

## Direct Marketing - How Online Media Have Revolutionized the Industry

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### Executive Summary

Online Marketing has been in vogue for quite some time now, and recently this medium has shot into prominence, thanks to the business environment. The spread of COVID-19 virus and the infection have not dampened the enthusiasm for improving and adapting direct marketing techniques. One of the fastest growing applications is Education industry, which is likely to witness revolutionary changes by this medium. The present research paper would trace the growth of this medium and the circumstances leading to the same. This paper will trace, not only the growth of the digital medium but also the dynamic changes happening to the medium itself in terms of development and the technological advancement that has helped the medium to grow to the present stage. What is in store for the future of the media will be attempted but to be honest this will be decided by the medium itself, and the Consumers in terms of the new needs for development further into a more useful and comprehensive tool. Digital Darwinism is a commonly used term nowadays to denote the development of digital technologies faster than and ahead of the abilities of human beings to exploit them.

**Key Words:** Critical issues in Marketing, digital Technologies and their impact on Marketing outlook, Fast growing Education industry, impact of virus times.

### Introduction

Direct marketing has been in vogue for many years now, ever since the travelling salesman has been sharpening his selling skills. But today the meaning of Direct Marketing has to be changed perhaps because of the proliferation of the digital media and the adaptation of the same by the public. Earlier the direct marketing challenge consisted of identifying a suitable product for the salesman to carry and demonstrate, to the prospective buyers and book the orders; but today the challenge is to make the product literature and presentation very attractive for instant placement of orders by the prospective user through the medium of networks and e-mails. It is this promotional medium which moves and the salesman never travels! For this to be successful the presentation of the product through visuals, descriptions and the specifications and demonstration of application, all have to be packed into a visual presentation for instant satisfaction and ordering. Thanks to the digital media and developments in Technology, today the Direct Marketing is an art and digitally promoted Products and services rule the roost. We can almost say that digital Darwinism is developing in this Marketing segment truly and as well!

Emerging opportunities in digital marketing after travel and e-commerce is expected to come from digital media, especially video Trends in online searches in India suggest that entertainment is becoming the largest sought after category contributing to 31% of all searches. Videos and music currently represent the highest proportion of the consumer preferences within the entertainment category, collectively aggregating to over 90%. The video viewing audience in India is expected to grow significantly in the near future at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 50%. With the increasing growth in video audience and consumption, the Indian market provides an opportunity for expanding digital marketing.

The internet has changed the way Indian Consumers respond towards new Products and features of Product Promotion. The Indian Consumers, largely young and educated are getting better opportunities for employment and the educated married women get opportunities to work from home which is a great blessing. Particularly in the software industry, talented and skilled employees are always in demand and they need to work to timings which are more suited to work from home at odd hours because of the different time zones of their clients and employers mostly in other countries. This has changed the scenario and work culture to one of advanced skill sets and flexible timings without the overheads of costly offices. The present situation, where movements of people are restricted has promoted this work culture and more and more people work from home which is not considered as odd. There is the additional incentive of saving office rents and cafeteria expenses and parking lots!

The developments in Digital media and Marketing have made the medium more suitable for manufacturers to market their products and consumers to avail the facility as one stop shop for their requirements. This emphasizes the need for consumers that

is the public and the marketing executives to be up to date on Technologies and Products and various Apps for seeking the Products they need through what the Technologists call search Engines and search engine optimization is the byword today.

