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# **A Critical Analysis Of Promotional Strategies Of Some Major E-Commerce Players In India**

Authored By - Nagabharana K

## **Abstract:**

Due to the development of the internet in the twenty-first century, several e-commerce websites have been launched all over the world. The E-Commerce market has since expanded in India. However, these businesses have a wide range of offerings. Based on what and where they sell, their operation differs. Where there is a need, marketing makes it easier for them to find customers and sell. The marketing approaches used by India's e-commerce companies vary, even though they operate all over the country. This research paper deals with the basic understanding of the promotional strategies which are used by Amazon, Flipkart, Snapdeal, Lens kart, Quikr, and Just Dial.

**Keywords:** E-Commerce, Marketing, Promotional Strategies, Online Shopping, Sales Promotion.

## **I. Introduction:**

Online merchants are frequently referred to as e-tailers, e-commerce, or electronic commerce. Electronic commerce refers to the seamless use of information and communication technology along the whole value chain of business processes that are handled electronically and are intended to facilitate the achievement of a business goal. These procedures might be in progress or finished, and they could cover consumer-to-business, consumer-to-consumer, and business-to-business transactions.<sup>1</sup> Online merchants or E-commerce players including Snapdeal, Flipkart, Amazon, Lens kart, Quirk, and Just Dial have studied Indian consumers purchasing patterns over the past ten years. E-commerce businesses have been creating innovative and cutting-edge methods to boost their web traffic and extend a widespread

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/220175602\\_Electronic\\_Commerce\\_Definition\\_Theory\\_and\\_Context](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/220175602_Electronic_Commerce_Definition_Theory_and_Context)

presence over many different geographical boundaries in response to the gradual expansion in the number of internet users and the penetration of the same in rural areas. Retailers have spent a significant amount of money on print and television media throughout the festive season to raise awareness, according to a Red Seer report. According to the survey, 38% of respondents learned about sales from newspapers, and 40% did so from social media. 15% of respondents learned about sales through word-of-mouth advertising.<sup>2</sup>

Online players have been experimenting with promotional strategies like flash sales, cashbacks, regular offers, same-day delivery, coupons, search engine marketing, buy more save more, online contests, bank tie-ups, etc., and have discovered that they are very effective at assisting in a transition in the contemporary retail industry.<sup>3</sup> The availability of a variety of online consumer sales promotion tools that businesses can utilise, including coupons, refunds, premiums, customer loyalty programmes, online competitions, free shipping, POP (point of purchase), samples, bonus packs, cross-promotions, discounts, sweepstakes, and advertising specialties. By creating an efficient marketing plan and a promotional strategy, a business can effectively communicate with its customers about its products or services. Advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct sales, and direct marketing are the five various types of communication strategies utilised in promotions.

## II. Research Methodology:

The study is mainly a Doctrinal and qualitative paradigm by integrating data from customers, and E-Commerce websites. An aspect that plays a very important role to understand this concept. The Doctrinal study is based on the collection of data from primary and secondary sources. Research methodologies can be divided into two categories: inductive and deductive. A theory is established using an inductive technique, and broad generalizations are drawn from specific data, whereas a deductive approach tries to test an existing theory and draws a specific conclusion from a broader set of observations. As a result, the researcher used a deductive strategy in this study.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ibef.org/download/E-Commerce-Report-Oct-2018>

<sup>3</sup> Himanshu Kumar Upadhyay, Pragya Singh & Nripendra Singh, *Digital promotional strategies for multi-brand retail fashion stores in India*, 23 J. STAT. MANAG. SYST. 215 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1080/09720510.2020.1724622> (last visited Nov 20, 2022).

### III. Issues:

- Do annual flagship sales promotion methods have an impact on customers?
- To determine whether there are any variations in the promotional methods used by the leading e-commerce businesses.
- Do prominent e-commerce player's promotional strategies affect customers buying experiences?

### IV. Types of E-Commerce:

This business can be broadly divided into four groups.

1. Transactions between more than two businesses are known as "business to business" (B2B).
2. Customers and businesses engage in business-to-customer (B2C) transactions.
3. Customer-to-Business (C2B) - A business-to-customer transaction.
4. More than two customers are involved in a customer-to-customer (C2C) transaction.

#### Promotion:

A kind of marketing communication known as "promotion" is used to inform or persuade the target audience about the numerous services and products the business has to offer. Promoting is done to increase awareness, spark interest, and boost sales. Companies use one or a combination of all or any of their ideas to promote their products, or services and meet their goals, companies use a variety of promotional mix tactics such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. The researcher in this study has mostly focused on sales. Major e-commerce businesses have employed promotion methods.<sup>4</sup>

#### Sales Promotion:

Sales promotion has been characterised as a non-personal marketing effort by many authors. According to one of Philip Kotler's well-known definitions of sales promotion, "Sales promotion consists of a broad collection of incentive techniques, typically short-term, aimed to drive quicker and/or higher acquisition of particular products/services by consumers or the

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<sup>4</sup> Ajay B. Jamnani, *Promotional Strategies with reference to selected E-commerce players in India*, 10 ASIAN J. MANAG. 153 (2019)  
<http://www.indianjournals.com/ijor.aspx?target=ijor:ajm&volume=10&issue=2&article=012> (last visited Nov 20, 20 22).

trade." Sales promotions, according to the researchers, are motives that are typically transient marketing activities distinct from advertising, personal selling, publicity, and direct marketing.<sup>5</sup>

It includes a wide range of marketing strategies designed to spur momentary customer purchases. These tools can be broadly divided into two types:

Tools for consumers and tools for businesses looking to promote sales.

