DIGITAL MARKETING

The Impact of Digital Marketing Strategies on Consumer Purchase Intention for Software Products

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Abstract

This study examines the role of product marketing within software products, focusing on its influence on customer purchase decisions, product positioning, adoption, satisfaction, and loyalty. In the competitive software industry, companies must communicate product value effectively and understand customer needs to attract and retain users. The study aims to identify the factors influencing software purchasing decisions and evaluate the importance of marketing strategies, including product demonstrations, customer reviews, pricing, positioning, messaging, and customer support. A quantitative research approach was adopted using a descriptive research design. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 106 respondents using convenience sampling. The collected responses were analysed using percentages and graphical representations. Secondary data was gathered from academic research and relevant literature to support the study.

The findings indicate that product features are a major factor influencing software purchase decisions, while customer benefits play an important role in product messaging. Clear positioning, customer support, and continuous product improvement also contribute to customer perceptions and continued usage.

1 Introduction

The software industry has changed significantly with the growth of digital platforms, cloud-based applications, mobile applications and subscription-based software. Software products are now used across education, banking, healthcare, business, communication, entertainment and many other areas. As the number of software products increases, customers have more choices than before. This has made it increasingly important for software companies to understand not only how to develop a product but also how to communicate its value to customers.

Product marketing can be understood as the connection between the product, the customer and the market. It helps companies understand customer needs and communicate the value of their product in a way that customers can easily understand. It also supports activities such as market research, customer segmentation, product positioning, messaging, product launches, sales support and customer feedback.

In software products, product marketing becomes even more important because customers cannot always understand the value of a product simply by looking at it. They may need demonstrations, free trials, tutorials, reviews or comparisons before deciding whether the software is suitable for them.

Software is different from many physical products because its value is often experienced through functionality, usability, reliability and the ability to solve a particular problem. Therefore, customers may evaluate a software product by considering its features, price, reviews, brand image, security,

customer support and expected benefits. The Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis (1989) highlights perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as important determinants of technology acceptance. (Journal Storage in September 1, 1989) This provides a useful theoretical background for understanding why customers may accept or reject software products.

Customer involvement is also becoming increasingly important in product development and marketing. Griffin and Hauser's work on the “voice of the customer” emphasizes the importance of identifying, organizing and prioritizing customer needs in product development. (pubsonline in Feb 1, 1993)Similarly et al. (2004) proposed a marketing perspective that places greater emphasis on intangible resources, relationships and value co-creation.(Sage Journals in January 2004)These perspectives are relevant to software products because customers frequently interact with products through feedback, reviews, feature requests and support services.

Customer satisfaction can also influence recommendation and loyalty. However, existing research suggests that satisfaction alone does not completely explain customer loyalty. A review by Gounaris et al. (2010) found that satisfaction has a positive relationship with loyalty but that other factors also contribute to loyalty. (ScienceDirect in 2026-09-17) Research on software users has similarly shown that different types of value provided by software can influence user loyalty depending on users' needs. (ScienceDirect in May 2018)

Therefore, this research examines product marketing from a broader customer perspective. It considers the complete journey from purchase consideration to adoption, satisfaction, continued usage, renewal and recommendation. The study uses responses from 108 respondents to understand how customers perceive different elements of product marketing within software products.

2 Problem statement and need for the study

The software market contains a large number of competing products, and customers often have several alternatives to choose from. A company may develop a product with advanced features, but customers may not adopt it if they do not understand its value or cannot identify how it solves their problems. Similarly, customers may purchase a product but stop using it if the product fails to meet their expectations, receives inadequate support or does not improve over time.

The central problem addressed by this research is therefore the need to understand how product marketing influences customers throughout the software product lifecycle. This includes the initial purchase decision as well as adoption, continued usage, satisfaction, renewal and loyalty.

The study is needed because software product marketing involves more than advertising. It includes product positioning, messaging, differentiation, communication of customer benefits, product demonstrations, customer feedback, support and continuous improvement. Understanding which of these areas customers consider important can help software companies design more customer-oriented marketing and product strategies.

