SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Understanding Social Media Marketing and Consumer Preferences: Study of Stationery Brand in Indian Market

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Abstract

The evolution of digital technologies has significantly transformed marketing and created new ways for businesses to communicate with consumers. Marketing through social media platforms, influencer marketing, optimising through search engines, content creation and online advertising are commonly used marketing strategies. Within the stationery market of India, a variety of products are being sold such as; notebooks, pens, pencils, art stationery, office stationery and school stationery. Consumers are able to view stationery brands on digital platforms to compare features of the products. Consumers are also able to observe the products and give feedback. This research aims to look at the relationships between social media marketing, and awareness, preference and engagement with stationery brands. It will take into consideration how consumers react to social media, value of how products are displayed digitally, brand awareness and consumer engagement through digital platforms. A descriptive research method has been used and primary data was collated via a well-structured questionnaire. Secondary data was also collated from suitable resources.

Social media marketing, influencer marketing, search engine optimisation, content and advertisement are common marketing methods. In the Indian market for stationery, many products are available including. Notebooks, pens, pencils, artistic stationery, office stationery and school stationery. Consumers can research stationery brands on digital platforms and compare the features. They can also view the products and provide feedback. This research looks to understand the relationship between social media marketing, brand awareness, brand preference and brand engagement within stationery brands. The way consumers interact with social media, the value given to product display, brand awareness and brand engagement in digital platforms will be taken into consideration. Descriptive research is used, and primary data was gathered from a structured questionnaire. Secondary data was also gathered from appropriate sources.

1 Introduction

Marketing plays a key role in a stationery business to increase awareness, demand and create good relationships with customers. In India, stationery products include notebooks, pens, pencils, highlighters, art materials and office supplies; aimed at students, professionals, artists and offices. Stationery brands have traditionally targeted consumers using in-store presence, newspaper advertising, TV advertising, printed leaflets, in-store displays and word of mouth. However, with digital marketing, new methods of marketing products within the stationery industry are available.

Social media platforms, websites, and online advertising can be used effectively by stationery businesses to advertise their products and promote their brand. Social media such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and LinkedIn are the platforms used to showcase design, colour, features,

purpose and ranges of products. Customer feedback can also be obtained. Short videos, co-operation with content creators, targeted advertising and analysis can enable stationery brands to reach out to students, parents, professionals, and creative people.

Social media marketing can be very beneficial to stationery businesses. By monitoring comments, reviews, polls and direct messages, businesses are able to understand what interests customers have in relation to products. They can understand what people value in products (appearance, quality, price, longevity, functionality) and so work to produce content and products which appeal to their target audience.

This can create brand awareness, and positive brand relationships. Providing content relevant to audience interests, creating a consistent image across platforms and responding quickly to users can allow brands to highlight the benefits of their products and stand out against competitors. Despite engagement on social media, purchases may not necessarily be made. Preferences also depend on many other factors such as price, availability, product quality and specific individual needs.

This research explores how marketing through social media has influenced consumer perceptions of stationery brands within India. It considers how consumers become aware of brands, what type of content on social media captures their attention and how presentation of brands, and engagement with them, on social media can influence perceptions and interest in products.

2 Objectives of the study

The primary objective of this study is to understand the role of social media marketing in shaping consumer awareness and preferences towards stationery brands in the Indian market.

1. To understand the effect of Social Media Marketing on increasing awareness of stationery brands.
2. To understand how consumers become aware of stationery brands via social media.
3. To understand what types of social media content draw attention to stationery products.
4. To understand how creative media content, and creative presentation of products within social media can affect brand recognition and interest in the product.

3 Literature review

The study of social media marketing has grown to become a major part in how people find and assess brands. These platforms have given businesses a new way to connect with their customers, market their products and understand new trends. Social media marketing is becoming a relevant marketing method for many consumers in India. This includes students, young adults and working professionals. Stationery brands can use these platforms to show off their notebooks, pens, art supplies, school supplies and more with unique and creative content.

3.1 Saima and Khan (2021)

The study looked at how social media influencers impact consumers purchasing intent. It was found that social media influencers impact consumers due to their credibility, trustworthiness and quality of content. Stationery brands can benefit from social media influencers as they can showcase their product creatively.

