

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Is India Ready for Digital Content Marketing Advertisement: A Study of Consumers in National Capital Region of India

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**Abstract:** In a country where the trailer of a movie's sequel can receive more than 65 million views in 24 hours, a digital content marketing advertisement is not able to receive even 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the views in 3 months of its launch. This raises a big question, as a country, Are our consumers viewing digital content marketing advertisements? Are the efforts and investments of companies in such advertisement generating desired results? Have these companies been able to increase their sales through these advertisements? Or the investments made in this effort are not very productive? This study attempts to find answers to all these questions raised with respect to the growing investments by organizations in digital content marketing yet seemingly poor awareness and conversion of customers. An empirical study is conducted on a sample of 178 respondents wherein they were shown ten digital content marketing advertisements and were asked questions on familiarity, perception, keenness, sensibility, recognition and realization of digital content marketing. The present study summarizes the results found and discussions thereof in the context of Indian customer.

**Keywords:** *Digital Content Marketing, Advertisement, Customer Perception, Customer Conversion.*

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## Introduction

Internet and Social Media has become the backbone of growth in every sphere of life and they have permanently changed the way how companies should do their business. It has become all the more essential for every firm to adopt internet and social media to advertise their product the total time spent on social media by people beats time spent eating and drinking, socializing, and grooming [2]. According to a report published by Statista, the average time spent by internet users worldwide has increased from 90 minutes a day in 2012 to 135 minutes a day in 2017 [14].

This has bewildered the marketers to think of new ways of attracting customers. Marketers are using every possible platform to target audience for example video ad that appear in starting of every video on YouTube, advertisement in non-paid downloads of different third party mobile applications, search history based ads on Facebook and so on. Content Marketing videos at digital platforms are another such way of advertisement which has suddenly become the trend in the field of marketing. Though content marketing is as old as the field of

advertisement is but organizations have started using content marketing in a different manner to build up their marketing strategies recently and are successfully targeting their audience since they have understood that audience now need the content of the product rather than the old jingles they used. It is believed that rather than talking about the product directly, it is better to engage customer by storytelling, or touching their emotional chords.

Marketers are even racing to the extent of arranging campaigns for social issues and projecting product in the background to create some sort of subliminal effect. Such ads do not highlight products but target customer tacitly to buy their product. Studies show that people rely on emotions, rather than information, to make brand decisions -- and that emotional responses to ads are more influential on a person's intent to buy than the content of an ad [8].

Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of content marketing is that it aids in driving more conversions over time. There are many researches which support that organizations

which create content marketing consistently experience 6 times better conversion rates when compared to their competitors which focus on their conventional marketing [11].

India being a young country (in terms of age of its population) can be thought of as a potential market to attract customer through content marketing on digital platforms on two simple logics, first is that youth spends maximum time online and percentage of youth in India is about 41%. Secondly, emotional arousal at adolescent and early adulthood is much easier than any other age groups.

The ad campaign called 'Fearless Kota' by Horlicks (explained in detail in Table X) is one such example to capture customers by emotional arousal. But the question is 'Are these types of ads helping them to increase their sales?' Well a correct answer of this question can't be given at the moment but it can be said that they tend to leave behind a major portion of our society which is below poverty line.

People below poverty line that composes 21.9% of India's total population generally are not affected by such emotional ads because either they have not watched these advertisements or not understood language and message. Another observation is that even those who have an access and understanding of the language of these ads are also hardly buying the product under consideration based on these advertisements floated on digital media platforms.

This observation put forward certain pertinent questions with respect to these advertisements. These are: Are our consumers viewing digital content marketing advertisements? Are the efforts and investments of companies in such advertisement generating desired results? Have these companies been able to increase their sales through these advertisements? Or the investments made in this effort are not very productive?