The study also attempts to connect marketing activities with customer outcomes. Instead of looking only at awareness or purchase, it considers what happens after purchase and how customers respond when products improve or when competitors offer better features.

One major problem is that customers may find it difficult to understand the differences between competing software products. Companies may communicate many technical features, but customers are often more interested in knowing how the product will solve their actual problems.

Another challenge is building trust. Customers may depend on reviews, recommendations, demonstrations and online information before making a purchase. A product with good features may still struggle if its value is not communicated properly.

Therefore, studying product marketing within software products is important because it helps understand what customers actually look for when making software-related decisions.

The study also looks beyond the initial purchase. It considers whether continuous improvement, customer support and satisfaction influence customers' willingness to continue using or recommending software.

3 Research objectives and research questions

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To understand the factors that influence customers when purchasing software products.
2. To study the effectiveness of different product marketing strategies.
3. To understand the importance of product positioning and messaging in software products.
4. To examine how product marketing contributes to software adoption.
5. To study the relationship between product improvement, customer satisfaction and loyalty.
6. To understand the importance of customer support after purchasing software.
7. To identify how companies can improve their product marketing strategies.

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

Respondent Profile and Software Usage

1. Which factor attracts you most toward a software products (ChatGPT, Microsoft, etc.)?
2. How important is a free trial or demo?
3. How important is price when choosing software?
4. How important is data security and privacy?
5. Which marketing channel influences your software purchase the most?
6. How influential are recommendations from influencers or industry experts?
7. How effective do you find social media marketing for promoting software products?
8. How much do product demonstrations or videos influence your purchase decision?
9. How influential are customer reviews and testimonials?
10. How effective is content marketing (blogs, guides, tutorials, case studies) in helping you understand software products?
11. How important is differentiation from competing software?
12. Does effective product positioning increase your likelihood of considering a software product?
13. How likely are you to renew a software subscription when the product continuously improves?
14. How much do you think effective product marketing contributes to the adoption of software products?

4 Literature review

4.1 Product marketing in software product

Software purchasing decisions can involve several factors. Customers may consider features, price, brand reputation, security, customer reviews, ease of use, support and compatibility with their requirements.

The traditional view of marketing often focuses on exchange and transactions. Vargo and Lusch (2004), however, described an evolution toward a marketing logic emphasizing intangible resources, relationships and value co-creation.(Sage Journals, 2004)

Product marketing therefore needs to communicate this practical value. Customers should be able to understand not only *what* a software product does but also *why it matters* to them.

For example, accounting software is valuable not simply because it contains accounting functions but because those functions help users perform accounting activities more efficiently. Similarly, project management software creates value when it helps teams organize tasks, monitor progress and collaborate effectively.

4.2 Software purchase decisions

Software purchasing decisions can involve several factors. Customers may consider features, price, brand reputation, security, customer reviews, ease of use, support and compatibility with their requirements. The Technology Acceptance Model developed by Davis (1989) identifies perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as important factors related to technology acceptance. (JSTOR, September 1, 1989).

This suggests that customers are more likely to consider technology when they believe it will provide useful outcomes and can be used without excessive difficulty.

For business software, the decision can be more complex because multiple individuals may participate in the purchasing process. Johnston and Lewin's review of organizational buying behaviour highlights the importance of different constructs and situations within organizational purchasing decisions.

Therefore, software product marketers need to understand different customer groups and communicate product value according to their specific requirements.

4.3 Product positioning and messaging

Product positioning helps establish a distinct understanding of a product in the customer's mind. It answers questions such as:

- Who is the product for?
- What problem does it solve?
- What benefits does it provide?
- How is it different from alternatives?

Product messaging is closely connected with positioning because it converts the product's value proposition into communication that customers can understand.

Effective messaging is particularly important for software because products can have many technical features. Listing features alone may not explain why the customer should care about them. Instead, product marketers need to connect features with customer benefits.

For example, instead of simply saying that software provides "automated reporting," a company could communicate that the feature helps users reduce manual reporting work and obtain information more quickly. This makes the benefit more understandable.

