

DIGITAL INFLUENCE: THE ROLE OF SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING IN DRIVING PURCHASE INTENTIONS AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN SKINCARE PRODUCTS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

Search engine marketing (SEM) significantly influences consumer purchase intentions by leveraging various digital marketing strategies and understanding consumer behavior. The effectiveness of SEM is contingent upon several factors, including the quality of content, website interface, and search result presentation, which collectively shape consumer perceptions and actions, which can further solidify their preferences and intentions to purchase specific skincare products. The primary objective of the study is to identify the factors influencing purchase intention and customer loyalty towards search engine marketing. This study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically explore the role of Search Engine Marketing in driving purchase intentions on skincare products among Young adults. A non-probability sampling method was employed, Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire, Data was collected through Google Forms from 165 respondents for primary data and the secondary data were collected from books, journals and the Internet. The findings reveals that Majority 32.1% of the respondents frequently purchases skincare products in online. Furthermore, the result indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between purchase intention and customer loyalty among young adult skincare consumers. This study highlights that Search engine marketing engagement strengthens the long-term loyalty towards skincare brands and thus it drives the intention to buy skincare products among Young adults. This framework offers a pathway Search engine marketing to build loyalty and ensure sustained growth in an increasingly digital marketplace.

Keywords: Search engine marketing, Purchase intentions, customer loyalty, digital marketing, Consumer behavior, skincare products.

1. INTRODUCTION

Search engine marketing (SEM) has a substantial impact on consumer intentions by utilizing a variety of digital marketing methods and studying consumer behavior. SEM includes strategies such as search engine optimization (SEO), which improves visibility and engagement, influencing purchasing decisions. The effectiveness of SEM is dependent upon several factors, including the quality of content, website interface, and search result presentation, which collectively shapes consumer perceptions and actions. Research shows that young adults commonly conduct branded keyword searches after purchasing skincare goods, demonstrating the effectiveness of search engine marketing (SEM) in reinforcing brand presence and driving repeat purchases. This behavior indicates that SEM can play a significant role in sustaining consumer engagement and loyalty. Over 50% of branded keyword searches originate from consumers who have already purchased the products, indicating a strong post-purchase engagement with the brand. While these consumers are less likely to click on ads for products they already own, they show a higher responsiveness to ads for complementary products, suggesting that SEM can effectively promote additional purchases (Zhang et al., 2018). Effective SEM strategies that emphasize brand elements can enhance conversion rates, making consumers more likely to engage with the brand post-purchase (Yeung & Nisar, 2014). Engaging content, such as influencer endorsements and interactive posts, enhances brand visibility and fosters emotional connections, which are crucial for repeat purchases (MAGDALUYO et al., 2025). Conversely, although SEM and social media marketing are effective, certain consumers may encounter information overload, resulting in confusion or indecision about their skincare choices. This highlights the necessity for firms to equalize marketing initiatives with transparent, concise information to facilitate consumer decision-making. Despite these advantages, it is imperative for marketers to address related challenges, such as ensuring privacy and transparency, to prevent consumer distrust. Brands must articulate their utilization of consumer data to improve SEM initiatives, since trust is pivotal in both purchase intentions and long-term loyalty. In conclusion, by utilizing SEM effectively, skincare brands can significantly influence young adults' purchasing decisions and foster enduring customer loyalty.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the factors influencing purchase intention and customer loyalty towards search engine marketing.
- To investigate the correlation between purchase intention and customer loyalty among young adult skincare users.
- To examine the impact of search engine marketing on brand awareness, Brand trust, perceived value and usefulness, product selection and perceived risk and security for skincare products.
- To analyse the effect of search engine marketing on the skincare purchases of young adults.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Concept of Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is defined as the use of various digital channels and technologies to reach and interact with consumers, facilitating the promotion and sale of goods and services (Diachkov et al., 2023). It has evolved from traditional marketing methods, incorporating internet marketing, social media, and mobile marketing to adapt to changing consumer behaviours and preferences (Sun, 2022). Utilizes platforms such as social media, email, and websites to communicate with target audiences (Durmaz, 2023). Engages consumers through personalized and direct communication, enhancing brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. Digital marketing offers unique advantages, including cost-effectiveness, broader reach, and the ability to measure campaign performance in real-time (Sun, 2022). Companies such as Amazon and Uber have effectively executed digital marketing strategies, leading to substantial revenue expansion and enhanced market visibility.