This paper aims to provide a theoretical as well as empirical base to the significance of digital content marketing in India. It also takes into consideration the effect of digital content marketing on the buying behavior of consumers and how consumers perceive these advertisements on the basis of

familiarity, perception, keenness, sensibility, recognition and realization of digital content marketing.

## Literature Review

Although many researchers have contributed to the literature of content marketing and digital content marketing and their relationship to other factors like attitude of the customer, purchase intentions, brand engagement, etc. still there are gaps that are yet to be explored in content marketing research [13].

According to the content marketing Institute, content marketing is "*Content marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action*" [5].

The main aim of using content marketing by marketers is building awareness, providing an effective experience and knowledge to encourage customer reaction for elevated profits of the organisation. Content can be presented in a variety of formats including: Case studies, videos, blogs, slide decks, infographics, memes, white papers, Quizzes, eBooks, and images, etc.

It is considered one of the most effective tools for Small and Medium enterprises to market their product or service. Content marketing is about increasing the intervention the marketers and consumers for profit; also it will captivate the customers and compel them to communicate and purchase [3]. It is also proposed that organisation can increase brand loyalty and purchases only through providing valuable information [7].

It is contemplated that content marketing is a very cost effective tool used by marketers to not only attract customers but also engage them to their brand [6]. There is a significant impact of content on online engagement. It builds trust and confidence among the customers and ultimately has an effect on perception and purchase intention [10]. Customer brand engagement is a psychological push which enhances the loyalty by building on trust, commitment and repeated purchase behaviour [4].

It is contemplated that for content writing one need to be very inventive of the valuable

content so as to engage it with the customers rather than just general writing. He also emphasized on the fact that organisations should create quality content which not only attract the customers, but also engage them with the brand so that they keep on visiting again and again to make purchases [13].

Videos are a good source of entertainment and education and it can be used by marketers to share valuable information related to the product or service offered [9].

According to Search metrics, the video sharing website, YouTube is considered the second largest platform after Google. On Google's search listing there is enormous amount of content but videos are one type of content which appear most frequently amounting to 70% of the total search results. And, thus any video content on the website is like to make it appear on the first page of search results.

Mostly users of internet spend more than 2 minutes on websites which contain video contents. Also, while making purchases, customers access video content for product reviews and demonstrations. It is predicted that one in two customers make purchases after watching videos related to the product or service [1].

It is also supported that out of 3 consumers more than 5 would spend a minimum of 2 minutes to watch a video that educates them about a product or service they are planning to purchase [12]. The usage of videos as a digital content marketing strategy by brands has led to increase in the conversion rates by 35% [5].

Although videos have become the most sought for tool by the digital content marketers but still there are a few hindrances. Firstly, it an inappropriate tool to target all.

Secondly, the quality of the content is a major concern. If the content of the video lacks the quality it will not be able to engage the target audience and will not be able to realize the expected results or convey the desired message [15].

## Materials and Methods

### Objectives

- To understand the Familiarity, Cognitive Connect, Positive Affect, Negative Affect, Purchase Intention, and Personal Preferences of consumers through digital content marketing advertisements
- To compare the customers' Familiarity, Cognitive Connect, Positive Affect, Negative Affect, Purchase Intention, and Personal Preferences through digital content marketing advertisements with respect to Gender, Age, Marital Status, Education Level, Family Type, Annual Income, Type of Schooling and Socio-Economic Status.

### Sample

This study was conducted on people from different background in national capital region of India. Responses were collected from 178 respondents. These people were from different background such as working professionals, home makers and students. The demographic profile of the respondents is as mentioned in Table 1.

The sample consists of 69 Males and 109 Females. Age wise, there are 149 respondents in the age range of 18-35 years termed as Young Adults and there are 29 respondents in the age range of 36-55 years termed as Mid Age Adults. Marital status wise there are 126 respondents who are Unmarried and 52 respondents who are married. According to Family type 69 respondents have Joint Family and 109 respondents have Nuclear Family.

