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The Daily Star

DHAKA, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2014

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NEXT STEP

Food for thought Careers in social media and digital marketing

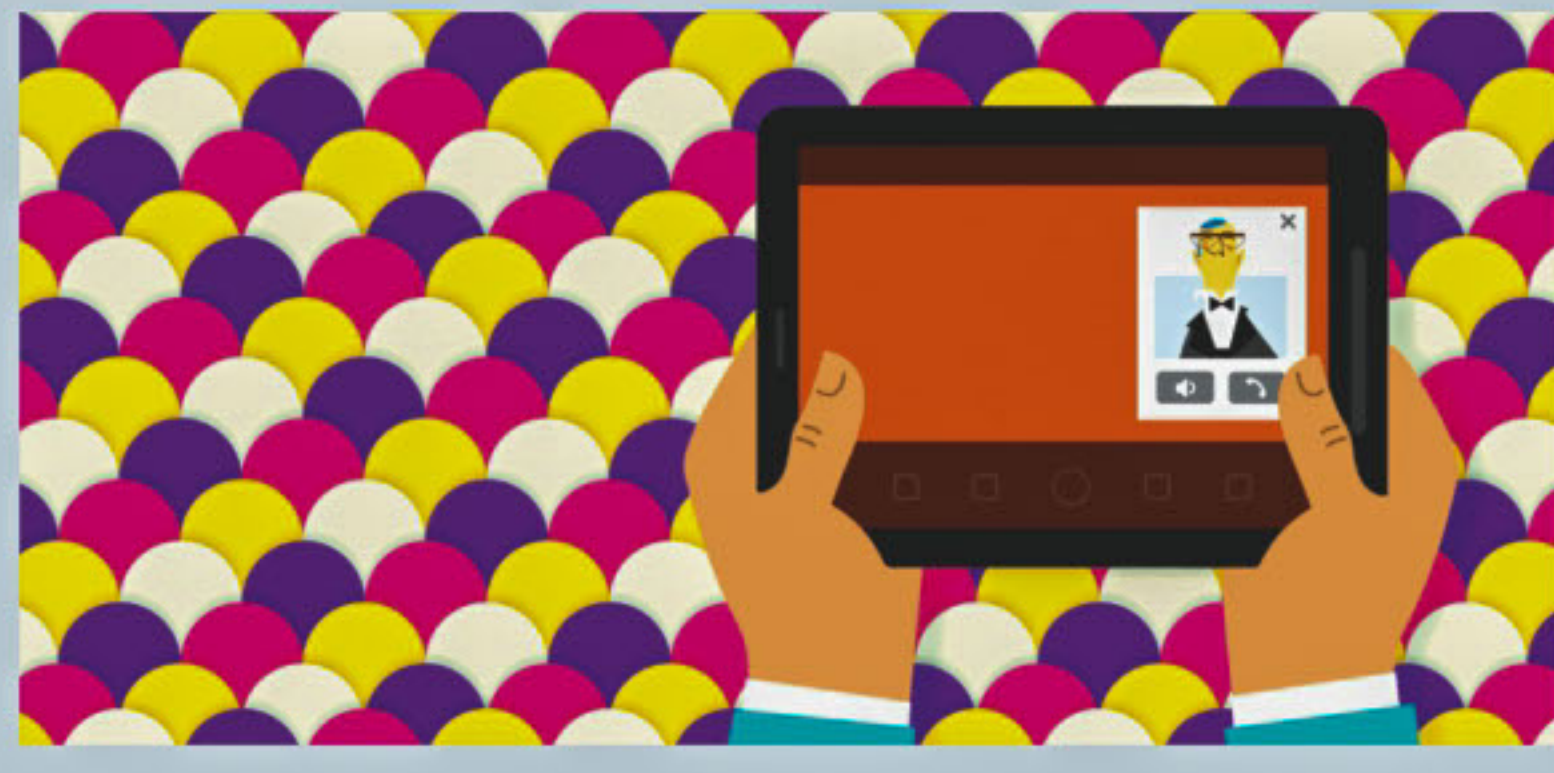
Businesses took a skidding jolt on the day Zuckerberg decided to open Facebook to people outside the Harvard network. One of the biggest inventions of the 21st century, the platform successfully connected millions of people to the rest of the world and, upon realizing the potential this social network held, businesses have started to orient themselves around this new mode of exchanging ideas.

The Internet and its ubiquity now imply that life in our fast-paced world can no longer be the same. It ensured that our ways of doing things changed for the better, so that we don't have to worry about our day to day living. Our society has become increasingly reliant upon the Internet for information. For most, if not all, our first source of information would be the World Wide Web.

Similarly, consumers of goods and services refer to the Internet as their primary source of information as well. A bad product review can be harmful for any brand, while positive reviews can do wonders in terms of word of mouth marketing over the online platforms.

