

Social Media Marketing Channels and Communication: COVID-19 Pandemic Perspective

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Abstract

This study is relevant because it provides a better viewpoint on the adaptability of social media marketing channels during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study describes how during the pandemic, social media marketing channels help the businesses and service sector to reach their target audience. How the nature of social media marketing changed and usage of that changed nature in the profile and successful marketing channels. The methodology followed in this research paper is based on a literature review and insights from other secondary resources for the increase in usage of social media tools during COVID-19. Small cases have also been used to highlight the usage of social media in the education industry. The findings of this study suggest that the usage of social media tools turned to be more formal during COVID-19, and it helped all the industries in establishing good communication. It is true that the overall use of social media tools has increased during COVID-19.

Keywords: Social media tools, Communication, COVID-19, Technology, Management, Marketing

JEL Codes: M0, M3

1. Introduction

The prerequisite to survive and compete are the key aspects that have been driving the trade and businesses to constantly look for the best alternatives available across markets. During this pandemic, firms have had to face new challenges almost day in and day out, such as a change in consumer preferences, getting to know and getting on top of online platforms, and simultaneously examining the customer segment connect for their products and services. Marketing through social media channels has turned out to be an effective way of creating market visibility for the products and services. Social media marketing denotes the process of attracting customer traffic to the website by means of developing visibility in various alternative and complementary social media. Social media marketing programs generally focus on the determination to generate content that draws the interest and motivates readers to share it with their social networks (Bajpai, Pandey, & Shriwas, 2012).

According to Neti (2011), "*Social media is all about networking and networking in a way that espouses trust between parties and communities involved. Social media uses web technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogues*". Further, she described social media by dividing it into two parts, i.e., Social + Media (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016). The term 'social' defines the way in which people communicate with each other, while 'media' shows the

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way in which information can be transmitted into distinct channels. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) stated social media as "*a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content*". O'Reilly (2005b) described it as "*Social media is a broad term that describes software tools that create user-generated content that can be shared.*" According to Filo, Lock, & Karg (2015), "*Social media is new media technologies facilitating interactivity and co-creation that allow for the development and sharing of user-generated content among and between organizations (e.g. teams, government agencies and media groups) and individuals (e.g. customers, athletes and journalists)*". These definitions given by numerous authors on social media rely on essential features like user profiles, engaging content, comments on a post, sharing a particular position, etc. (Cox, 2010).

Social media marketing has influenced the purchasing behavior of today's consumers (Tuten & Solomon, 2017; Järvinen, Tollinen, Karjaluo, & Jayawardhena, 2012). While buying a particular product or service, its influence is noticeable. For instance, around seventy percent of customers have used social media channels like social networking sites and blogs to take the product, brand, or service information (Kirtis & Karahan, 2011). It has emerged as an essential tool of marketing. According to a report by McKinsey, firms using social media as a marketing platform tend to get more long-term profits because of its multiplier effect (Sherman, 2011). Ever since the beginning of the pandemic public has been continually exchanging views and information through various social media platforms (Kumar & Ayedee, 2018). They shared their emotions, feelings, and opinions about it. The conversations were on issues and concerns such as healthcare, their anxiety, and about the pandemic situation globally and its impact. They mentioned their problems on social media about little too big things, such as facing emotional and mental traumas to the difficulties faced by migrant workers.

Literature Review

This study is qualitative in nature, and hence, literature was reviewed regarding different types of social media marketing channels how these social media marketing channels have played a significant role in establishing communication among other industries. The situation of the world during COVID-19 was also discussed. Table 1 depicts the arguments made by different authors regarding social media marketing channels and their relationship with communication during COVID-19. Further, social media engagement was also discussed.

Table 1 Literature Review

S. No.	Author (s)	Arguments
1	(Chen, et al., 2020)	The governments in different countries are effectively using social media tools for establishing effective communication with the citizens of the nations.
2	(Cinelli, et al., 2020)	The authors argued in favor of five social media platforms, i.e., Gab, Reddit, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter which helped provide a lot of information during a pandemic.
3	(Pérez-Escoda, Jiménez-Narros, & Perlado-Lamo-de-Espinosa, 2020)	The researchers have justified that traditional media channels were not beneficial in establishing communication during COVID-19. Social media tools, i.e., Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter, played an essential role in establishing communication and spreading information during COVID.