## Objectives & Methodology

While the broader topic concerns with Direct Marketing, we need to concentrate on the Digital Techniques and how they have impacted the way Products are placed and promoted in the Direct marketing mode. The digital Marketing Techniques have evolved over a period of time and information pertaining to the same is available on the web pages. The need is to identify the required information and take data from the online media, as the online media has catapulted into the centre stage. The online media sources have really become the bread and butter for marketing companies for putting up their product information and promote the same appropriately. We can consider this as a new Avatar of online marketing. This paper will consider the impact of such media in the marketing of Products and services. The topic has wide scope and so in order to achieve focus following limited Objectives have been considered for the current paper:

1. The development of Direct Marketing Techniques.
2. Impact of Online Marketing of Products on the media.
3. A brief of current online marketing techniques.
4. Futuristic outlook for online Marketing Techniques.
5. Suggestions and Recommendations

The Objectives identified as above are broad in nature. Since the technique is current and developing by the day it is necessary to carefully consider how data will be identified and collated. Since the internet is the focus and the medium selected for research will also be the same. One of the unique features of this medium is that the availability of information is almost unlimited. The search has to be optimized by experience and availability of data and the Technology. It will have to be compiled specifically for the limited purpose of this research paper. We have been able to identify web resources and information has been collected in plenty which will be suitably edited for use. The challenge was to collate the collected information into data banks for proper classification for further use. Although this has not been very easy, never the less it has been achieved. The information so collected is properly segmented, assorted and classified before using for Analysis. The classified data was useful in analyzing for arriving at the right conclusions, considering the Objectives. Based on Data Analysis and keeping in mind the limited Objectives of research, Conclusions have been made and some Recommendation for further study in related topic.

## Review of literature

At one time in the past, artificial intelligence, data-driven marketing and voice search engine optimization (VSEO) were ambitious concepts. Today, these innovative digital marketing trends are a reality and the top priorities for most business owners in 2020. And why it should be so is answered by the fact that your business has to remain competitive in the current landscape in digital marketing. *“Every business is a victim of Digital Darwinism, the evolution of consumer behavior when society and technology evolve faster than the ability to exploit it. Digital Darwinism does not discriminate. Each business is threatened.”* We live in a period of time in history when and technology moves fast and consumer interests and behaviors are hard to predict.

2020 may be the year that a lot of people wake up to the predominance of artificial intelligence (AI). It's sure to be at the heart of global business and industry in the future – and it's already taking over many simple jobs. For example Microsoft and Uber (Car rental), use Knight Scope K5 robots to “patrol parking lots and large outdoor areas to predict and prevent crime”. The robots can read license plates, report suspicious activity, and collect data to report to their owners.” You can rent these R2-D2-like robots for \$7 an hour which is less expensive compared to a human security guard's wage:

Content and its consumption would drive the growth in the Indian market participated by the younger audiences (between 18 – 35 years age bracket), constituting around 80% of the users. Consumer preferences will drive and determine the focus areas for the growth in India. These players are trying to leverage their individual strengths to capture market share. Top MCNs in India catering to kids, entertainment & food categories have over 3 million subscribers and close to 100 million viewers of their company web pages. The changing face of digital user is expected to lead to an increased focus on regional and vernacular content. The next wave of growth in India's internet population, enabling India to breach the 300 million internet user base in the near future, is expected to be from tier II and III cities, thus enabling the growth of vernacular and regional content. Currently 45% of the users consume regional language content and this percentage is expected to increase with the growth of internet users. Digital media players should thus consider aggregating / producing vernacular content to capture the next set of users.

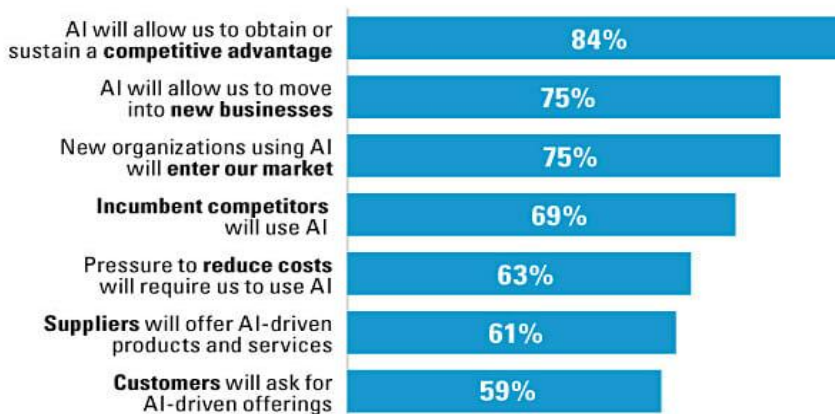
With the evolving internet audience, there is an opportunity for digital media content producers to create ‘target group centric’ content. With rapid digitalization, the face of new digital India is expected to be far more diverse in the times to come and moving away from the old, familiar figure of an urban, mid-aged, upper-middle class male country. Payment wallets & operator billing models are expected to enable monetization and reduce the challenge of under penetration of credit card payments. Subscription revenue is constrained by low credit card penetration, payment gateway failures and other factors that hamper online payments. Daily packs and transaction based models are also gaining market traction. Many global players are entering the Indian market and are looking at local partnerships in order to provide ‘Global’ Offerings. The market is expected to witness more vertical and horizontal partnerships and acquisitions to drive synergies.

