SOCIAL MEDIA AND REDEFINING SELF

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ABSTRACT

"Media" – the very word does speak for itself, and it is undoubtedly more than just acting as a liaison. The four letter word somehow is overburdened with lots of speculations, expectations, and aspirations. Now, the reader would certainly not be at fault, if he/she makes a slight effort to raise his eyebrows, as if asking why or how the mention of the Media makes sense in a Business journal. Well, to come to his/her rescue, it may be well stated that the Social Media and its influence over the lives of individuals have been given an effort to be explained through this study. Every organisation thrives for its success, and the underlying factor that would denote an enterprise’s success comes through money, yet it is very important on part of the seller to get an inkling of what his consumer expects out of him. This research talks about the importance, presence or dominance of the Social Media and how an individual can relate to it. As mentioned before, establishing a relationship is of prime importance, this paper is only a replica of how the Social Media has reached itself into every nook and corner of everyone's house, and has also occupied a major portion in their hearts. The topic being very uncommon, all the data collected have been Primary, assistance has been taken from the Net for using the facts and figures, and the Bar Graph. The conclusion speaks of the current status of the Social Media, and the contemporary state of well-being, and relevant data has revealed how people look upon the Social Media as their saviour.

KEYWORDS

Social Media, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Differentiate.


INTRODUCTION

The season of Autumn differentiates itself from the rest, and is an all time favourite among people, especially with the Bengalis, as the "Bangalis" await this season ever since the Academic calendar begins, as Goddess Durga is on her expedition to her father’s house after a year with her kids. The husky voice of Birendra Krishna Bhadra seems to be a huge respite, and is a comfort zone, rather a moment of nostalgia before every Bengali. "Mahishasurmaridini" was, and even is a refresher, reliance and what not before the public, and nobody could specifically say when that big black box occupied a major portion of their pass time, and was an excellent entertaining package for individuals.

With Doordarshan spreading its wings in the year 1959, people rediscovered a shelter, an informer, entertainer in the same. Turning the pages of the diary, one would definitely recall those nostalgic moments, the notable contribution of Mr. Ashok Kumar with his dominating nasal modulation in soap opera “Humlog” was an all time favourite among folks. Ramesh Sippy directed “Buniyaad” also set the ball rolling too far, the patriot depicted in the character Master Haveliram created a huge sensation among the mass.

It may be stated from the above instances how Radio and Television have played, and still continue to play pivotal roles as Mass Mediums. Truly speaking, peoples' tastes and preferences have undergone a sea of changes, the evolution of the New Media, over the days deserves special mention, whether people call it reach, or popularity, or success is a different stand to decide on. While these many paras talk about how the different forms of Media had their early inception, and also throws a glimpse on how the dependable Media became among the individuals.

The discussion would be deemed incomplete without the mention of the New Media, which expands and encircles around the Internet, the prefix to the word Media in this regard is “New”, only to rejuvenate those old days during the month of September (On the occasion of Durga Puja), or the Baishakha, which the young one would look forward to with a huge aspiration of getting “new” clothes. It will not be an exaggeration, if stated that flamboyance often associates itself with this very word (New).

Focusing on the current genre, the New Media, as the very name signifies, refers to the Web, and a detailed survey would state that this form of Media is the most profound form of communication contemporarily. The Print Media had its very inception since the days of Wiley, as mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, The Bombay Times whose columns stirred the nation those days, has taken to journalism online too. The e version has emerged out to be a huge respite for all and sundry, especially for those who think twice for spending cash on buying the paper, on answering to his other needs, or thinking of those who have are not blessed with a 10/5 job.

Communicating through the Social Media

An uncanny thought surpassed, before detailing on the Social Media, and how the Self has been connected into this genre, why not take up the call on communication at the very niche level. It will definitely not be an exaggeration to state that communication goes hand in hand with the Media (In any form). Communication, it is no secret has a tendency to establish a commonality, as the former has been derived from the Latin word ‘communis, which means common. A person too much equipped with Grammar, would probably be
annoyed, by the optimum utilisation of proper nouns, emphasising on the proper noun named “Communication.”

The importance of Communication, rather its presence may be dime a dozen, only to say that Communicating is the art of inculcating or establishing a relationship between the Sender and the Receiver. Going into gory details, it would be observed that usually the process is Two Way, between the Sender (Who encodes his message in a particular language), and the Receiver (Who decodes the message from the Sender).

As mentioned previously, the process of Communication involves a two way traffic, stretching out between the Sender and the Receiver, notwithstanding the fact that that the mere level of tremble, if they are to present a dish before the guests, seeking highly of that slightest nod. Intrapersonal Communication refers to that form of Communication that happens within the self.