Thus, in response, many organizations have started using the Internet as their primary source of marketing as it can reach a larger mass of audience and may appeal to the wider populace of consumers with less investment of resources. Digital marketing has not only become one of the most popular forms of advertising and selling a product or a service, but certain products and services would not

"As a CEO of a full service social media agency, I believe strongly that there are key areas within social media upon which you may build a career. These areas will survive the emergence and dissipation of networks, tools, and philosophies," Carrie Kerpen, CEO of Likeable Media, told Forbes. Kerpen is definitely correct in her hypothesis that social media is a place where there are many methods to utilize and construe the reality into a platform where a person can thrive. Since the field in question is quite in demand and most of the users are but entrants, it is easier to use our own ideologies, tools, uniqueness and perceptions to concoct innovative methods to exploit this field to our own benefits. The primary areas upon which one should concentrate on in this field as mentioned by Kerpen would be advertising, service, content, and data.



thrive or even be capable of sustaining themselves without some form of digital marketing.

Advertising on social media is distinct from traditional and digital advertising. It requires an understanding of social behaviour that goes way beyond re-targeting platforms. For emerging networks to survive, they will need to find innovative social media ad solutions, and must become experts in the placement, optimization, and reporting of social ads in order to go forward.

Kerpen also refers to customer service as being a significant field in social media, "Understanding the

impact that social media can have on customer service is something that will take time and resources. Trust me when I tell you that companies will need to ramp up their social listening and customer service. This is way beyond a PR or social agency pulling a Radian 6 report. This is investing in resources that understand one-on-one communication. Companies hate when I say this—because it's hard. But make no mistake; it's something that companies will need to do as social media becomes more and more integrated into the overall consumer experience."

Finally comes content. In order to

interact in any way other than being a total annoyance—brands need to have great content. Great content is about being valuable to consumers. That means either informing them, entertaining them, saving them, inspiring them, or simply knowing what they want in what medium. The diversification of media has made reaching your target consumer much more challenging, and brands that master the art of content win.

Any person who enters social

In many Internet-based companies, social media marketing is also the only form of marketing available. Nazia Hossain, Quality Control Executive at Lamudi, was responsible for managing the social media marketing for the company to some extent. According to her, the experience taught her a great deal about how the digital marketing sector functions and how one can thrive in that field. "Not only did I have to learn how to deal with customer queries and solve them efficiently, I had to learn what sort of advertisements and marketing strategies would attract customers and also what would be the relevant data obtained for utilizing digital marketing appropriately."



media with relative knowledge in any of the streams above will thrive and attain a multitude of success.

However, proper guidance and mentorship are also of the utmost importance. A social media manager can earn a basic salary of Tk. 15,000 to 18,000 in nominal companies and Tk. 20,000 to Tk. 25,000 in high-end companies where social media is the major form of marketing.

Hence, considering the overall impact of social media upon our lives and perceptions, it can be concluded that innovative advertising techniques, a diligent customer service team, relevant data and proper, alluring content could collude to an exceptional career growth in this sector. As businesses find themselves entangled in a web of overload of information, digital marketing will be their preferred way forward. And this is exactly why the prospects in this field are enormous.

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Your social media checklist

1. Research and know your audience. What topics and interests are they most social about? Does the audience on different social media platforms vary?

2. Only use those networks and platforms that best speak to your audience. Do not waste resources, time and effort developing content and strategy for a platform if it is not applicable to the consumers you are targeting.

3. Establish your set of key performance indicators (KPIs). What exactly do you want your efforts on social media to achieve? What does this success look like in quantifiable terms?

4. Write your very own social media marketing playbook. Here you should detail your KPIs, audience profiles, brand personas, campaign concepts, promotional events, contests, content themes, crisis management steps, etc. Note that the strategy should be unique to each platform.

5. Align the members of your company around the plan. Assign responsibilities as to who is posting, who is responding, and who is reporting metrics.

6. Take about an hour at the start of the week or the month to schedule tweets, Facebook posts, LinkedIn posts, pins, or other social media content. These can be anything from your own ideas and work, to links to outside content that may be interesting or useful to your audience.

7. Create a bank of your social media content using a spreadsheet and plan out the material, topics, headlines, related links, desired scheduling, and an area for approval or comments from management. Cut some slack for yourself and keep a folder to store your social media content, so that is readily available and easily accessible when the rush sets in. Share away!

8. Post relevant content relating to newsworthy topics and events in a timely manner. It's important to share opinions as soon as breaking news happens. It's also the best way to generate discussions, which is a sign effective marketing.

9. Treat all social channels separately. You shouldn't be posting the same message across all channels – remember who the audience is behind each platform.

10. Assign someone to act as a customer service rep to be responsive to your user generated content and negativity. Don't ignore comments and feedback. It's the best way to connect to your audience and to make your users feel special.

11. Schedule reporting for your performance. Depending on your goals, reporting metrics can occur weekly, monthly, or bimonthly. So establish when and how you will evaluate social media performance.

12. Reanalyze your plan on a regular basis. If something in your plan isn't working, switch it up or test varied content to determine what your audience responds to better. Always have a strategy to fall back on.