3.2 Rajarathinam, Rathinam and Parayitam (2022)

This study was carried out on 1325 respondents in the city of Chennai and Coimbatore. It was observed that social media marketing, engagement and personalisation affects consumer behavior. This study therefore shows the importance of targeted marketing for stationery brands.

3.3 Sharma, Agarwal and Malati (2024)

This study investigated the impact of online reviews and recommendations on consumers' purchasing intentions. It was found that electronic word-of-mouth does have a positive impact on brand awareness, brand image and purchase intention. This therefore shows how important customer reviews are for stationery brands.

3.4 Meenu (2025)

This study investigates the influence of social media marketing on consumer intention to purchase amongst 286 Indian respondents. Brand trust, online communication and customer engagement are emphasized.

3.5 Garima and Sheokand (2024)

This study focuses on examining how social media advertising influences purchase intentions of Indian millennials. It also shows how online reviews, recommendations and privacy issues have an impact on consumers' attitudes towards advertising.

4 Research gap

While there are several studies around social media marketing and consumer purchase behaviours in India, there are few studies into consumer preference related to stationery brands. Existing literature does not generally focus or draw their attention towards consumer goods, influencer marketing, online advertisement and e-word of mouth.

It is very significant to know how Indian consumers find out about stationery brands via social media. What type of content attracts them and how they form opinions based on how brands present themselves online. This study examines at how social media is used, what content is preferred, brand awareness and consumer engagement in relation to stationery brands.

5 Research methodology

5.1 Research design

Both primary and secondary data is used within this research. Primary data is collected via quantitative questioning paradigm in order to get an insight into users' social media practices, opinions regarding brand discovery, preference of content, brand awareness and engagement. Secondary data has been collected via descriptive documentation in order to understand some background information on this sector of the market (stationery and art materials in India).

Quantitative data has been analysed to understand trends in consumer opinion. Qualitative data has also been summarised to provide an overview of how the main topics from the survey relate to digital marketing within stationery industries/brands and DOMS. Overall, these results allow for a greater

understanding of consumer digital behaviour and how digital communication is being utilised by DOMS.

5.2 Scope of the study

This section provides an analysis of how social media is utilised in marketing by Stationery brands. It discusses issues such as increasing brand awareness, content preference, engagement, brand recognition and relation building. Overall, the results of the survey indicate general attitudes of consumers to social media and brand communication.

6 Social media marketing and consumer preferences for stationery brands

6.1 Social media as a marketing channel

Social media is an important tool for stationery brands. This allows marketers to deliver information about products. Brands can display their ranges of notebooks, pens, art supplies and office supplies to attract new audiences and encourage current customers to give feedback. The success of this will depend on the correct platforms and content being used to target the desired audience.

6.2 Content creation and visual communication

Stationery brands can create content such as images, short videos, stories, comparisons, how to write & draw, tutorials & reviews. This can highlight key aspects of the product which consumers will look into before purchasing. Providing clear visuals and useful information will help the consumer get a better understanding of the products on offer.

6.3 Audience engagement and consumer behaviour

Engagement could come from likes, comments, shares, saves, views and DMs. This shows that your audience are interested in the design, demo, collection or offer of your brand. It doesn't necessarily mean they will buy but it shows you what your audience is interested in based on their responses and engagement. This means you can create a plan for future communication.

6.4 Brand identity and brand recall

A stationery brands identity can be conveyed through their logo, packaging, product design, colours, tone of voice and social media channels. Using all of these consistently can help consumers recognise and remember your brand. Including relevant information about your products and having a clear visual style can help set your stationery brand apart from competitors.

6.5 Online interaction and responsiveness

Commenting and answering questions on your stationery brand can make it seem more approachable. Quickly answering questions about features, availability, sizing, colour and using your products can help the consumer gain valuable information. However, if you ignore questions or are not handling criticism well it can have a negative impact on your brand.

Secondary data has also been used in this study in order to understand consumer preferences in this market. It provides an insight into why people choose certain stationery products, and provides insight into how companies are using social media platforms to interact with their desired audiences.

7 Factors influencing consumer preferences for stationery products

From various sources of information, it is clear that certain factors influence buying decisions. These include;

7.1 Product quality and durability

Customers will be influenced in their buying decisions by the quality of the product. In relation to stationery, customers buying notebooks may look at features such as; quality of paper, thickness, smoothness and durability. When buying pens or pencils, ease of writing and performance of the product can effect this decision. If a product is satisfactory, it is more likely to gain customer confidence and therefore increase repurchase.