2.1 Overview of Search Engine Marketing

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is an essential element of digital marketing that aims to improve online visibility and driving targeted traffic via search engines. It includes both organic strategies, such as Search Engine Optimization (SEO), and paid strategies, like Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising. The importance of SEM has escalated as businesses increasingly depend on search engines to engage with prospective clients, making it vital for efficient online marketing tactics. SEM integrates SEO, which improves organic search rankings, and PPC, which involves paid advertisements to appear in search results (Mohan, 2024). Effective SEM depends on strategic keyword selection and optimization, which helps websites rank higher in

search results, thereby increasing visibility(Mohanty & Swain, 2025). Integrating social media platforms into SEM strategies can enhance reach and engagement, leveraging the vast user base of these platforms(Sakas et al., 2017). Although SEM is an effective marketing approach, it requires continuous adaptation to evolving algorithms and consumer behavior. Businesses must allocate resources to research and strategic development to enhance their SEM initiatives effectively. Additionally, the ethical considerations and legal compliance in digital marketing practices are crucial for sustainable success in this field.

2.2 Role of Search engine marketing in driving purchase intentions and customer Loyalty

Brands that appear on the first page of search results are perceived as more credible, significantly influencing purchase intentions. Organic results often lead to higher trust and engagement compared to sponsored ads, affecting consumer choices(Diwanji et al., 2023). Over half of branded keyword searches come from consumers who have already purchased the product, indicating ongoing engagement with SEM even after a purchase. post-purchase consumers are more responsive to ads for complementary products, suggesting that SEM can effectively target existing customers for additional sales(Zhang et al., 2018). AI-driven advertisements enhance targeting and engagement, significantly impacting purchase intentions among omnichannel customers. Understanding consumer behavior through AI allows marketers to tailor their strategies, improving the effectiveness of SEM campaigns(Mittal et al., 2023). While SEM is crucial for driving purchase intentions, it is essential to consider that not all consumers respond uniformly. Factors such as prior purchase experience and the type of product can influence how effectively SEM strategies convert interest into actual purchases. SEM effectiveness varies based on whether the search intent is informational, transactional, or navigational. Campaign performance is significantly affected by the alignment of ads with these intents(Schultz, 2020). Studies indicate a strong correlation between the effectiveness of digital ads and increased purchase intentions. Elements such as visual appeal and clear calls-to-action are critical in converting interest into actual purchases(Rudra et al., 2025). Mobile app advertisements serve as a mediator between exposure to digital ads and purchase intentions, particularly when aligned with consumer motivations(Alghizzawi et al., 2023). An integrated approach combining SEO and SEM enhances online visibility and engagement, ultimately driving higher conversion rates. This strategy allows businesses to optimize their digital marketing efforts effectively (Rohimi, 2024). Although SEM is an efficient instrument for enhancing purchase intentions, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential disadvantages,

including the risk of oversaturation in digital advertising, which may result in consumer fatigue and reduced effectiveness over time. Maintaining a Balance between ad frequency and relevance is essential crucial for sustaining consumer engagement.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically explore the Role of Search Engine Marketing in driving purchase intentions on skincare products among Young adults. Descriptive design is appropriate for analyzing perceptions, experiences, and behavioral intentions of the consumers. This facilitates to observe the existing relationships among digital marketing practices, purchase intentions, and customer loyalty in the context of skincare goods. This approach facilitates the extraction of structured insights into real-world customer experiences and online engagement trends.

3.2 Sampling Design and Technique

A non-probability sampling method was employed, specifically purposive sampling, to identify respondents who have prior engagement in purchasing skin care products via online platforms. This approach ensures the participation of individuals who are aware of or influenced by SEM practices and have experienced purchase intention and customer loyalty. Respondents were chosen from varied consumer profiles to obtain a comprehensive understanding of satisfaction levels and retention behaviours influenced by digital exposure.

3.3 Tools used for Analysis

The gathered data was examined using a range of statistical tools. The Cronbach alpha reliability test, which is adopted as a means of assessing and measuring the reliability of variables. Descriptive statistics were used and Karl Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to ascertain the strength and direction of relationships between the study variables using SPSS. These instruments provided substantial empirical validation for the hypothesis testing.

3.4 Data Collection Method

Primary data was obtained through a structured questionnaire. The instrument consisted of close-ended statements measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire was distributed directly to individuals who had the habit of purchasing skincare products online through SEM, ensuring relevance and accuracy.