4	(Hayes, 2020)	During COVID-19, when all the physical activities were on halt social media tools acted as a mediator between sports authorities and their consumers
5	(Sobaih, Hasanein, & Elnasr, 2020)	Social media tools played an essential role in imparting online education during the COVID-19 lockdown. In many developing countries, the students and teachers have used social media platforms for group formation and other activities.
6	(Ayedee & Kumar, 2020)	During COVID-19, social media tools played an essential role in establishing online conferences and communication. The overall usage of social media tools increased during the pandemic.
7	(Kumar, Syed, & Pandey, 2020)	During COVID-19, practical usage of all types of technological tools helped SMEs in improving their performance. Social media tools played an essential role in improving communication. The overall use of social media tools and other technologies increased during COVID-19
8	(Kaya, 2020)	Social media usage was increased much more than regular times during COVID-19. These tools also affected the decision-makers and helped healthcare professionals as well—people related to each other only through social media tools.
9	(Vordos, Gkika, Maliaris, Tilkeridis, & Bandekas, 2020)	Social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook were used for PPE kit design distribution around the world. It helped all the healthcare professionals. Social media platforms also tackled the problem of PPE shortage.
10	(Islam, Laato, Talukder, & Sutinen, 2020)	The darker side of using social media tools during COVID-19 is the share of misinformation which leads to social media fatigue.
11	(Kumar & Ayedee, 2021)	The usage of social media tools helped SMEs in resolving their operational issues and establishing better relationships.
12	(Kumar & Ayedee, 2021)	Social media usage increased during COVID-19

(Authors' Own Compilation)

Different Types of Social Media Marketing Channels

As the interests and opinions of the public vary, the medium of social media differs too. There are various types of social media marketing networks. But in this research article, we will discuss the top social media marketing networks which are widely used by the communities. These are Facebook, Blogs, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Facebook: Facebook has emerged as one of the top social media marketing platforms. Facebook was launched in February 2004 by the students at Harvard University. In a brief span of time, Facebook attracted people as an important mode of communication network, and soon it became a channel for marketers to connect among consumers.

Blogs: A blog is a page on World Wide Web, which allows its users to keep updating the area in which they have shown their interest. The individuals who keep doing blogging are known as bloggers. According to M. Fenner (2012), *"the best way to communicate with the public is through bloggers because they have constant contact with their readers."* Nowadays, people are turning their passion into a profession by keeping the societies updated in a specific area. Even many firms pay these bloggers to advertise their products or service to influence the market.

Twitter: Twitter also connects people around the globe. Numerous celebrities and persons of importance from legal, administrative, and political thought leaders, as also from fields such as cinema, connect with the public through Twitter postings (Rugova & Prenaj, 2016). The positive response of any product or service can add various benefits to the company and vice-versa.

LinkedIn: LinkedIn is a professional social networking website. It was founded by Reid Hoffman in 2002. It displays professional profiles of professionals and managers. Corporates and top employers often access LinkedIn silhouettes for their talent search and headhunting. At times it carries vacancies in niche firms for respondents to show interest.

YouTube: YouTube was established by three employees of PayPal in 2005. This social media website enables its members to share videos and event recordings. Users can create their own channel as well on YouTube. YouTube has been owned by Google since 2006. This social media marketing platform facilitates companies and firms to advertise their products or services. The medium carries advertisements as well.