Socio Economic status of 23 respondents is high, 146 have Middle Socio Economic Status and 9 respondents have Low Socio Economic Status. 63 of the respondents are Undergraduate, 94 of the respondents are Post Graduate and 21 respondents belong to others. Income group of 81 respondents are up to 5 Lakhs, 70 respondents belong to income group of 5.1-10 Lakhs, 13 respondents have annual income between 10.1-20 lakhs and 14 respondents have annual income above 20 Lakhs.

There are 35 respondents who have done schooling from Government School, 28 of the respondents have done their schooling from Convent School and 115 of the respondents have done their schooling from Public School.

**Table 1: Showing Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Gender	Males	Females		
	69	109		
Age	Young Adults (18-35 Years of Age)	Mid Age Adults (36-55 years of Age)		
	149	29		
Marital Status	Unmarried	Married		
	126	52		
Family Type	Joint Family	Nuclear Family		
	69	109		
Socio Economic Status	High SES	Middle SES	Low SES	
	23	146	9	
Education Background	Undergraduate	Post Graduate	Others	
	63	94	21	
Income Group (Annual Income)	Up to 5 Lakh	5.1-10 Lakh	10.1-20 Lakh	Above 20 Lakh
	81	70	13	14
Type of Schooling	Government School	Convent School	Public School	
	35	28	115	

## Tool Used

To map Familiarity respondents were asked whether they have watched before the ten advertisements shown to them. To map perception, keenness, sensibility, recognition and realization a questionnaire consisting of 16 items was developed. Exploratory Factor

Analysis of the data collected from 178 respondents generated five factors. These factors are presented in the Table 2. The Cronbach alpha score of the entire questionnaire came out to be 0.861.

**Table 2: Showing Descriptions of the Factors used in Study**

Sr. No.	Factor	Description
1	Cognitive Connect	Cognitive Connect here can be termed as recognition with the issue depicted in the advertisement, realization of its importance and sense of the advertisement with respect to product.
2	Positive Affect	Positive Affect here can be termed as positive perception towards the advertisement and generation of positive emotions after watching the advertisement
3	Negative Affect	Negative Affect here can be termed as negative perception towards the advertisement such as wastage of time and money and no connect with the product.
4	Purchase Intention	Purchase Intention here means definite search and trying the product after watching the advertisement and even leaving previously used alternative for the product under consideration.
5	Personal Preferences	Personal Preference here means that technical specifications, features, reviews and experience are more important than any advertisement of the product.

## Procedure

The respondents were shown ten digital content marketing advertisements (Table 3) and they were asked to mark their responses after watching each advertisement with respect to their Familiarity, Cognitive

Connect, Positive Affect, Negative Affect, Purchase Intention and Personal Preferences. The responses thus collected were analyzed by using Descriptive Statistics, and Analysis of Variance.

**Table 3: Showing the Description and the Link of the advertisements used in Study**

S No.	Product	Ad Title	Description	Link
1	Horlicks	Fearless Kota	Kota is famous for competitive examination coaching for engineering and medical along with it Kota is also famous for the city where most number of students commits suicide. Horlicks in this ad highlights that along with other inputs, right kind of emotional nutrition is also important for students to overcome the fear of exam. Horlicks started an initiative in which moms of these children were taken to meet their children and provide them with emotional nutrition in the form of their love and warmth.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0azhsVWu8uo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0azhsVWu8uo</a>
2	Tata Tea	Jaago Re	This ad by TATA TEA shows that there are many things that are going on in front of us which are not ethical or right according to the law, but we don't react to such acts until someone alarms us. So TATA TEA uses its tag line ALARM BAJNE SE PHLE JAAGO RE to aware people to react and stop this acts rather than doing protest afterwards.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I8iNkB16N0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I8iNkB16N0</a>