Trends in the online searches in India reflect that entertainment is the largest sought after category. Videos and music currently represent the highest proportion of the consumer preferences in the entertainment category. In addition, the statistics also shows the preference of the Indian consumers towards vernacular and regional language content with 93% of the time spent on videos in Hindi and other regional languages. Trends for online searches in India Entertainment, 31% Other, 4% Live TV, 1% Music, 32% Video, 61% Other regional languages, 30% English, 7% Hindi, 63% Games, 2% Consumer electronics, 14% Education, 11% Social networking, 10% Source: Google Report: Online opportunities in Telecom News and info, 8% Finance, 8% Health, 6% Others, 1

“Artificial intelligence is the biggest commercial opportunity for companies, industries, and nations over the next few decades” and “will increase global GDP by up to 14% between now and 2030,” which means that “AI latecomers will find themselves at a serious competitive disadvantage within the next several years.” Here are the top reasons why organizations are adopting AI in their business:

## Reasons for adopting AI

Why is your organization interested in AI?



Percentage of respondents who somewhat or strongly agree with each statement

Figure 1: Reasons for popularity of Artificial Intelligence

AI can analyze consumer behavior and search patterns, and use data from social media platforms and blog posts to help businesses understand how customers find their products and services. Businesses adopting AI in 2020 will be able to cut staffing costs and accelerate growth, getting an edge over their competitors. Chat bots will continue to be an important part of digital marketing in 2020. This AI-based technology uses instant messaging to chat in real-time, day or night, with your customers or site visitors. Surveys show that Chat bots will power 85% of customer service by 2020. Top benefits of chat bots are 24-hour service (64%), instant responses to inquiries (55%), and answers to simple questions (55%). 63% of respondents prefer messaging an online Chat bots to communicate with a business or brand. By 2022, chat bots will help businesses save over \$8 billion per annum, 80% of businesses want chat bots by 2020:

Many customers prefer interacting with chat bots as they are responsive 24/7, give answers promptly, accurately recall your entire buying history, and never lose patience. These virtual assistants offer outstanding customer service by meeting customers' expectations and automating repetitive tasks – which means that you can focus on more important work.

Many brands already use Chat Bots technology for passenger car rides and Passengers can use the app to choose the type of ride, make a request, track the location of the car, send friends a time estimate of their arrival, and make payment. Other brands that are successfully using chat bots technology include Whole Foods Market, Fandango, Sephora, Staples, *The Wall Street Journal* and Pizza Hut. The reality of modern marketing becomes clear: it's more conversational. People want it that way, and so brands are reacting. When consumers have a question, 82% want an "immediate" response. Conversational marketing facilitates a one-to-one, real-time connection between marketers and customers:

