

WeChat – An instant marketing tool

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Case Study: WeChat-An Instant Marketing Tool

January 2011, WeChat launched itself in the Chinese's market and it was the big moment for the company called Tencent which was looking to create a separate marketing channel which wanted unprecedented growth which had been attracting business from all corners and were hoping to cash in on two fifty millions middle class consumers. China, in just three short decades had become one of the most competitive market place in the world. And the average shanghai consumer was exposed to more than three times the advertising of that their British equivalent, Marketer needed this opportunity to use their resources wisely to break through the clutter and WeChat wanted this opportunity to be channelized and that piece of Pie to create a creative market platform for WeChat.

WeChat (Known as Weixin in Chinese) created such a platform where businesses were finding success to reach Chinese consumers. The mobile instant messaging service was china's home grown answer to WhatsApp and other Chinese clones. WeChat introduced innovative new features and the results were phenomenal as they clocked up more than 300 users within two years of their launched. The last 100 million users were added in less than four months.

WeChat had become a popular way for urban Chinese to communicate, and even had china's state run mobile operates lobbying to enforce charges for WeChat as it was cannibalizing on their revenues.

China's young ,affluent and urban made up their majority of WeChat users.74% of the 300 million were in their 20's, and as one's needed a Smartphone's to download the App belong to average to higher income group. WeChat users profile closely resembled to those consumers who were most brand conscious and were likely to purchase and own foreign products. WeChat provided another way to build loyalty and promote ones wares to Chinese consumers, while most communications was not having viral potential of social media services such as Weibo, WeChat messages could be more targeted and personalized to the targeted customers.

WeChat messages can be as text, images, sound, and videos and can be location –relevant and can be sent to groups or singles. Given 38% of the Chinese Smartphone's users uses their mobiles more than five hours a day and check every six minutes on an average. The prospect/customers were kept engaged .If executed well, WeChat can be an effective tool to of marketing channels.

WeChat had developed a sound business functionibility model to ensure smooth function of their platforms, to be successful on WeChat it required to create a fan following and unlike some other messenger services it required to create an QR Code by the companies and the customers would be scanning the code and became fan. And companies advertise the QR Code via different means like posting on websites, through social media, packaging and advertising in the store or through advertisements.

WeChat also had an API that allow companies to integrate the services into mobile apps to attract the followers and as consumers were exposed and showed their inner circle, it required to provide a good and creative reason to sign up of consumers and they provided in the form of offer coupons, prizes, entertainment, Pictures, WIFI access, POS promotion, VIP treatment or support.

WeChat had some handy features such as finding other users close by or sending a message in the bottle to random users which have created success story for the companies like starbucks, Adidas etc.

The business model which followed On WeChat as once the company received the followers they sent communication to individual users or specific groups. It was a good idea to tailor the message and made it relevant and personal to the prospects /customers. News, coupons offers and promotion, VIP membership, entertainment, and general pieces of interest all worked well for the companies on WeChat. As amongst the mass of people in China, Chinese consumers like to feel exclusive, especially for luxury brands and WeChat allowed to create an exclusive cluster for VIP customers. It could be also used as a useful forum for research

focus group. And there were another idea was to make it more personalized to offer customizable menus on their WeChat pages to allow shopping and other features such as recommending close –by –shops to make it more relevant for personalized uses.

Now it was very important for the companies those would be looking to explore this new marketing channel they must have the idea that when someone following them ,they were letting them into their pockets or handbags, so they should have not abused that privileged by sending them irrelevant messages and it could interrupt the followers. So they must treat this facility as to the point and not so salesy in appearance to the WeChat users. And as this channel facilitated customers to get into conversation Company, would have to ensure that they were having the proper resources and automated tools to handle it.

WeChat plans to launch itself in the Indian market too. There has been discussion whether to go for the same Chinese run model or to redesign a new business model for the Indian customer. It would like to taste success in the Indian market. Beside there has been suspicion if the Chinese government would interfere with the data sharing. It is a challenge for WeChat to create appeals in the Indian market.

Q. 1. What contributed well for the WeChat’s Success in China?

Q.2. is it suggestible to work with the same model in India which they have followed in China?

Q.3 Comments on Alternate marketing Channels provided by WeChat.

Q.4 Tell us the branding applicability on WeChat?

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