7.2 Price and value for money

As stationery products are often bought by people in education and within employment, price is an important factor to consider. In general consumers will seek high quality stationery at a cheap price. However, some consumers may be willing to pay a higher price if products have a better design, quality or extra features.

7.3 Attractive designs and product presentation

Having aesthetic notebooks, interesting packaging, unique designs and appealing products can attract customers. In today's society many new products are discovered via social media. Therefore, having an appealing product design can peak people's interest and encourage them to look further into that brand.

7.4 Brand recognition and reliability

Customers may be more likely to buy from a brand that they are familiar with. Customers will have perceptions about the reliability and quality of a brand depending on their familiarity with it. If stationery brands consistently communicate with customers, advertise products well and provide positive experiences to customers, they will gain more recognition within their brand.

7.5 Promotions and online communication

Using promotions can be effective in attracting consumers to brands. Promotions can include things like advertisements, sales, showing off products and social media. Using social media to show off products in creative ways is one way of promoting products to audiences. This means more people know about the brand and products, however just because people are aware does not necessarily mean they will make a purchase.

8 Social media presence of selected stationery brands

Several stationery brands in the market make use of social media. Stationery brands can easily promote their products, new ranges of products and also interact with customers on platforms such as Instagram and YouTube. They can display images, short videos, guides, examples and creative work.

Popular stationery brands currently in the Indian market are DOMS, Camlin, Navneet and ITC Classmate. All of these have different marketing strategies

A comparison of selected stationery brands' social media followers, based on the industry report published in November 2023, is presented below.

Table 1. Social media followers of selected stationery brands (November 2023).

Brand	YouTube Followers ('000)	Instagram Followers ('000)
DOMS	1,010.0	41.6
Camlin	38.4	94.6
Hindustan Pencils	1.0	34.1
Navneet	15.5	13.9
ITC Stationery	25.7	114.2

Source: Industry report on the stationery and art material industry in India (Technopak Analysis, 2023).

From the data we can see that DOMS has the highest number of followers on YouTube. However, if looking at Instagram, ITC Stationery has the highest number of followers, however Camlin also has a large number of followers. Therefore, this shows that depending on the brand, the level of engagement may differ between different social media platforms.

DOMS have performed very well in digital marketing. In the Annual Report (2024-25), it can be seen that DOMS have over 3 million subscribers on YouTube and over 100,000 followers on Instagram. Within digital marketing, they advertise their vast range of products through using creative content within these platforms. This includes tutorials, demonstrating products, unboxing products, competitions etc.

This data shows how in this sector, companies are using social media to provide useful information. Tutorials on how to use products in art, or projects using stationery in creative ways mean that students, artists and potential customers are engaged.

9 Survey data analysis and interpretation

This survey was made up of 10 questions. As can be seen from the percentages below I gained an insight into how people use social media, and their opinions on brand communication. Since these questions were about brands in general, I have described how the results are relevant to marketing a stationery brand.

9.1 Age group of respondents

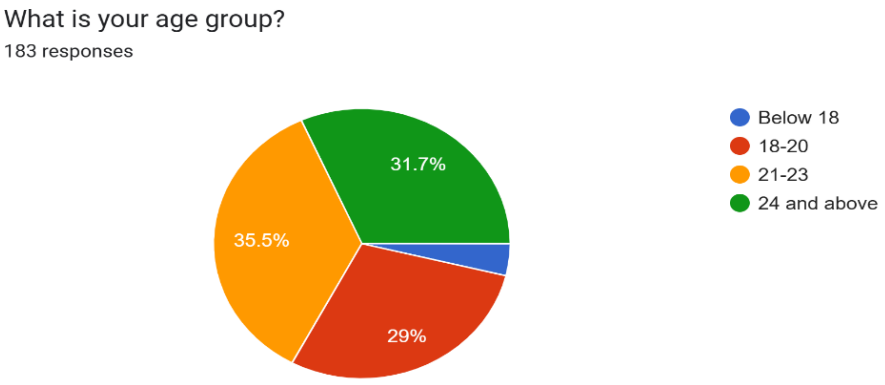


Figure 1. Age group of respondents.