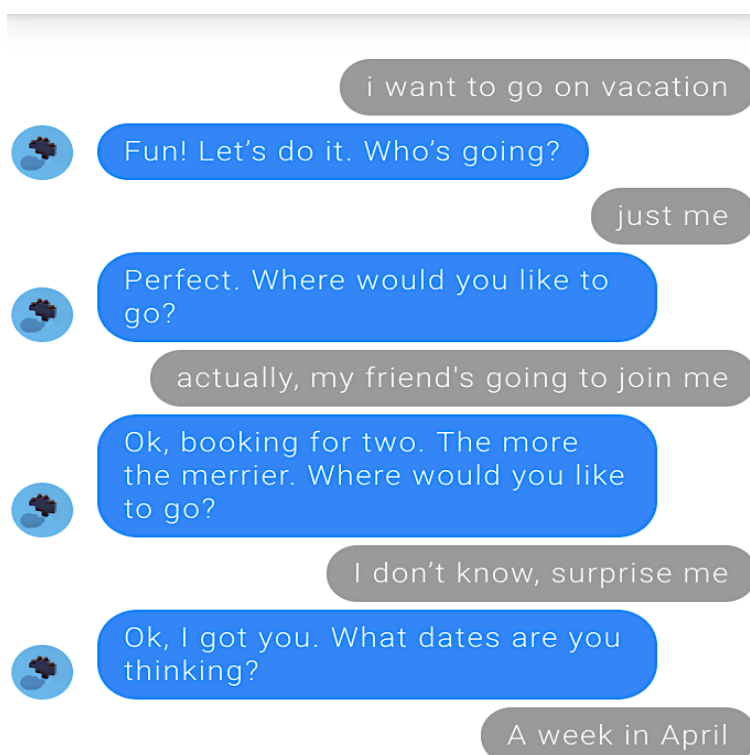


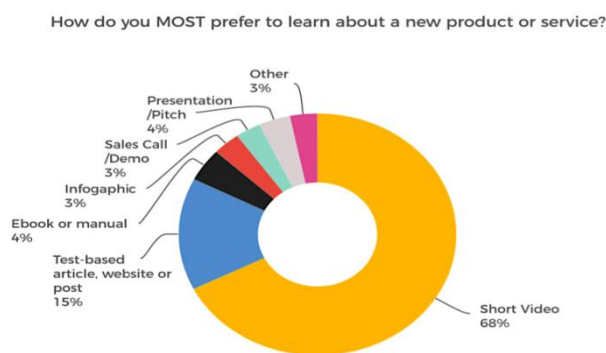
Figure 2: Conversational Marketing

Unlike traditional strategies, this form of marketing is now available across multiple channels, allowing brands to meet customers on their terms: on the devices, platforms and time schedules that suit the customer best. *"Today's buyers expect to find what they're looking for now, not later. As we prepare for the future, it will be more important than ever for businesses to be available across a broad spectrum of channels, and to make sure they are communicating the way people prefer to communicate."* The primary goal of conversational marketing is to enhance the user experience through a feedback-driven model that fosters higher engagement, instant service and greater loyalty. The efforts to personalize generic advertising rather than conventional marketing techniques have been lauded by consumers and Netflix and Amazon have succeeded. 63% of consumers are highly annoyed with generic advertising blasts.. 80% say they are more likely to do business with a company if it offers personalized experiences. 90% claim they find personalization appealing.

When you want to study examples of the power of personalization, it's hard to overlook Netflix and Amazon, with their tailored recommended products or movie titles. A few other companies that are successfully using personalization today are: **Easy Jet** launched a data-driven email campaign that uses customers' travel history with the airline to build personalized stories, which then suggest where they might like to travel next and encourages further use with its rewards system – which skyrocketed their revenue to \$2.56 billion. **Cadbury's** created a personalized video campaign that matches a Dairy Milk flavor with users based on

data from their Face book profile, including age, interest and location. The campaign generated a high click-through rate and a conversion rate, enough to proving that the personal touch works. **Starbucks** uses a mobile app that draws on data like purchase history and location to get as personal as possible, allows customers to customize their products.