COVID-19 Situation around the world

The advent of COVID-19 has changed the whole world radically. The shocking situation has taken many lives across countries, and often the scale of deaths is more than even during world war times. The economic scenario of countries is also turning uniformly dismal. COVID-19 was announced on 31 December 2019 by the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission (Staszkievicz, Chomiak-Orsa, & Staszkievicz, 2020). Every country has been adopting various strategies on the measures to reduce the spread of the pandemic, on how to minimize the economic, livelihood, security, and logistical challenges to the populations. The standards have included enforcement of social distancing consequent suspension of industrial, financial, educational activities. A long break on city and international travels as a sequel to enforce a wall on the epidemic crossing national borders as also closing for the public shopping spaces for an extended length of time (Staszkievicz, Chomiak-Orsa, & Staszkievicz, 2020). Various essential rules and regulations have been formulated and further communicated by governments to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, such as wearing masks, social distancing, ban on social gatherings, closures of schools and universities. Globally availability of adequate hospital beds, medication, and treatment protocols have been an immense challenge. It has thus affected for quite some time the lifestyles, besides the avenues for livelihood for the populations.

Scenario during COVID, Death Rate and Healthcare Issues

The situation in several countries was getting worse. As some of the countries or states have announced, community spread. As of 1st February 2022, the coronavirus has resulted in the death of 56,66,064 people worldwide, with 37,64,78,335 people are tested positive for the COVID-19 (World Health Organisation, 2022). This pandemic has left ordinary people in shock, and they are facing many problems like unstable financial situations, lack of healthcare facilities, anxiety, stress, and humanitarian challenges. The impact of this disease on public health emergencies has affected countries and societies in terms of economic, socio-psychological issues, as well as international dealings. Healthcare organizations around the

globe are being challenged in this pandemic time (World Health Organisation, 2022). Individuals working in healthcare systems are also facing a critical time. They are being challenged by the growing demand for the care and maintenance of individuals who are infected with COVID-19. Healthcare organizations tend to suffer because of the continuous challenge of providing better services for both, i.e., those who are suffering from certain diseases and the ones who are infected by this virus (Kumar & Kalse, 2021). However, various nations are trying to cope with this prevailing situation. But COVID-19 pandemic has strained the healthcare setup of even the most developed countries and is estimated to be the origin of economic recession incomparable in recent history (Grover & Sharma, 2020).

Social Media Engagement

Social media is one of the dominant channels through which consumers engage with a particular brand or venture, and companies are identifying the need to engage where current and potential consumers are giving the most consideration (Baird & Parasnis, 2011). Social media platforms provide the users an interactive possibility to create value and engage with the business (Brodie, Ilic, Juric, & Hollebeek, 2013). This pandemic has led to a surge in social media engagement. This pandemic has changed the daily routines of the public overnight. As the citizens have been using social media for office, education, and domestic as also limited shopping activities, the volume of usage has made a substantial impact on social media. Social media is seen as an essential tool for interacting with everyone wherever that they may be. So, users have now got accustomed. Researchers claimed that the best time to post on social media is influenced by the changed aspects of work and life, as all have moved to the online perspective.

Objective of the study

The key objective of this viewpoint-based study is to analyze the role of social media marketing channels during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this pandemic, when physical marketing was on a halt, it is interesting to note how social media marketing tools have rolled the dice in favor of marketers. Another objective is to understand how COVID-19 has changed social media engagement. The authors will utilize small cases to understand the usage and changing role of social media during this pandemic time

2 Methods

The present study is qualitative in nature and based on a semi-systematic literature review. Various research papers and small cases have been discussed to evaluate the role of social media marketing channels during COVID-19. The semi-systematic review finds to apprehend and identify all probable pertinent research paradigms which have further implications for the concerned research topic (Harrison, 2013). This study is also descriptive in nature, and therefore, the role of social media engagement has also been discussed with by taking the perspective of COVID-19. How the association of social media engagement has changed is also described by looking into several parameters. This approach helps the readers to examine the arguments given regarding the observed research topic.