1. Samples, coupons, offers for money back, price reductions, premiums, competitions, trading stamps, demonstrations, etc. are examples of consumer-focused sales marketing methods.
2. Tools for trade-oriented promotion include dealer sales competitions, cooperative advertising, complimentary products, and merchandise allowances.

Promotions by some of the E-Commerce players are as follows

Amazon uses billboards as well as other significant forms of advertising, and they have broadcast television ads that are mostly web-based advertising. Additionally, Due to the fact that Amazon makes use of online advertising networks, if you browse for a product on Amazon, you may also see an advertisement for it on other websites also. Another clever marketing strategy employed by Amazon is search engine optimization, which involves getting the company's name to appear higher in search engine results. When creating the company, Amazon's founder kept this in mind and decided that it should begin with "a."<sup>6</sup>

Amazon in India focuses on word-of-mouth marketing, which is the best kind of advertising. A sure-fire technique to get a new customer is for people to talk about the site with their friends and family or mention it positively. However, there are countless print media advertisements to draw attention to their existence. Go global act local e-commerce behemoth, Amazon has effectively positioned itself as a website that enables anyone to buy something and have it delivered to any remote areas also. It has also helped them carve out a distinct area in the customer's imagination by using the slogan "Aur Dikhao" and the Great Indian Sale in its most recent movement in India.

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<sup>5</sup> Achint Nigam, Prem Prakash Dewani & Abhishek Behl, *Exploring Deal of the Day: an e-commerce strategy*, 27 BENCHMARKING INT. J. 2807 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-03-2020-0129> (last visited Nov 20, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.amazon.in>

Through innovative marketing strategies, Flipkart has established a leading position in the market. Positive advertising including "Big Billion Days," "No Kidding, No Worries," "Fair-Tale," "Shopping ka Naya Address," and "Shop Anytime, anywhere" helped the business generate top-of-the-mind recognition. Additionally, Flipkart has been aided in becoming a household name in the target market thanks to Twitter, Facebook, TV advertisements, and marketing of mobile app purchasing. The concept of online multi-brand product trading in India has been revolutionised by Flipkart. Its huge success has proven to be motivating for other businesses. It typically operates through word-of-mouth promotion. Their best proponents have been happy consumers.<sup>7</sup>

More than 80 million products are available in more than 80 distinct categories on Flipkart, and thus is one of India's largest online stores. Additionally, Flipkart has enlisted the aid of inspiring and inventive commercials to foster public awareness of and belief in its website. The idea that books may be disseminated with only one click was used to promote their main initiative on TVC. Recently, an advertisement with the tagline "No Kidding No Worries" was released in an effort to increase social significance. In order to successfully complete their tasks, skilled individuals are employed.<sup>8</sup>

In a similar vein, Snapdeal also highlighted and emphasised discounts, coupons, substantial discounts, offers, etc. to entice online shoppers across major product categories. They steered both offline and online advertising. Their primary promotional methods, which centered on providing emotional fulfillment for their customers, included campaigns like "Dil ki Deal," "Bachate Raho," "Unbox Zindagi," etc. Similar offerings have been adopted by other online marketplaces, including Shopclues, Paytm Mall, eBay, and others.<sup>9</sup>

Agarwal has provided insight into e-commerce in the context of India. It presents its scenario, multiple definitions offered by other scholars, several e-commerce category kinds, and uses instances from India. It studies the top 100 websites and categorises them to discover browsing and purchasing patterns. According to the Chi-square test, there is no correlation between the international and Indian website rankings. Finally, it states that the most important criteria for consumers to evaluate are safety, faith, and suitability.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> www.flipkart.com

<sup>8</sup> Nirankush Dutta & Anil K. Bhat, *Flipkart: journey of an Indian e-commerce start-up*, 4 EMERALD EMERG. MARK. CASE STUD. 1 (2014), <https://doi.org/10.1108/EEMCS-03-2014-0064> (last visited Nov 20, 2022).

<sup>9</sup> www.snapdeal.com

<sup>10</sup> Agarwal, D. (2012). E-Commerce: True Indian Picture. 3(4), 250–258.