3	Nivea	Mom's Touch	This ad highlights the importance of mother with scarce resources for those children who basically have seen their mothers doing sacrifices for the happiness of their children. Nivea supports such mothers by providing them free groceries.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0iSn2alwc8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0iSn2alwc8</a>
4	Johnson Tiles	Red Ramp Project	This ad shows the initiative taken by JHONSON TILES in which they created a ramp of red tiles on the beach for one day for those people who use wheelchair or crutches to walk but can't go to beaches because of the sand.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DytBXoMwZak">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DytBXoMwZak</a>
5	Paper Boat	Float a Boat	This ad shows a parent teacher meeting of a school where teacher ask parents to make a paper boat and many of them couldn't do it so the teacher call their children and ask them to teach their parents how to make a paper boat. Then teacher suggest parents to relive their childhood.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A67vPmbBqHQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A67vPmbBqHQ</a>
6	Volkswagen	The Fun Theory	In this ad Volkswagen converts the stairs of a metro/tube station into PIANO by placing piano tiles on the steps of the stairs to promote use of stairs. They found that number of people using stairs was increased by 66%.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBbymar3bds">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBbymar3bds</a>
7	Dove	Choose beautiful	In this ad dove placed two boards on two different gates of a building titled AVERAGE & BEAUTIFUL and women were self-motivated to choose the beautiful door. The idea goes with the tag line CHOOSE BEAUTIFUL.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DdM-4siaQw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DdM-4siaQw</a>
8	Coke	Small World Happiness	Coke started an initiative to make people in India and Pakistan interact with each other by placing two happiness machines one in India and one in Pakistan and people were made to perform various tasks during the interaction session and then were awarded with a coke.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ts_4vOUDIImE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ts_4vOUDIImE</a>
9	Dabur Vatika	Brave and Beautiful	This ad shows the life of a female cancer survivor how she manages to face the society and how she quest for her self-confidence and how people at her home and workplace support her and made her realize that she doesn't need hairs to look beautiful.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QomoNyfkqvg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QomoNyfkqvg</a>
10	Himalaya lip care	Muskaan	This ad basically shows the initiative started by Himalaya lip care along with smile train to help those children who are suffering from cleft which is basically a face deformity and cannot afford the treatment to give them a beautiful smile which goes with its product title MUSKAAN.	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26dx1EDXzRU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26dx1EDXzRU</a>

## Results and Discussion

The data collected from 178 respondents was subjected to descriptive analysis and analysis of variance. Table 4 shows the familiarity

data for different advertisements. At an average 70% of the respondents has not watched these advertisements before.

**Table 4: Familiarity Data of Respondents for Advertisements**

Advertisement Watched	Ad1	Ad2	Ad3	Ad4	Ad5	Ad6	Ad7	Ad8	Ad9	Ad10
Yes	46	87	40	49	54	60	55	45	61	47
No	132	91	138	129	124	118	122	133	117	131

Further the mean calculations of all the respondents taken together shows that respondents could generate average 'Cognitive Connect' means they could averagely recognize with the issue depicted in the advertisement, could averagely realize of its importance and could make average sense of the advertisement with respect to product. The 'Positive Affect' of these advertisements is also average meaning

these advertisements could generate average positive perception towards the advertisement and averagely positive emotions after watching the advertisement. The advertisements were perceived wastage of time and money by few people as is depicted by low score on 'Negative Affect', whereas the 'Purchase Intention' is also found to be low. This means that respondents will not search, try or buy the products based

on these content marketing advertisements. Further the high mean score on 'Personal Preferences' clearly indicates that the

criterion taken to purchase a product still remain the technical specifications, features, reviews and experience (Table 5).