The semi-systematic review done for this study shows that how numerous authors have given distinct dimensions related to a particular paradigm. For instance, Cinelli, et al. (2020) established the fact that some of social media platforms helped general public during COVID-19 in delivering the desired information. Hayes (2020) illustrated that social media tools provided a link as a mediator between consumers and sports authorities. Social media platforms were not only offering communication aspect to the consumers but also played a significant role in spreading information (Pérez-Escoda, Jiménez-Narros, & Perlado-Lamo-de-Espinosa, 2020). Information regarding health, other ongoing lockdown activities and majorly regarding e-education is supported through social media tools. These tools played pivotal role in establishing online conferences, education, webinars etc. (Ayedee & Kumar, 2020). Hence, there was a profould increase in social media tools (Kumar, Syed, & Pandey, 2020; Kaya, 2020; Kumar & Ayedee, 2021).

3 Results

This study shows how social media engagement among people has changed. As different studies have shown the earlier timing to post on social media channels and how it varied during COVID-19. Major social media marketing channels have been discussed earlier. The difference in social media engagement and the association of people with the brands have been discussed. Apart from this, how economic and attitude shifts at tectonic levels and the other ways of reaching customers and audiences during COVID-19 were also described.

- **Time to post on Facebook:** Earlier, it was seen that people used to post around 1-2 p.m. While through the current pandemic best times to post on Facebook was **Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10–11 a.m.** (Arens, 2020)
- **Time to post on Instagram:** The timings to post on Instagram was much like Facebook in this pandemic. People even working online all day were still posting on **Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays at 11 a.m. extensively** (Andrew Hutchinson, 2020).
- **Time to post on Twitter:** There is no such consistent change being shown in the times to post on Twitter because this platform enables the users to check the reliable news as well as to know any public information. Hence, the patterns of using this platform remained consistent to some extent. Peak hours to post on Twitter falls on Fridays from 7-9 p.m. (Alan, 2020).
- **Time to post on LinkedIn:** LinkedIn is a professional website that allows its members to communicate professionally. This social media platform has also witnessed a slight shift in posting updates, same as Twitter. There are various best times to post on LinkedIn, according to several researchers, such as **Wednesdays at 9-10 a.m. & 12 p.m., Thursdays at 9 a.m. & 1-2p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m.-2 p.m.** (Digital Marketing Community, 2020; Karen Hollenbach, 2020)
- **Changes in Brand Behavior:** Throughout this Pandemic, there has been seen a significant increase in sent volume messages by various organizations such as health care, entertainment, and media. Even a change is observed in the attitude of people towards the brands (Mason, Narcum, & Mason, 2021). Therefore, a deterioration of social media messages has been seen in retail companies, sports, etc. This posits more challenges to these firms, and hence they have to think about new policies and content strategies. According to this prevailing condition of COVID-19, it is becoming harder to reach the final consumer.
- **Audiences' engagement with brands:** As earlier mentioned, health care and consumer goods have increased messages & consequently, the audiences' attention increased. Whereas, other firms showed a low audience engagement like sports, legal, etc., because of the guidelines issued by govt.
- **Change in audiences' behavior:** Due to the pandemic and the circumstances around COVID-19, it is estimated that audience behavior will constantly change over the coming months (Dwivedi et al. 2021). Various challenges and hurdles brands will be going to face in the coming future. Although, researchers have given some plans to overcome it by constantly reviewing and reprioritizing their strategies.

Economic and Attitude Shifts at Tectonic Levels

Across the world in democratic countries, where COVID 19 relief packages have been announced, in the words of Philip Kotler, it is 'socialism for the wall-street. Yes, countries – viz., the USA, India, and New Zealand have announced measures since March 2020 for reliefs to sections of society/economy, but that is not going in any way to create jobs or employment. (Kotler, 2020) Kotler surmises the world is heading to a 'Great depression,' leading to millions unemployed, the poor across the world vulnerable to both health and economic downturns, and falling short of even basic needs such as water. It is educative to note that citizens turned their interaction with the environment distinctively over the past more than four to five decades of various stages of industrialization (at a space of a decade each). Last two decades, markets have been driven by 'consumerism.' This could drastically change in the period ahead as people tend

to simplify life; anti-consumerism, driven by economic compulsions as also changes in preferences.