Using an automated system for loading and inspecting lenses while also locating the geometric center to precisely supply glasses to three decimal places, Lens kart leverages robotic machine techniques brought from Germany to ensure excellence. For customers of all age groups, it provides close to 5,000 products. Sunglasses from brands like Vincent Chase and Tag Huer, Carrera, Fossil, Ray-Ban, Fastrack, Tom Ford, etc. are available from them. Also available are many types of sunglasses, such as nightwear, retro, polarised, power, premium, and sports. The Pan-India presence of Lens kart began in New Delhi. They implemented a hybrid business strategy that involved selling goods through retail locations, e-commerce websites, and mobile applications. The gross merchandise value of Lens kart, which has expanded at an exceptional rate, is anticipated to be INR 300 crores. They wish to provide their goods to customers at fair prices. They established the direct supplier chain as a result to reduce production expenses. They provide goods in the Luxury, Value, and Premium pricing ranges. They use a value-based pricing strategy and provide the greatest items at fair prices. Lens kart implemented several product-related strategies as marketing strategies.

In December 2013, they began providing a check-up programme via their websites and mobile applications. Someone will receive a free trial from the business. when the buyer selects five frames from its web platforms. Customers simply have to pay for the purchase of the glasses or lenses; the first frame is provided free of charge. They have started an email campaign through online channels, and their advertisements are also run-in newspapers, magazines, billboards, and on television.<sup>11</sup>

The tangible good or service that is provided to the customer is the product. It also includes any extra services or perks that are offered along with tangible goods. Function, aesthetics, packaging, service, warranty, and other factors all play a role in product decisions. Just Dial offers entertainment, institutions, facilities, travel aid, consumer durables, and services to local enterprises. Just Dial offers a way to link potential customers from anywhere in India to manufacturers, retailers, dealers, and service providers. Placement decisions are made in relation to the distribution channels that are used to get the product to the intended audience. The distribution system handles logistical, transactional, and enabling tasks. Pricing takes into account discounts, financing, and additional choices like leasing in addition to the list

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<https://doi.org/10.4304/jait.3.4.250-257>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.similarweb.com/website/lenskart.com/>

price. They contractually charge merchants, suppliers, and businesses a certain sum for client references in order to make money. At Just Dial, break-even analysis is taken into account when making promotions. Knowing the value of a customer might help them decide whether the expense of recruiting new ones justifies the benefit. Advertising, public relations, print media, radio, billboards, social media platforms, and other digital media platforms like television, emails, etc. are all involved in promotion decisions.<sup>12</sup>

In order to boost consumer interest and liability, Quikr has integrated the majority of the modules into a single structure. The website acts as a one-stop shop for all of the different requirements to find and promote goods and services over 12 categories and 140 subcategories. They receive 10 million visits each month. They deal with used goods for consumers such as electronics, household essentials, marriage, taking care of pets, cars, jobs, services, real estate, etc. To keep customers interested, they strive for constant improvisation. In both the urban and rural sectors, Quikr is present throughout the entire nation of India. They projected a total of 12 million postings by the end of 2013.

Their website and mobile apps effectively manage these postings. Quikr was successful in raising 20 crores of INR in 2009 and 150 million INR in 2014. Quikr is a free classifieds website that serves its users' requirements. To make money, they use the "pay per click" AdSense platform Advertisers are listed there. Lead generation is the second strategy. Potential buyers are listed in various categories and provide them with connections to industry stakeholders. Quikr's multiple ATL and BTL marketing initiatives have helped the company become extremely well-known in India. Along with missed call commercials, it has produced educational marketing campaigns that have assisted the company in building the strongest possible brand recognition. Both print and digital media, including television, newspapers, and magazines, have displayed advertisements. Additionally, they advertise on social media websites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Ranveer Singh, a popular Bollywood actor, also appears in their ads and serves as their brand ambassador.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.similarweb.com/website/justdial.com/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.similarweb.com/website/quikr.com/>

## V. Conclusion:

Although e-commerce in India still represents a very small portion of the offline retail business, it has enormous potential and has shown potential growth over time. India, where the true action in online retail started, has also seen many e-commerce businesses over the past decade after recognising the potential. However, only Amazon, Flipkart, and Snapdeal have been able to meet the needs of online shoppers. Amazon and Flipkart have been engaged in a fierce battle for market share, while Snapdeal has been a distant rival in comparison. influence of Amazon's Great Indian Sale, Flipkart's Big Billion Day, and Snapdeal's Snapdeal Gold Annual Flagship Promotion Sale methods on online shoppers. However, as consumer purchasing habits change quickly, businesses must adapt their marketing strategies and design their annual flagship sales promotions using cutting-edge techniques in order to maintain the interest of online customers.

Last but not least, given that India is a price-sensitive market, sales promotion tools like discounts, offers, deals, cashback, coupons, online contests, bank tie-ups, etc. are here to stay. As a result, e-commerce players will continue to engage in aggressive marketing in an effort to increase sales volume, capture market share, and maintain growth in their GMV (Gross Merchandise Value) numbers year after year. E-commerce businesses will need to adapt and continue looking for new methods to provide Online shoppers can improve their customers' buying experiences with their annual flagship deals and customer retention through their loyalty membership programmes.

The adoption of successful marketing and promotional strategies has led to each of these businesses becoming more established in the industry, as it can be noticed. As a result, we have seen these businesses expand as a result of adjusting to various changes and evolving their marketing strategies appropriately.