The most common age group of respondents were those aged 21-23 (35.5%) followed by 24 years or older (31.7%), 18-20 years old (29%) and under 18 years old (3%).

This could be because younger adults are more active on social media. Different age groups will have different needs when buying stationery such as school stationery or office stationery. Therefore stationery brands should take into account all age groups when creating their marketing strategies.

9.2 Most frequently used social media platform

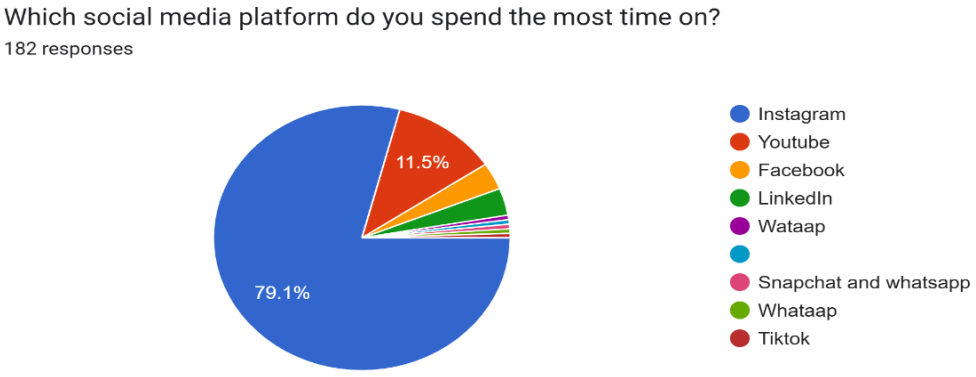


Figure 2. Social media platform on which respondents spend the most time.

Instagram was the most popular choice (79.1%), followed by YouTube (12.4%) and other social media platforms (10%).

Instagram may be popular due to the various features such as Reels, Stories and beautiful visuals. This makes it easy for stationery brands to display their new products. This means it is a great opportunity for stationery brands to promote their products visually. Discovered a brand through social media.

9.3 Discovering brands via social media

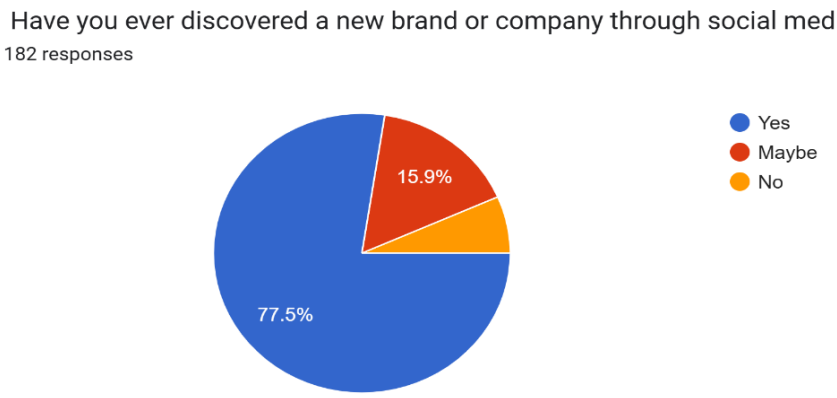


Figure 3. Discovery of a new brand or company through social media.

Yes was the most popular answer (77.5%), followed by Maybe (15.9%) and No (7.1%).

This could be because consumers often see many advertorials, influencer promotion, recommendations and videos. Stationery brands can utilise this to show off their new products. Follow brands for their content

9.4 Following brands due to content

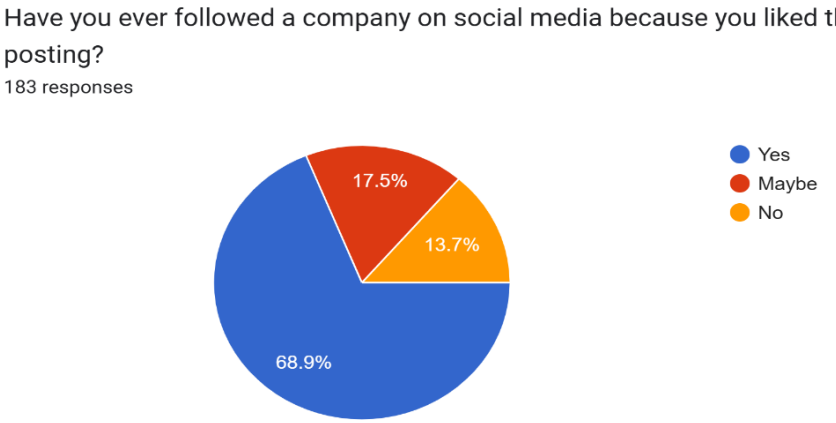


Figure 4. Following a company on social media because of its content.