Preferences of consumer groups are getting influenced by their enlightenment on the world around them as much by economic health and safety considerations. Environment and health perceptions are shifting more populations to vegetarianism, and methane pollution is giving rise to a possible shift away from meat (Kumar & Ayedee, 2021). The job scenario is putting brakes on credit card loan habits. Emerging habits are getting shaped by positive reinforcement of the choices. With gatherings for social ceremonies and graduation events being out of the question, the same target populations now receive good experiences through grocery home deliveries, free food deliveries for the sick from, say, vegetarianism driven restaurants, health and sanitizations products. These ventures are ensuring consumer satisfaction through prompt redressal of perceived grievances as well. (Tamara Charm, 2020, July, 24). It is likely that 75 % of consumers have modified their behavior and adopted different modes of shopping. These shifts are being strengthened by a) positive reinforcements, b) by new offerings, c) by contextual cues, d) align messages to consumer mindsets, e) deeper analysis of beliefs and behaviors.

Ways of reaching Customers and Audiences

One finds many advertisements of the stockbroking firms, for instance, offering 'free' investment seminars. The inherent conference/seminar and 'crowd sourcing' as one would refer to in knowledge acquisition parlance are defining new expectations and a normal in some way. When the 'pandemic' began, the caution on what was referred to as 'infodemic' was very much made aware of amongst the public (Ayedee & Manocha, 2020). The threat has not reduced in any way as every person is gullible at certain times due to their own beliefs, passions, likes, dislikes, etc., and before the realization strikes, lots of questionable 'knowledge' would have been 'used.' a mighty consequence of the 'Covid 19' circumstance due to the increasing reach and variety of the social media has been what could be termed as 'democratization of knowledge. Ronnie Das et al. (Ronnie Das, 2020) have brought it out in their research as to how despite the often pessimistic and troublesome images of the scenario that social media has been projecting every day on Covid 19, it is widely seen to have become essential for disseminating vital information as also for eliciting societal responses. The classic example of the New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardren using 'Facebook' interaction effectively across the country is a case in point (Wilson, 2020).

Ever since the beginning of the news about the virus from China emerged for its simple nimbleness and agility, social media has been way ahead of the print and television mainstream news media in disseminating news, reports, and insights as also the economy and global political projections. Many well-nuanced persons – be they from politics, research institutions, military-strategic institutions as also social organizations- have been reaching out to the public through various modes of social media – be it Twitter, Facebook, and sharing, spreading, and debating opinions and suggestions ever since the beginning of the pandemic. The use of social media during such difficult situations that are akin to war was prevalent during earlier epidemics, e.g., Ebola or swine flu, indicating an attempt to spread social awareness across their own groups. It has been researched that social media did perform specific good message leadership roles during such pandemics, including the present one, viz., a) giving awareness of sharing and caring, b) focusing on the needs of the elderly, c) enabling volunteering efforts for the health and safety initiatives, d) presenting the importance of safety measures such as wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands and certainly sanitizing. Overall, it has been found to be a helpful medium and ally for the government and administrators as much as a tool for other types of 'leaders.'

4 Conclusion

Social media, which earlier was considered as a means of personal entertainment, has emerged as a one size fits all multi-purpose fleet of vehicles, be it private or community communication, governmental or municipal authority guidance vehicle, as a banking and retail medium, and

most importantly, the most sought after for (social media) marketing strategy. These platform offers many flexibilities such as audience, cost, and time possibilities. In this pandemic time, social media marketing has consolidated as a crucial tool of marketing. National leaders such as Prime Ministers and Presidents of different nations have become adept at engaging the social media 'social networking' route to effectively present their views, policies, and priorities as also a concern to the public and society at large. This marketing strategy has been an effective tool of communication among individuals and acted as the best instrument to reach the audience globally. All critical information that is useful to the public is being shared through these social networking websites. Hence, this social media marketing is considered as a kind of online media that encourages and enables conversations between peoples, societies, and leaders on matters of public and policy, safety interest to all. The social media and conferencing platforms have proved to be a welcome instrument in these pandemics, social distancing and avoiding the burden of gathering physically. Social media has become the most acceptable choice that serves this approach. Because it can reach millions of people with the highest speed, and it can blow out very quickly and rapidly. Therefore, government organizations, healthcare systems, and firms choose to use social media even in the alternative to traditional media tools.