Video marketing is one of, *the*, most important marketing trends today, and likely to remain for the next 5-10 years. The numbers below, show the importance of incorporating video into your digital marketing strategy in 2020: 70% of consumers say that they have shared a brand's video, 72% of businesses say that video has improved their conversion rate, 52% of consumers say that watching product videos makes them more confident in online purchase decisions, 65% of executives visit the marketer's website and 39% call a vendor after viewing a video, Video is by far the most popular way customers want to learn about new products:



**Figure 3:** Features of Video Marketing

And not just the You Tube. There are plenty of ways to drive higher engagement with your video marketing, as you can make a video post or start a live broadcast on Face book, Instagram or LinkedIn.

One of the issues that marketers have faced in recent years is the growing shift to mobile devices. Those long-form sales pages and emails of yesteryear are fading fast because they're simply too difficult to read on small mobile screens. However, video can present the same information in a format that works perfectly regardless of the device. Because people find video content more compelling, so Google pushes pages that include videos higher in the rankings. One of the best things about video marketing is that it makes it easy to reformat your content. Imagine that you've recorded a video for your YouTube channel. Instead of just publishing it on YouTube, you could also:

- Get it transcribed so you have a text version of the video
  - Publish the transcription on your blog under an embedded YouTube video for better rankings
  - Upload the raw video with the transcription as subtitles to Face book (native Face book videos get a much higher impression share and engagement than shared YouTube videos)
  - Turn the transcription into a standalone blog article with a short rewrite and addition of relevant stats and images
  - Rip the audio alone and use it as a podcast episode
  - Use video thumbnails in your email marketing campaigns and the word "video" in subject lines to increase open rates.
- If you think social messaging apps are just for sending emojis to your friends, take a look at these numbers:
- 1.3 billion monthly users are active on Face book Messenger:
  - 10 billion messages are sent between people and businesses on Face book Messenger every month
  - What's App has 1.6 billion active users and 55 billion messages are sent via *every day*
  - The top three social messaging apps – What's App, Face book Messenger and We Chat – have more combined users than Face book or YouTube.

These statistics show the popularity of social messaging apps, and since people are spending more time messaging each other, it makes sense to market your company's products and services where your potential customers are hanging out. Social messaging apps can be very useful in sending messages to customers directly, as they allow personalization and add value to the user experience. In addition, people expect businesses to have a presence on messaging apps because it's a direct and easy way to interact with them. In fact, 63% of customers are more likely to return to a company website that has live chat. 6.4 hours is the

average time that passes before the recipient opens a newsletter. In the case of web push, the recipient will see the message immediately. Moreover, the younger audience favors other methods of communication and prefers to deal with less touch points when engaging brands. 7% open rate for segmented push messaging compared to a 3% open rate for generic, broadcast messages (a 2x improvement) 54% of users convert from a segmented push notification, compared to only 15% for broadcast messages (a 3x improvement) Notifications triggered by behavior are being used to re-engage people who have shown interest but failed to convert, and in recovering revenue from abandoned shopping carts: Stats from Content Marketing Institute:

Content marketing costs 62% less than outbound marketing and generates 3x as many leads. Content marketing has lower up-front costs and deeper long-term benefits than paid search. 615 million devices now use ad blockers, which means your ads are not being seen by as many people. Small businesses with blogs generate 126% more leads than those without blogs. Content marketing rakes in conversion rates 6x higher than other methods. Even amid all the innovation, content marketing remains a reliable, powerful way to attract new customers to your site and build relationships with them in real, quantifiable ways that deliver long-term value for your business. With e-commerce and social media both growing at alarming rates, it's no wonder brands are using the two together to maximize opportunities for sales. Social media is integral to digital marketing, and visual platforms like Instagram are gold for marketers. Better yet, visual commerce is taking off as more consumers are willing to buy products through ads they see in their feeds.