4.4 Research gap

Existing literature provides substantial understanding of technology acceptance, customer satisfaction, organizational buying and loyalty. However, there is value in examining these ideas together from the perspective of product marketing within software products. In particular, the present study connects product positioning and messaging with purchase decisions, product improvement, support, adoption, satisfaction, renewal, recommendation and switching behaviour.

The study therefore attempts to provide a practical customer-level understanding of how different aspects of product marketing are perceived by respondents.

5 Research methodology

The study uses a descriptive research design because its purpose is to understand and describe respondents' perceptions regarding product marketing and software products.

A quantitative research approach was adopted. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of questions related to software usage, purchase decisions, product marketing, product positioning, messaging, adoption, satisfaction and loyalty.

The study included 106 respondents. Convenience sampling was used because respondents who were accessible and willing to participate were included in the survey. The respondents represent individuals with experience or familiarity with software products.

Secondary information was obtained from academic research papers, books and relevant scholarly literature. The literature was used to develop the conceptual background and interpret the primary findings.

The questionnaire used multiple-choice and rating-scale questions. The collected responses were organized and analysed using percentages and graphical representations. Pie charts were used to make the distribution of responses easier to understand.

The analysis is primarily descriptive. Therefore, the percentages represent the responses of the 106 participants and should not automatically be generalized to the entire software-user population.

The study mainly focuses on how customers perceive software products and the role played by product marketing in purchase decisions, product adoption, satisfaction and loyalty.

6 Data analysis and findings

6.1 Respondents profile and software usage

The first part of the data analysis focuses on the "Respondent profile and software usage behavior". Understanding who the respondents are and how they interact with software products is important

because people from different age groups, occupations, and usage patterns may have different expectations from software products. Their reasons for using software, the amount of time they spend on these products, and the categories of software they use most frequently can also influence how they respond to product marketing activities such as advertising, product demonstrations, free trials, pricing offers, social media promotions, reviews, and product communication.

6.2 Factors influencing software purchase decisions

The survey findings indicate that customers consider several factors while selecting software products. Product features, customer benefits, pricing, reviews, advertising, free trials and customer support all contribute to the overall purchase decision.

The results suggest that customers are not influenced by promotional communication alone. They want to understand what the software can actually do and whether it can solve their specific requirements. This is consistent with the Technology Acceptance Model, where perceived usefulness is an important consideration in technology acceptance (Davis, 1989).

6.3 Product positioning and messaging

It examined which element of product messaging has the greatest influence on respondents. Out of 106 respondents, 27.8% selected customer benefits, making it the largest response category. Product features followed with 23.1%, while 17.6% selected price. A further 15.7% selected the problem solved, while 9.3% selected competitive advantage. The remaining respondents selected brand image.

The finding indicates that effective product messaging should move beyond a simple list of features. It should explain what the product does, what problem it addresses and what benefit the customer can expect.

It examined the importance of differentiation from competing software. The largest group, 35.2%, considered differentiation moderately important. 25.9% considered it slightly important, while 21.3% considered it important. Another 10.2% considered differentiation very important, and 7.4% considered it not important.

These results show that differentiation is relevant to software customers, although respondents vary in how strongly they consider it. The presence of a substantial moderate category suggests that customers may notice differences between products but may not always make their decision based solely on differentiation.

It focused on the importance of clear product positioning. 31.5% of respondents considered clear positioning important, while 21.3% considered it very important. 26.9% selected neutral and 18.5% selected slightly important.

The results indicate that clear positioning can play a meaningful role in software selection. More than half of the respondents selected either important or very important.

The final question in this section examined the importance of customer support after purchase.

The largest group, 34.3%, considered customer support very important, while 25.9% considered it important. 22.2% were neutral and 17.6% considered it slightly important.

These findings indicate that post-purchase support is an important part of the software customer experience. Customers may face installation issues, technical difficulties, account-related problems or difficulties understanding particular features.

6.4 Product adoption, satisfaction and loyalty

The findings show that product features were selected by 38.9% of respondents, making them the largest influencing aspect. Product positioning was selected by 19.4%, while advertising accounted for 11.1%. Reviews were selected by 10.2%, while the remaining responses were distributed among pricing, free trials and customer support.