Exaggerating upon this fact, it is not too far to seek how the first level of communication takes place within the self. In this regard, the aspects to this level of communication can be ascertained like Self-concept, Perception, and Expectations; the preceding level of communication when communication takes place between a second person, which is being termed as the Interpersonal Communication. Relationship again plays a pivotal role in successfully meeting up to the demands of this level of communication, based on the Interpersonal relationship between two individuals. It is on the intensity of the level of relationship one say how successful was the Interpersonal Communication. The succeeding levels of communication after the Interpersonal level of Communication are Group and Mass Communication respectively, while the target audience in the former one is a group of small individuals, while in case of the latter one, as the name signifies, the audience is huge.

The various forms of Media under the names of the Print, Electronic and the New Media have played and still continue to decipher important roles in different spheres. Exaggerating on the New Media, Social Media would definitely come to think of it. It will certainly not be aggrandised, if stated that the Social Media under various heads has been played a commendable role in due course of time, and has undoubtedly become that “saviour” from boredom.

Stressing on different level of Communication, and emphasising at the Intra level, it may be well inferred that the New Media has carved out a niche for itself, it has helped a person define, rather redefine himself in the deepest sense.

DISCUSSION

Now, a question very pertinent to this would crop up as to what is the Social Media, and the following question to it would definitely mention how a form of communication can be socialised. Matters can be simplified as thus – any form of “computer mediated tools” that assist people to share their ideas, thoughts and beliefs (Communicate) through networks. A survey by Nielson reveals that people tend to spend more time with the Social Media than any other site. The Social Media again has been reliable relaxer, entertainer, time pass; all in the same.

Society, if personified would reveal how it has been a source of prime concern among the mass, and if taken at the peak through the leading dailies, it would come to knowledge most of the Broadsheet has been occupied by news that is hard in nature, which in turn showcases how people take a perennial interest in these stories.

The only supporter cum protector’s to the brave heart Nirbhaya, (A 23-year-old woman who was brutally raped in a moving bus) is worth mentioning in this regard, especially when he faced the world by citing all that happened in that dreadful night in an interview with a private news channel. No sooner was this interview fixed, it went viral in the Social Media.

This is how the Social Media has been actively involved into our lives, of course people have their own preferences, similarly they opt for different media forms as well. This piece of information had become viral within no time in the Social Media, and the entire nation was all ears to the exclusive interview of the ever supportive friend of Nirbhaya. Not everybody was informed about the sudden telecast of the friend, had Facebook not acted as the saviour.

While communication does essentially involve the message being delivered, rather decoded at the other end, feedback from the end of the receiver too plays an important role in determining the success of communication, rather the process of communication would be deemed incomplete without a proper feedback. There is no scope of a feedback in case of the Intrapersonal level of Communication, while in case of the Interpersonal level of Communication, chances are high that the feedback from the other person is instantaneous, and unabated.

Group Communication too would follow the same route as the IPC, where there is usually a delayed feedback in case of Mass Communication. Emphasising on the New Media, it can be very well stated how gradually it has been a “soft corner” in the lives of individuals. The Internet, it is no secret has become a time saviour and is the most convenient form of Communication to the people contemporarily. The Social Media would definitely come to think of it in this regard, further sub categorised or identified as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, My Space and what not. Facebook would need no formal introduction, with its inception by the eminent Mark Zuckerberg in the year 2004, has a huge fan following ever since its birth and its craze has been multiplying till date.

Facebook, LinkedIn, You Tube, Twitter, Google Plus, My Space, Flickr and the other forms of Social Media, have been playing different roles in due course of time, yet if a detailed survey is being conducted, it would be revealed how Facebook tops the list till date. That Prosenjit Chatterjee starrer Sankhachil bagged the National Award for the best Feature Film was known to many through Facebook, even the ardent “FANS” outsourced their reliance onto Facebook, only to confirm their arrival at the movie hall to assess on Aryan Khanna. Facebook also has another trait under the purview of Pages, that might involve a particular celebrity, an institution, or a particular show, that invites people to like, share or comment on a particular Page.

How many people actually knew about Kuwait evacuation? Before the film had hit the silver screen the tweet by Akshay Kumar informed what the evacuation was all about and how he was working on a film that brought the story alive before the audience. It is well known how advertisements account for most of the revenue generation, and the increased level of advertisements in the Social Media
doubly prove how the Social Media has supported itself economically.

The contribution of the Social media has been immense over the days, and as mentioned before this form of Media has created a special place for itself both in the minds and the lives of individuals. The Social Media is dependent on the Mobile and the Web through the people and communities share and interact amongst each other.