Speaking of instant access, it reminds us to one of the fastest-growing digital marketing trends in recent times: **interactive content**. In 2020, we're destined to see a shift from traditional text-based content toward dynamic, engaging content that offers users an immersive experience. Interactive content is more engaging, more memorable and more likely to generate the results your business needs. Users demand personalization and want to be able to browse a physical store, view products on social media, and purchase online. And if you're not keeping up with their demands, someone else will get that business. This is another area where AI and big data are playing a role by helping brands understand consumer behavior better and personalize at an individual level at scale. In a world gone mad for mobile, arguably one of the most significant digital marketing trends of 2020 is the dawn of 5G technology, or fifth generation of mobile technology. This update heralds a new era of digital communications and its impact will be felt across virtually every industry.

Which means, of course, that brands and marketers want to use (or are already using) data for their own business and advertising purposes.

**Johnnie Walker** has a Blue Label bottle with built-in electronic sensors that can tell if the bottle has been opened and where it is in the supply chain.

**Malibu**, another drinks company, takes it a step further, using their "connected" bottles as digital touchpoint to promote exclusive content.

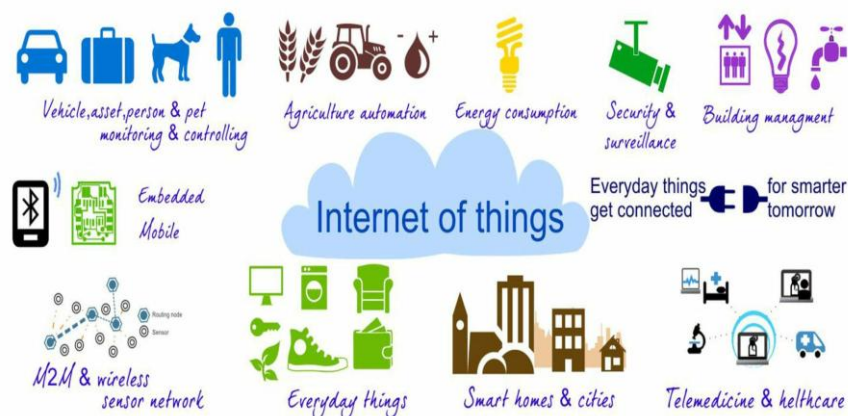
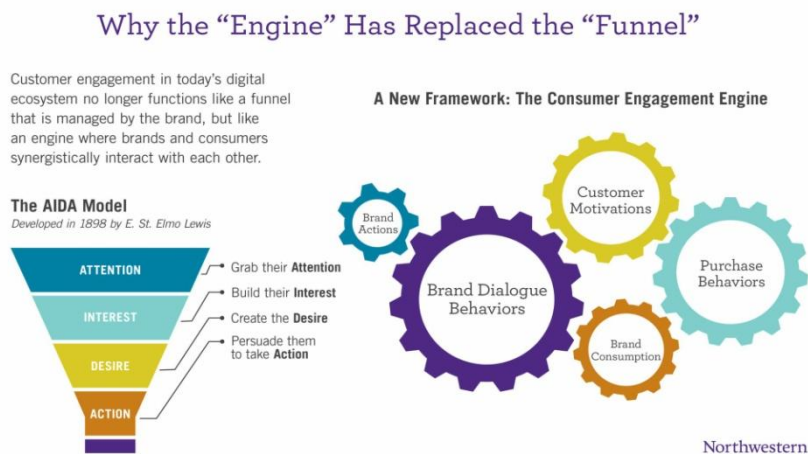


Figure 4: Internet of things (things to come!)

And as 5G technology matures, more IOT ( Internet of Things) devices will present more on-demand content for consumers and more advertising opportunities for marketers. This analysis is called semantic search, and with AI and voice search on a meteoric rise, it's becoming a more central aspect of how search works. Another way that the sales funnel is being revolutionized is from

funnel to engine, in which the brand no longer dictates the buyer's journey – rather, the brand and customer “synergistically interact with each other”:



**Figure5:** AIDA model and search engines

The bottom line is that we can, and *should*, expect that technology will continue to metamorphose, so marketers must develop funnels that are capable of reacting to constant shifts in the digital landscape. One of the most wow-inspiring digital marketing trends of 2020: Neural marketing. While this may sound like we’re quoting from a sci-fi movie, the reality is that this technology is advancing quickly and may become a viable tool for marketers soon. For the uninitiated, Neural Marketing is a strategy that analyzes measurements of a person’s brain activity and nervous system to determine which types of content they find engaging. The company combines biometrics, neural matrices and complex algorithms to analyze attention and emotion levels, effectively helping marketers figure out what content to focus on and what to avoid.