This supports the broader idea that product marketing should maintain a strong connection with the product itself. Communication should reflect actual product capabilities rather than create expectations that the product cannot fulfil.

It is found that 35.2% of respondents were likely to renew their subscription when the product continuously improves, while 16.7% were very likely to renew. 34.3% selected neutral, 7.4% were very unlikely and the remaining respondents were unlikely.

The findings indicate that continuous improvement can have a positive relationship with renewal intentions. Software customers may expect products to develop over time because technology, customer requirements and competitors continue to change.

The findings show that 33.3% of respondents were neutral about recommending a software product they were satisfied with. 27.8% were very likely to recommend it and 26.9% were likely to recommend it. Smaller proportions selected unlikely or very unlikely.

The results suggest a positive relationship between satisfaction and recommendation for a considerable portion of respondents. When customers feel that a software product meets their needs, they may be more willing to share their experience with colleagues, friends or other users.

The findings show that 33.3% of respondents were likely to switch to a competitor offering better features, while another 22.2% were very likely to switch. 33.3% remained neutral.

Switching behaviour can also be influenced by price, ease of migration, data portability, learning costs and customer support. Therefore, better features are an important factor, but not necessarily the only factor determining whether a customer actually changes software.

It is examined respondents' overall perception of product marketing and software adoption.

The largest group, 37%, stated that effective product marketing contributes to adoption to a moderate extent. 29.6% selected to a very large extent and 19.4% selected to a large extent. Approximately 9.3% selected to a small extent and 4.6% selected not at all.

The results therefore support a broader understanding of product marketing in which marketing and product performance work together. Communication may bring customers to the product, but usefulness, usability, support and continued value can influence whether customers remain with it.

6.5 Effectiveness of product marketing strategies

The purpose of this analysis is to understand how different product marketing strategies affect customers while they discover, evaluate, understand, trust, and make purchase decisions regarding software products. The analysis is based on 106 valid responses collected through the questionnaire. The questions considered in this section focus on important elements of software product marketing, including marketing channels, influencer and expert recommendations, social media marketing, product demonstrations and videos, customer reviews and testimonials, and content marketing.

Customer reviews and testimonials play an important role in building trust and confidence in software products. People often find real experiences from other users more reliable than advertisements because they provide practical information about how a product works. Positive reviews can encourage potential customers to try a software product, while negative feedback helps companies identify areas that need improvement.

Overall, software companies should focus not only on promoting features but also on explaining how their products solve real customer problems. Combining social media, informative content, demonstrations, and genuine customer feedback can make software marketing more trustworthy, useful, and effective.

7 Discussion of findings

The findings of the study provide an overall picture of how product marketing operates across different stages of the software customer journey.

First, product value remains central to customer decision-making. Product features were the most frequently selected influence on software purchase decisions, while customer benefits were the leading element of product messaging. This suggests that customers want to know both what a product can do and how those capabilities can benefit them.

Second, product positioning and differentiation have an important communication role. A considerable proportion of respondents indicated that clear positioning influences their consideration of software. This means that software companies need to communicate their purpose and value proposition clearly, especially when several competing products appear similar.

Third, the findings indicate that customer feedback and continuous improvement are relevant to continued usage. More than half of the respondents indicated that they were likely or very likely to continue using software when companies regularly improve products based on customer feedback. This supports the customer-oriented approach discussed in the literature, where understanding customer needs can contribute to better product development.

Fourth, customer support is an important part of the post-purchase experience. The responses show that many participants consider support important or very important. This indicates that software companies need to think beyond the initial sale and support customers throughout their usage journey.

Fifth, the findings show that satisfaction and loyalty are related but not identical. A significant proportion of respondents were willing to recommend software they were satisfied with, but a sizeable neutral group was also present. This is consistent with previous research showing that satisfaction alone does not fully explain loyalty.

Finally, the possibility of switching to competitors offering better features shows that software companies operate in a continuous competitive environment. Customer relationships therefore need to be supported by ongoing product value, innovation and responsiveness to customer expectations.