**Table 5: Showing Comparison of Mean score of all Respondents against Criterion Norms**

Sr. No.	Factors	Very High (4.3-5)	High (3.5-4.2)	Average (2.7-3.4)	Low (1.9-2.6)	Very Low (1-1.8)
1	Cognitive Connect			3.10		
2	Positive Affect			3.20		
3	Negative Affect				2.43	
4	Purchase Intention				2.50	
5	Personal Preferences		3.72			

Analysis of variance is applied to see the significant differences in the responses of sample according to their demographics with respect to the various factors judged about digital content marketing advertisements. Table 6 and Table 7 shows that Young Adults and Mid Age Adults significantly differ on Negative Affect and Purchase Intention wherein the negative affect of mid age adults is higher as compared to young adults however both of the groups have low negative affect.

The Purchase Intention of Young Adults is higher as compared to Mid Age Adults wherein the purchase intention of Young Adults is found to be low while that of Mid Age Adults is found to be very low. Further it is important to mention here that there is no difference on any factors with respect to gender.

The results also reveals a significant difference in the Purchase Intention of Married and Unmarried respondents with Unmarried respondents being higher on their purchase Intentions as compared to Married respondents wherein Unmarried respondents has average purchase intentions while purchase intentions of Married respondents are found to be low.

Socio-Economic Status (SES) wise there are significant differences amongst respondents on all the five factors. The Positive Affect of respondents from High SES having average scores is significantly higher than Low SES respondents having low score on positive affect. The Middle SES also has average positive affect but they do not differ significantly from the other two SES groups (Table 6, Table 7). The Low SES who are high on Cognitive Connect are significantly higher than Middle SES and High SES who are average on Cognitive Connect. The High SES scoring is average on Negative Affect are significantly higher than Middle SES and

Low SES who scored low on Negative Affect. This means respondents belongs to high SES feels such advertisements as wastage of time and money more than others.

The Purchase Intentions amongst Lower SES are significantly lower than the other two SES groups. Also it is important to note here that purchase intentions of Low SES are very low and of Middle and High SES are low based on these advertisements. Further the results depict (Table 6, Table 7) that Personal Preferences of purchasing a product of High SES and Middle SES are significantly higher than those of Low SES. Also the personal preference to buy a product is high amongst Middle and High SES respondents while it is average in case of Low SES.

Interestingly the type of schooling received by respondents has been found to have significant bearing on the Purchase Intentions of respondents. Respondents having Convent schooling background with average Purchase Intentions are significantly higher than the respondents from Public and Government Schooling background scoring low on Purchase Intentions. These results give an interesting revelation that the values inculcated at school level are very important. According to the Income Groups it is found that respondents differ significantly on their Cognitive Connect, Negative Affect, Purchase Intentions, and Personal Preferences (Table 6).

Further Table 7 shows that though respondents from all the income groups scored average on Cognitive Connect yet respondents from income group of Above 20 lakh per annum are significantly lower than others in connecting to these advertisements. Further, the Negative Affect is significantly higher in Above 20 lakh per annum respondents group as compared to other groups wherein above 20 lakh per annum income group is also found to be high on

Negative Affect while other groups scored low on Negative Affect. Also the results show that Purchase Intentions of above 20 Lakh income group is significantly lower than 5-10 lakh income groups and also they scored very low on Purchase Intentions as compared to the low scores of Up to 5 lakh income group, and average scores of 5-10 lakhs income group. Even the Personal Preferences for purchasing a product of Above 20 lakhs per annum income groups are significantly higher than Up to 5 lakh per annum income group and 10-20 lakh per annum income group. Where other groups have scored high

on Personal Preference, Above 20 lakh per annum income group scored very high.

This indicates that respondents earning more than 20 lakhs per annum have significantly different perception regarding the usefulness of digital content marketing advertisements and their drive for purchasing these products on the basis of such advertisements. It is pertinent to mention here that this is the income group comprising of two or more than two working professionals in family, high end business groups, respondents coming from well-educated families.