### Conclusion and Suggestions

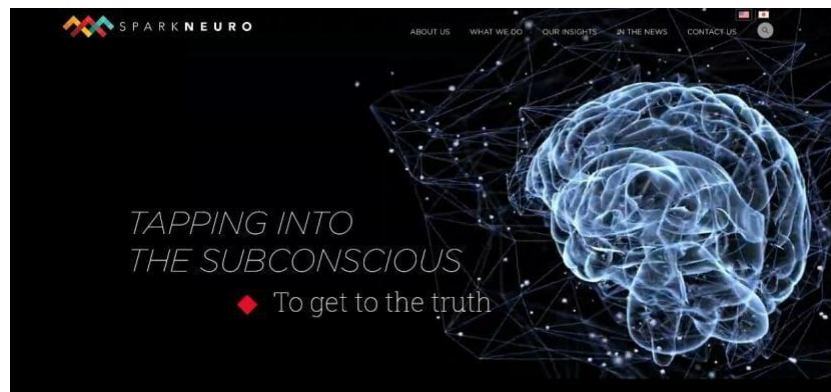
The Direct Marketing techniques have evolved quickly in the last few years and this process will continue. The development of Artificial Intelligence, the chat-bot and Conversational Marketing are some of the off-shoots of developments in the direct marketing techniques, for instant customer engagement and better service. In 2020 Marketing has become very personalized thanks to internet and instant direct marketing services. In addition to the above gadgets several apps have been developed for specific purposes. Apart from video marketing, and other gadgets customers are increasingly wedded to mobiles. Mobile devices have advanced features today. The present day 5G and other forth coming models have advanced features for instant satisfaction of a customer.

As per Social Media Today, 62% of the present Millennium is more interested in visual search capabilities than any other new technology. Images are returned for 19% of search queries on Google. There are over 600 million visual searches on Pinterest each month. Marketers can get the edge on competitors by jumping on the visual search trend in 2020 to draw customers and serve them the perfect product. In 2020 and beyond, the customer journey will be more dynamic and unpredictable, as it needs to respond to rapid changes in consumer desires. After all, in the mobile age, people have become accustomed to instant gratification. If they think or talk about something, they want to learn more, see more and buy more of it with just a few clicks of a button. To get the most out of micro-moments in 2020, you should

- Identify your consumers’ “I want to buy” moments
- Be there in these moments of need
- Deliver relevant content
- Make it easy for them to make a purchase
- Measure every moment that matters

Voice search plays an important role in providing all the relevant information that people are search engaging for through audio content. AI is getting smarter and the number of errors made by voice Chat bots like Alexa, Siri and Google has reduced greatly. Push notifications are on the rise, with 85% of online stores using them in 2019. At least twice as many people sign up for web push notifications compared to a newsletter. Only 10% of the best email marketers can achieve a newsletter sign-up rate that matches the performance of web push. We can be sure that neural marketing will have a major impact on the future of marketing. The richest consumer data resides in the brain and any tool that helps companies understand the brains of their prospective customers is sure to be worth its weight in gold.

**John F. Kennedy once said: “Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”**



**Figure 6:** Neural marketing

## Recommendation

One needs to continuously update the skills as Technologies develop (including the Author!). The world is becoming actually more open and Technology has helped as always. One needs to update the skill levels, more frequently! As it appears, the innovation in Technology and processing, are advancing rapidly to suit the needs of the environment. As marketers, one has to adapt to the new ways of Product placements and customer acceptance through the Mail media. As John F Kennedy has recommended one needs to have a futuristic outlook. Chat bots and Neural Marketing have become quite popular.

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