a mobile friendly website. 80 per cent brands advertise on web, social and mobile indicative of the fact the spending on digital marketing has grown more than other marketing channels. Facebook and Twitter are most popular social media platforms closely followed by YouTube and LinkedIn. Instagram has become popular and preferred. Snapchat is a recent entrant in the Indian arena and not many Indian brands are present on it yet. Pinterest and Vine both have very limited reach and usage among Indian consumers.

Digital Payments in India

India from a predominantly cash/cheque economy has grown to be a digital payments nation. Besides other reasons two main reasons that have come to the forefront are the new business models that have emerged with mobile wallets, prepaid cash cards and a few others.

The other is the acceleration in funding of payment service providers.

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) announces the launch of a new initiative, called Catalyst in partnership with Indian Finance Ministry, to scale up digital payments in India. Six cities have been shortlisted including Indore, Vishakhapatnam, Kota, Jaipur, Bhopal and Nagpur. The criteria for short listing these cities were level of smartphone penetration, mobilization of merchants in the local economy and administrative feasibility. The aim is to increase the payments 10 times in 6-12 months.

A Speedy Mobile Website Serves the Best

The speed of a mobile website is more important than ever for a mobile user today. A user needs a website to be fast and relevant else the user will leave in a matter of seconds. Gone are the days when simply having a mobile site load successfully on the mobile phone was considered as an achievement. A study reveals that the average load time for mobile sites over a 3G connection is 19 seconds. A lot of factors affect revenue, but it was seen that mobile sites that load in under 5 seconds earn twice the revenue that the sites that load in 19 seconds earn.

Tools to help improve mobile website experience:

Assess: Test the website’s current performance using tools like PageSpeed, Insights, Mobile Friendly Test and Web Page Test.

Execute: Eliminate bulky content, reduce the server request and consolidate data and analytics tags. Keep fewer files to download which would mean fewer HTTP requests and faster loading times.

Monitor: The site must be monitored after the changes are done. The website should be regularly audited to flag and remove anything that adds latency. Using these tools a great and fast mobile web experience can be created.