**Table 6: Showing Analysis of Variance of various factors with respect to demographic variables**

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age Wise	Negative Affect	1.898	1	1.898	5.586	.019
	Purchase Intention	21.388	1	21.388	45.224	.000
Marital Status Wise	Purchase Intention	3.708	1	3.707	6.465	.012
Family Type Wise	Negative Affect	2.689	2	1.345	3.987	.020
	Personal Preferences	8.637	2	4.319	5.269	.006
SES	Positive Affect	4.242	2	2.121	4.644	.011
	Cognitive Connect	2.217	2	1.108	3.482	.033
	Negative Affect	3.536	2	1.768	5.319	.006
	Purchase Intentions	7.203	2	3.601	6.469	.002
	Personal Preferences	11.688	2	5.844	7.285	.001
Income Group Wise	Cognitive Connect	2.722	3	.907	2.860	.038
	Negative Affect	6.632	4	1.658	5.208	.001
	Purchase Intentions	11.992	4	2.998	5.599	.000
	Personal Preferences	6.734	3	2.245	2.687	.048
Type of Schooling	Purchase Intentions	6.779	2	3.390	6.062	.003

**Table 7: Showing Significant Mean Differences of various factors with respect to demographic variables**

	Dependent Variable	Young Adults (18-35 years)	Mid Age Adults (36-55 years)		
Age Wise	Negative Arousal	2.29 <sup>L</sup>	2.42 <sup>L</sup>		
	Purchase Intention	2.54 <sup>L</sup>	1.42 <sup>VL</sup>		
Marital Status Wise		Unmarried	Married		
	Purchase Intention	2.70 <sup>A</sup>	2.55 <sup>L</sup>		
Family Type Wise		Joint Family	Nuclear Family		
	Purchase Intention	2.43 <sup>L</sup>	2.63 <sup>L</sup>		
Socio Economic Status		High SES	Middle SES	Low SES	
	Positive Affect	3.03 <sup>aA</sup>	3.26 <sup>aA</sup>	2.63 <sup>bL</sup>	
	Cognitive Connect	3.04 <sup>aA</sup>	3.08 <sup>aA</sup>	3.58 <sup>bH</sup>	
	Negative Affect	2.79 <sup>aA</sup>	2.37 <sup>bL</sup>	2.40 <sup>bL</sup>	
	Purchase Intentions	2.40 <sup>aL</sup>	2.57 <sup>aL</sup>	1.66 <sup>bVL</sup>	
Income Group Wise		Up to 5 Lakh pa	5.1-10 lakh pa	10.1-20 lakh pa	Above 20 lakh pa
	Cognitive Connect	3.07 <sup>bA</sup>	3.20 <sup>bA</sup>	3.12 <sup>bA</sup>	2.73 <sup>aA</sup>
	Negative Affect	2.48 <sup>aL</sup>	2.54 <sup>aL</sup>	2.51 <sup>aL</sup>	3.54 <sup>bH</sup>
	Purchase Intentions	2.39 <sup>abL</sup>	2.71 <sup>bA</sup>	2.77 <sup>bA</sup>	1.74 <sup>aVL</sup>
Type of Schooling		Government School	Public School	Convent School	
	Purchase Intentions	2.38 <sup>bL</sup>	2.43 <sup>bL</sup>	2.95 <sup>aA</sup>	

Note:

- Means with differing subscripts within rows are significantly different at the  $p < .05$  based on Duncan Multiple Range post hoc paired comparisons.
- The superscripts shows the comparison of scores against criterion norms where VL means Very Low, L means Low, A means Average, H means High, and VH means Very High

## Conclusion

Digital content marketing advertisements with the focus of targeting customers through indirect advertisements, like storytelling, social cause campaigns may be trending in the marketing market but as is revealed by the results of the present study approximately only 30% consumers are watching such advertisements. These kind of advertisements are able to generate recognition, realization, sensibility, and

positive emotions to average extent only while purchase intentions after watching these advertisements are still low and personal preference with respect to technical specifications, reviews, features and experience still holds the highest value to purchase a product. This can be used as an indication by marketers to invest intelligently in such advertisements.

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