Innovation in Social Media

Social media is a vital tool to get into a medium to bond with customers and, where possible, co-create with customers. During the early stages of the internet as also laptop computers, 'DELL' was a pioneer in making believe the customers that they could co-create the laptop configuration that they were looking at. By this, DELL saved on channel costs and bypassed on price benefits with the international quality they built a substantial market share. The revolution in social media has, with the present technology tools and management insights, translated into the concept of moving away from 'talking to your customers to 'talking with' your customers and building a growing customer fraternity. While social media has been by habit used to self-present and get connected with friends, in the present pandemic, one notices the power of social media very clearly again. Like during calamities earlier such as media has been helping people to reach out to their own friends, family, and community or colleagues in different locations and get a feel of the happenings. (Kristen D Valck, 2020, April, 7th). Academics, Marketers of consumer brands, whether durables or consumables, governments, regulators, and tax authorities have reinvented themselves in such social media opportunity scenarios. Online and digital learning has been gradually maturing, though, by no stretch, it can ever genuinely replace educational processes and systems at either school or college levels or, for that matter, in research. Yet just as the internet threw up a whole world of data democracy since the mid-'90s, so also has this online learning started pushing educational processes to much higher levels.

Learn, Unlearn and Relearn

Teachers have been stretched to be competitive in bringing out online pedagogy that gives actual value to the students/participant for which they are paying attention. In fact, it has taken teaching standards to a higher level, by which the student/participant clearly expects some addition of knowledge beyond 'data.' So, by the time in a couple of quarters when academics migrates back to classrooms (by, maybe early months of the year 2022) the amount of data, analysis and scenarios exposure would be the base level the class discussion will be expected to go beyond. There is immense pressure on the consumer brand advertisers as well; some have taken the message, while many have not. No longer will routine self-glorifying messages will be received kindly (with or without celebrity endorsement), and only those that touch the needs of the consumer segments (communities) will receive a fair audience. The governmental regulatory and statutory authorities have taken full advantage of the power of social media (Kristine de Valck, 2020), and are finding their directions penetrate very effectively through to the (intended) public. To walk the talk, for instance, many of the book publishers and online academies, as also leading educational institutions, have been offering their online course 'free of cost' to students since the lockdown began to build a brand name, credibility, and image.

Thus, social media and associated technology surround such as group meetings apps have created a new normal of accessing existing knowledge and propagating messages.

Challenges of Information Anarchy

Research also indicates a few other possible reasons., such as due to not empathizing with the cause hence forcefully spreading misinformation, several individuals also message tweet of their own opinions without necessarily being aware of the factual situation, besides a significant number retweet any matter that comes up. There is also a substantial percentage of groups or individuals who believe in positing a different point of view without considering the facts, yet for their own 'political' reasons, vigorously sustain a group to spread the misinformation forcefully. As much as the good Samaritan role of social media, for the purpose of group dynamics as indicated above, social media also has been doing a disservice by spreading questionable recommendations, viz., a) on medication, b) food choices, c) misinformation by believing in gullible opinions, d) politicalized opinions on treatment, hospital facilities, and medicines. All in all, for both helpful, unhelpful, information and opinion sharing and also misinformation spreading like every other time this time also narratives on 'Covid 19' and the various economic and situational challenges, as its consequences, it was found that multiple groups were created to sustain such views. There are also entirely responsible and conscious experts or experienced and mature individuals who take pains to narrate repeatedly their considered ways to keep better and safe in given situations. It also has been found to be effective in disseminating disaster management communication building resilience in communities during such disaster situations.