8 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations can be made for software companies.

8.1 Focus on customer benefits

Software companies should explain how product features solve customer problems rather than simply listing technical specifications.

8.2 Develop clear product positioning

Companies should clearly communicate their target customer, key problem, major benefits and differentiation from competing products.

8.3 Use simple and consistent messaging

Product communication should avoid unnecessary technical language. Customers should quickly understand the purpose and value of the software.

8.4 Use customer feedback for product development

Companies should collect feedback systematically and use it to identify meaningful product improvements. Customer feedback should be treated as an input for both marketing and product development.

8.5 Strengthen post-purchase support

Customer support should be accessible, responsive and capable of helping users solve technical or product-related difficulties.

8.6 Communicate product improvements

When new features or improvements are introduced, companies should clearly explain how they benefit existing customers.

8.7 Maintain competitive product value

Companies should regularly monitor competitors and customer expectations. Continuous improvement can help software products remain relevant in changing markets.

9 Limitations and future scope

9.1 Limitations

The study has several limitations. First, the sample size was limited to 106 respondents, meaning the findings represent the views of the participants surveyed rather than the entire software-user population.

Second, convenience sampling was used. As respondents were selected based on accessibility and willingness to participate, the sample may not fully represent all categories of software users.

Third, the study relies on self-reported responses. Respondents' stated intentions regarding purchase, renewal, recommendation or switching may differ from their actual future behaviour.

Fourth, the study examines software products broadly rather than focusing on one specific category such as SaaS, enterprise software, educational applications or financial technology.

Finally, software markets change rapidly. New technologies, pricing models, artificial intelligence features and customer expectations may influence future purchase and adoption behaviour.

9.2 Future scope

Future research can examine product marketing within specific software categories such as SaaS, fintech, educational technology and AI-based applications. Researchers can also compare B2B and B2C software purchasing behaviour.

Future studies could use larger and more diverse samples and apply statistical techniques to examine relationships between variables such as product positioning, satisfaction, renewal and loyalty.

Further research can also explore customer churn, subscription pricing, free trials, product-led growth, personalization, AI-based recommendations and customer experience.

10 Conclusion

The study "Product Marketing Within Software Products" examined the role of product marketing in software purchase decisions, positioning, messaging, adoption, satisfaction and loyalty. Based on responses from 108 participants, the findings indicate that customers evaluate software products through a combination of product-related and marketing-related factors.

Product features emerged as an important influence on software purchase decisions, while customer benefits were the most selected element of product messaging. This suggests that customers want to understand both the functionality of a product and the practical value that it can provide. Price, problem-solving ability, reviews, advertising and other marketing elements also contribute to the overall decision-making process.

The findings also show the relevance of clear product positioning. A considerable proportion of respondents indicated that effective positioning increases their likelihood of considering a software product. This highlights the importance of clearly communicating the target customer, purpose, benefits and differentiation of a software product.

Another important finding is the role of continuous product improvement. Respondents showed a tendency toward continued usage and subscription renewal when companies regularly improve their products based on customer feedback. This demonstrates that product marketing cannot be separated from the actual product experience. Customer feedback can provide useful information for identifying areas of improvement, while product improvements can strengthen the value communicated to customers.

Customer support also emerged as an important aspect of the post-purchase experience. This shows that the relationship between a software company and its customer does not end with the purchase. Customers may need assistance, guidance and problem resolution throughout their usage journey.

The study also found that customer satisfaction can support recommendation behaviour, although satisfaction alone does not guarantee loyalty. At the same time, the possibility of switching to a competitor offering better features demonstrates the importance of maintaining product value in a competitive market. This is consistent with the broader literature, which indicates that loyalty depends on several factors rather than satisfaction alone.

The study therefore concludes that product marketing should not be viewed simply as a promotional activity. It acts as a connection between the customer, product and market. Successful software

companies need to communicate meaningful value, deliver that value through the product, listen to customers and continuously improve their offerings. In this way, product marketing can contribute to stronger product adoption and more sustainable customer relationships.

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