Primary Data was collected from 165 respondents via Google Forms, and the secondary data was collected from books, journals and the Internet.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table No.1 Demographic profile of Respondents

Demographic	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Age		
18-21	36	21.8%
22-25	43	26.1%
26-30	44	26.7%
30 above	42	25.5%
Total	165	100%
Gender		
Male	79	47.9%
Female	86	52.1%
Total	165	100%
Education		
Undergraduate	63	38.2%
Post graduate	52	31.5%
Others	50	30.3%
Total	165	100%
Occupation		
Student	35	21.2%
Employed	48	29.1%
Self-employed	44	26.7%
Unemployed	38	23.0%
Total	165	100%
Annual Income (Rs.)		
Below 2 lakhs	36	21.8%
2-4 lakhs	33	20.0%
4-6 lakhs	60	36.4%
Above 6 lakhs	36	21.8%
Total	165	100%

Source : Computed from Primary data

INTERPRETATION:

From this above table, the Majority of the respondents 26.7% belong to those between the **age** of 26-30 years, **Female** 52.1% , **Undergraduate** 38.2%, **Employed** 29.1%, and 36.4% belong to the **annual income** level between Rs.4-6 lakhs.

Table No.2 Frequency of online Purchase for Skincare Product

Particulars	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Rarely	38	23.0 %
Occasionally	38	23.0%
Frequently	53	32.1%
Very frequently	36	21.8%
Total	165	100%

Source : Computed from Primary data

INTERPRETATION:

From the above table, it shows that 23.0% of the respondents Rarely purchases skincare product in online, 23.0% of the respondents Occasionally purchases skincare product in online, 32.1% of the respondents Frequently purchases skincare product in online and 21.8% of the respondents very frequently purchases skincare product in online. Thus, the Majority of the respondents **Frequently** purchases skincare product in online.

4.2. RELIABILITY TEST

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.748	6

Source : Computed from Primary data

INTERPRETATION:

The reliability analysis for the construct with all six factors such as **Brand Awareness and Trust, Perceived value and usefulness, Product selection, Perceived risk and security, Purchase intention and customer loyalty** yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of **0.748**, indicating acceptable internal consistency and reliability of the scale. Based on the table it's observed that the values obtained are acceptable and a good fit for the research. Thus, the variables are acceptable and reliable.

4.3 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Correlation analysis

(H₀) : There is no significant positive relationship between purchase intention and customer loyalty among young adult skincare consumers.

(H₁): There is a significant positive relationship between purchase intention and customer loyalty among young adult skincare consumers.

Table No.3: Correlation analysis between Purchase intention and Customer loyalty

Correlations			
		Purchase Intention	Customer Loyalty
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.763**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	165	165
Customer Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.763**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	165	165
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source : Computed from Primary data

INTERPRETATION:

From table no.3, it indicates that the calculated Pearson correlation coefficient value ($r = 0.763$). The significance value ($p = 0.000$) is less than **0.01**, showing that the correlation is statistically significant at the 1% level, demonstrates a strong positive correlation between the variables. These findings support the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirm that there is a significant positive relationship between purchase intention and customer loyalty among young adult skincare consumers.

5. FINDINGS

This study aimed to explore the Role of Search Engine Marketing in Driving Purchase intentions and customer loyalty in skincare products among Young adults. The following major findings shows that maximum number of respondents were between the age of 26-30 years (26.7%), majority number of respondents were Undergraduates (38.2%). (52.1%) of the respondents were female and (29.1%) of the respondents were employed, (36.4%) of the respondents belong to the Annual income level between Rs.4-6 lakhs, Majority (32.1%) of the

respondents Frequently purchases skincare product in online and there is a significant positive relationship between purchase intention and customer loyalty among young adult skincare consumers.

6. CONCLUSION

This study highlights that exploring the role of Search Engine Marketing in driving purchase intentions on skincare products among Young adults, that SEM engagement strengthens the long-term loyalty toward skincare brands and thus it drives the intention to buy skincare products among Young adults. The respondents suggest that the information found through search engines increases the intention to buy skincare products and loyal to skincare brands that maintain strong online visibility. Furthermore, the relationship among these variables is found to be significantly interconnected. This framework offers a pathway to Search engine marketing to build loyalty and ensure sustained growth in an increasingly digital marketplace.

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