Now if the attention could be drifted towards a second form of Social Media, undoubtedly YouTube would occupy the second place. YouTube came into being in the year 2005, and was founded by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim, the trio were employees to PayPal, the idea to starting this type of a Website commercialised when the PayPal decided to open up a website, that would be give Video footages the top priority, and create a place where the users can share, upload and view content to their video footages.

The Audio Visual Medium has always been and shall continue to be a source of reliance before the public, as a particular news story which is supplemented by visuals would trigger more than a still photograph of the same. “A photograph is equivalent to, 10,000 words”, - thus said a famous Chinese photographer. And YouTube was, rather is a medium through which people can upload, share and most importantly connect to themselves and the others while accessing this particular site.

While Facebook and YouTube cater to the needs of the common man, the celebrities too have a platform for themselves, wherein they can share or put forward their views, under the banner of “Twitter”, which is designed exclusively for the celebs. Launched in the year 2006, Twitter has been widely accepted by the celebrities too, and the Tweets by the celebrities have been informing people with the latest developments in their lives, or about their upcoming ventures.

True, that Gen Y is too much into Facebook, Google Plus or the YouTube, yet the contribution of LinkedIn can never be undermined. LinkedIn is that water to a thirsty, after having travelled in a sultry weather. LinkedIn had its formulation in the year 2003, and has been a site that is exclusively designed under the business flavour. A close glance at LinkedIn would reveal how an individual can extend his professional network. “In” (As it is popularly jargoned) also provides a respite before the new job seekers, keeping in their updated profile.

The following diagram illustrates how the different Social Media, and which one is the most popular, the data has been collected from the Internet, whereby Facebook has been at the pinnacle, followed by Twitter and YouTube. LinkedIn gives a close competition to YouTube, and the other Social Media occupies the least position.

Facebook, undoubtedly has been the most famous and used form of Media, nevertheless, FB (As referred to colloquially) provides a better chance to people to communicate, connect, or perhaps reconnect. Twitter has its own depth of field, while the audio visual YouTube too is worth a mention.

The Social Media has been playing different roles under different banners and somehow (based on the parameters of clarity in service, timeliness) have reached out before the audience. Do they provide a platform whereby an individual can connect to his real self? Or probably redefine him or herself? The above words would gain some accuracy, while cited with live illustrations. Sumitra, a middle-aged woman has recently taken to the Internet and chatting, using the email address of her college going daughter, she gets hooked onto a guy who is half her age, and keeps on talking to him over days.

The film “Sumitra Online” (Directed by Atanu Ghosh) tries to portray how women after a certain age have to forcibly live in solitude, and then she rediscovers her real self when introduced by another male. The Social Media plays an important role in determining the relationship of an elderly and lonely female, with a teenager. Or consider the case of Charulata 2011, wherein actress Rituparna Sengupta used Facebook as a means to communicate with her lover. Relationships have been often deemed complex, this film encircles around a woman who has rendered her feelings before two men, one being her lover and the other being her husband. Facebook is the only means through which Charu (Rituparna) gets in touch with her lover, and the Social Media to her oxygen. The Social Media has not only educated people technologically, but also been a dependence before them. Well, surveys and researches would of course speak out to the fact that a day without the Internet, more specifically without the Social Media would certainly not make breathing worthwhile.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion seems to be the toughest part of a project, though the study talks about what has been the growth of the Social Media in due course of time, the research paper begins with the evolution of different forms of Media, only to exaggerate that the importance, rather the presence of Communication. Journalism when started in the year 1780, by James Augustus Hicky was confined to a group of intellectuals, yet the advent of the Electronic Media claimed a lot more credibility from the audience, which has been emulated to several folds with the grand entry of the New media.
The acceptance of the Social Media has been immense before the receivers, and that the Research paper was just an effort to mention how the Social Media besides contributing to business, and maximising sales ensuring the economic stability, has been able to create a place for itself among individuals.

There has been another notable domain, which is worth mentioning in this regard, and that is the wide presence of Advertisements. An advertisement pops up every time one wants to read an article, and this is pretty much evident as Ads are the primary source of profit maximisation for any organisation to survive in this highly competitive market. Recent surveys have revealed that women are more prone to using Social Networking sites than men, and a mere glance at Facebook would show how a particular brand is announcing a 50% off on a ladies Kurti or a cosmetic brand.

All things analysed, it can very well be said that the contribution of the New Media has been worthwhile, and the Social media not only does help get rid boredom, yet it helps creating a personal relation among the individuals. It would not be too spurious to mention that the Social media has kind of replaced itself with books too, and reading habits have become a far sighted hobby among Gen Y, so the dependence continues yet.

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