A Comparative Study on Customers Attitudes towards Search Engine Marketing in Kanniyakumari and Thiruvananthapuram District

S. N. Amutha Chithra

Assistant Professor Dept. Of Commerce S. T. Hindu College - Nagercoil

Abstract

Internet has become an important part of human life, it has connected individuals world wide through e-mail, exchange of information and social media. The digital networked environmental provides a variety of new possibilities to communicate, to interact and to learn. Search engine marketing is a part of Digital marketing, commonly referred to by its acronym SEM, is cost effective method of Internet marketing which is often used to gain visibility and traffic on search engines. Search engine marketing can be defined as a set of marketing methods to increase the chance of receiving quality traffic through search engines. Basic purpose of SEM is to improve website's ranking on various search engines such as Google or Bing. SEM is a broad term which refers to number of different activities including search engine optimization (SEO), search targeting and social media marketing. During recent years, SEM has become popular within rising number of Internet users around the globe and numerous IT and non-IT enterprises aiming to expand their business by strong Internet marketing. 400 respondents from Kanniyakumari District is taken as sample and t-test is applied to test the hypothesis. "Factors influence the attitude of respondents towards search engine marketing. The results show there is no significant difference among the male and female respondents towards the factor that influence the attitude towards search engine marketing".

Key Word: Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Search Engine Result Page (SERP), Pay-Per-Click (PPC), Page-Rank(PR)

Introduction

In every field of human activity information is the key component. Whether it is research and development, business and industry, for general public, the information has to be acquired, processed, stored, retrieved and disseminated for information. Information generation, dissemination, transfer and communication take place between people through channels and in a variety of contexts and environments. In an information – driven society and economy, information about information reigns supreme. There is a massive change in the method of communication in modern days. Social Media have become a convenient way to communicate among all age clusters. The internet and particularly social media have modified the shoppers and marketers communicating medium. The web platform is a new method for developing business.

Search Engine Marketing

SEM is a model of Internet marketing that attempts to promote websites to improve their visibility of Search Engine Result Pages (SERPS) through the practice of Search Engine optimization, (SEO), paid placements, contextual advertising and paid inclusion. There are several online marketing tools to acquire audiences like

opt – in, viral marketing, banner advertising, search placement, and

Pay – Per – Click (PPC) or keyboard marketing.

 SEM is also called essential word marketing or PPC advertising, which allows advertisers to place bids on specific keywords or phrases and have their advertisement show up alongside the organic search engine. It is also observed that almost twenty percent of advertisers are moving their advertising budgets to SEM from traditional print and other kinds of mass media. The best search engines like Google, Bing and yahoo are concentrating on maximizing traffic to a web page. It can be perfumed by SEO, PPC advertising and paid inclusion. The effectiveness of these techniques is measured by click – through rates from the search engine to the websites, generating customer leads, leading to sales and competitive bench marking. The click – through Ratio (CTR) is influenced by ad positioning(rank on the page), length of the keyword, brand – specific and retailer – specific content on the page.

SEM helps customers to generate new knowledge and use the same for transactions on both the office and online world. There is profound involvement of customers in information search on an online platform, hence researching about products & services promoted through SEM have become inevitable. SEM is an umbrella term for promotion of websites. It is the appearance of Internet marketing, which aims at increasing the perceptibility of websites & its content in the search engine results with the more significant chunk of the population spending a lot of their time online, focusing marketing by most businesses is shifting from traditional advertising techniques like print advertisements, TV commercials to online marketing. Hence, companies should aim at maximizing the traffic to their websites via search engines. To optimise traffic, vendors need to ensure that their site features top results of most popular search engines like Google, Bing, Yahoo etc. SEO is, the procedure of developing a websites position so that the web page comes up higher in the search results of significant search engines.

There are few elements used by search engines to determines how relevant a website is, these include the age of the site, frequency of content updating, the ratio of keywords to the content available on the website and the quality and number of incoming links to this web sites. Most of the search engines consider book links, links to a web page from an external website, as an essential factor while ranking results. Every page indexed by Google is assigned a Page Rank (PR) depending on the number and quality of the back links to this particular page. A site with more excellent PR ranks higher in Google's search results than one with lower PR. Websites can increase their PR by having more top PR websites linking them.

Objectives

To study attitude of the respondents towards search engine marketing.

Hypothesis

The factors that influence attitude towards search engine marketing are significantly different for male and female respondents.

Statement of the Problem

Technology is growing immensely. Online users can access the information of products or services through internet. Online users are well aware of the products or service available to them in the market. There is an explosion of information which the online users can access at the click of a button. The marketers need to understand about the online user's behaviour and marketing know-how along with the social media optimization & search engine optimization techniques to succeed & stay longer in the market.

Data Collection

Collection of data in the preparation of this research was from three main sources. Literature review from the books, online materials and articles were used to collect information for the theoretical aspect of the research, similarly survey strategy was used to collect from the respondents who have knowledge in the field and would also provide relevant information. Simple random sampling method was selected by interview method by using structural questionnaire method. The questionnaire was prepared with care to make sure that answering was effortless and convenient as possible for the respondents. The selection of participants for this study was done by random sampling method but care was taken that the participants have relevance to the topic of study.

Limitations

1. Only one objective is studied
2. Only 400 respondents are studied.
3. The opinion of the respondents are from their memory.

Factors influencing the attitude towards search engine marketing are different for male and female respondents.

An attempt is made to analyse the factors influencing attitude towards search engine marketing among male and female respondents.

Ho: The factors that influence attitude towards search engine marketing are significantly different for male and female respondents.

Table: 1
Kanniyakumari District

Sl. No	Influencing Factors	Gender	Mean	SD	Mean Differ	ε	ρ
1	Informative	Male	3.47	1.17	0.01	0.356	0.723
		Female	3.37	1.04			
2	Easy Comparison	Male	3.32	0.964	-0.22	0.800	0.427

		Female	3.43	0.953			
3	Easy Selection	Male	2.15	1.052	0.05	0.144	0.886
		Female	2.17	1.236			
4	Enjoyable	Male	2.47	0.897	-0.07	-0.305	0.762
		Female	2.53	0.632			
5	Convenience	Male	2.32	0.591	-0.41	-1.359	0.180
		Female	2.12	1.073			
6	Annoying	Male	30.3	1.033	-0.17	-0.657	0.514
		Female	3.50	1.022			
7	Time Consuming	Male	3.57	0.844	-0.07	-0.388	0.700
		Female	3.80	0.593			
8	Disruptive	Male	3.50	0.493	-0.63	-2.730	0.006
		Female	3.89	0.873			
9	Information Overload	Male	3.65	1.052	-0.72	-2.845	0.004
		Female	4.47	0.471			
10	Acceptable	Male	3.00	0.885	0.50	2.275	0.027
		Female	2.50	0.731			

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it can be concluded that attitude towards search engine marketing among male and female do not differ significantly from each other on the matter of factors that influence the attitude towards search engine marketing. They differ with respect to two factors namely disruptive and information overload. This is indicated by the P-value being less than 0.05 in all the above two cases as seen in the above table.

Thus the given hypothesis namely "the factors influence the attitude towards search engine marketing for male and female respondents is not supported.

Conclusions

The search engine marketing's greatest strength is that it offers advertisers the opportunity to their ads in front of motivated customers who are ready to buy at the precise moment they are ready to make a purchase. No other advertising medium can do this, which is why search engine marketing is so effective and such an amazing powerful way to grow business.

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