New technologies, Scaling and Data Protection Challenges

It is quite a revelation how technology (any technology) that has been only proliferating since the early 2000s has found itself in many twists and turns a key enabler of many a strategic shift in business models and products. Moving from mainframes to 'midi's, to mini, micro, desktop, laptop, pager, the smartphone has come with the revolution in languages used on the program that now has landed into an era of digital and user-friendly apps tools and processing platforms. This elasticity has also revolutionized the way organizations work, involve with workers, managers, the supply chain as also the legal and tax authorities. Many telecom products and application revolutions followed suit and then resulted in video conferencing. Now come Covid19, there was a demand for nimbleness, time to beat the costs, time to beat the need for a corporate website identification', the actual front runner showed and won hands down. Yes, with all the political and antecedent doubts on credentials, 'ZOOM' platform became in the space of between March to June 2020, the most easily sought-after conferencing platform, yes, but hold your breath not just for conferencing, but for holding office and governmental and defense sector meetings, the world over in the western world and in the Indo pacific countries. The schools were closed, and hence across the globe, India to the USA, everywhere, school, high school, college education, and even religious programs get-togethers, found it convenient to hold these events on Zoom (Drake & Grant, 2020).

The founder who developed the platform from scratch (launching a new venture), when a decade back his employer did not like the technical idea of creating a conferencing application for smartphones as against the then existing norm of doing from desktops, revolutionized the whole concept of convenient conferencing. But till the Covid19 came on the horizon, it was still an office meetings facility often mediated by the Zoom team. But once it found itself to be a sought-after medium, it soon shifted to being used for a variety of group situations as above besides family get-togethers. As the platform was designed for a different purpose, its application as the friendliest meetings platform came with plenty of capacity, server, and data privacy and even integrity challenges for the (Chinese origin) American founder, mainly since based on product development, he had specific servers located in China along with Chinese employees. In no time, he had to alleviate all misgivings but also locate alternate capacity in the USA and also introduce security and password features and strengthen the awareness of the data encryption features for this new \$19 billion valued venture. But it has stood up to the

challenge and has jostled to retain its leadership role amongst competing platforms, all of which are more costly for the end-user (especially if it was a student or an employee working from home).

Healthy Social Media Business

Despite these, the venture, by its corporate tariffs policy as also by the wide userbase due to its utter simplicity, has garnered more genuine revenues in the recent months over and above original business projections. Imagine a platform built for knowledge workers initially had to cater to the explosive growth in the variety of users and volume and face questioning challenges on 'access to camera, microphone,' related misgivings as well. But the platform overcame it admirably and adapted the feedback quickly to become even better. The owner proudly says I became an 'accidental social network' and quite powerfully so, to the researcher, it appears. So much for the power of the social networking and social media marketing transformation and its transformation overnight in the time of the pandemic. The revolution is so interesting that the existing social network platforms have been finding it prudent to focus on becoming the favored office meetings and beyond medium for small businesses (Gilliland, 2020).

The existing players are creating thriving marketplaces shopping aids to interact between manufacturers and customers, display the products and even aid financial transaction medium. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube have all been feverishly working on these strategies. Thus Facebook's 'shops' competes directly into 'Amazon' space, YouTube's video ad tool takes advertising to a very different targeted level. Now the Facebook shops and Pinterest are collaborating with other tool builders to achieve niche space in the advertising arena. Instagram (owned in turn by Facebook) is creating new features to link small businesses to make a gift, donation receiving, fundraiser, food order kind of features to keep the small companies afloat. Social media marketing, family gatherings, business meetings, office meetings, and management as also educational institutions from school, college to higher education levels are all getting influenced both in terms of their visibility, comparative capabilities, and reach.

Industries, Economies, and Services

Thus technology, business life, and social life are all influenced by the pandemic and its consequent business, family, industrial and economic changes. The businesses that are maintaining a semblance of growth are those providing Covid19 and Pandemic-related equipment (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2020). The mainstream industries, the travel, travel services, hotel foods, and recreational sectors bridal clothing, formal wear for both men and women, are all down, and so are the ad-marketing budget of these enterprises down by over 50 percent or more. Global retail sales are heading for a drastic fall. Though the IT industry per se is staying afloat, it is not an ad-spender, and this industry is also cutting down on many associated costs and spending, especially on support services such local travel, snacks, and lunch budgets as also on variable pay, so the ad spend is less than average consequently.

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