Yes was the most popular answer (68.9%), followed by Maybe (17.5%) and No (13.7%).

Consumers may follow brands as they offer interesting and informative content. Stationery brands can gain followers by providing interesting content such as journaling ideas, study tips, product demos and creative stationery videos.

9.5 Content type attracting most attention

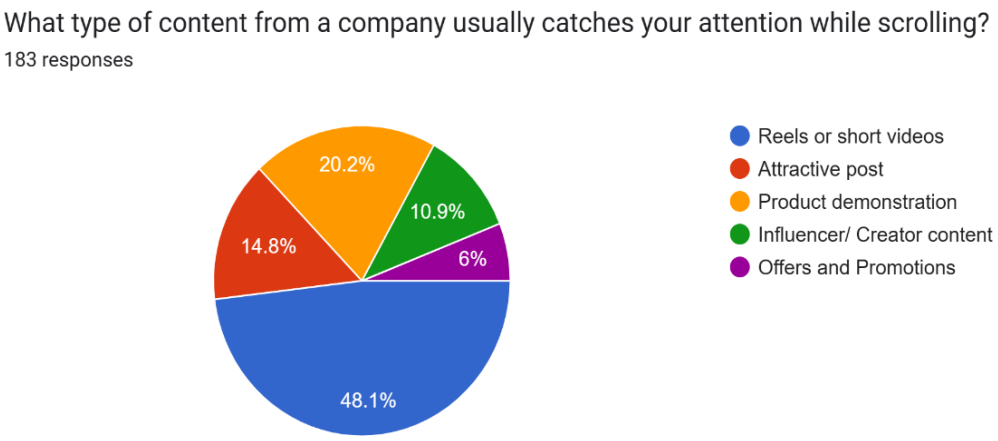


Figure 5. Type of company content that catches attention while scrolling.

Reels and short videos were the most popular (48.1%), followed by Product Demos (20.2%).

Short videos may be more engaging as they can deliver information quickly. Stationery brands can use short videos to show off their pen quality, notebook designs and creative ways to use their products. Interesting content helps brand recall

9.6 Interesting content makes a brand easier to remember

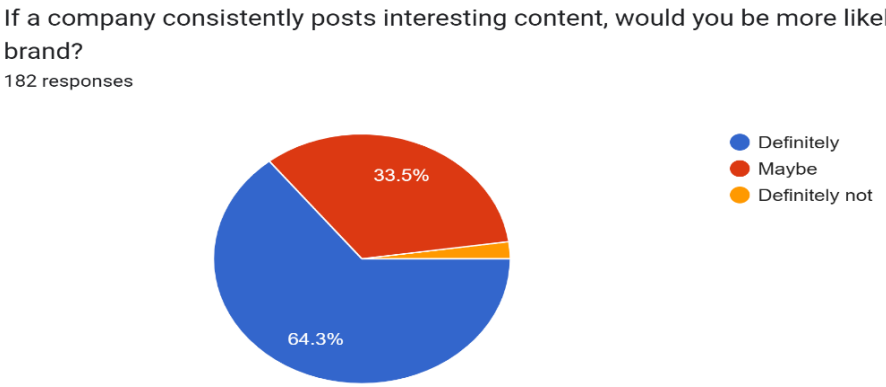


Figure 6. Likelihood of remembering a brand that consistently posts interesting content.

Definitely was the most popular (64.3%), followed by Maybe (33.5%) and Definitely Not (2.3%). Interesting content may leave a lasting impression as it is often very aesthetically pleasing, creative and brands are seen often. Stationery brands can use consistent designs, logos and engaging videos to increase brand recognition.

9.7 Social media page communicates brand identity

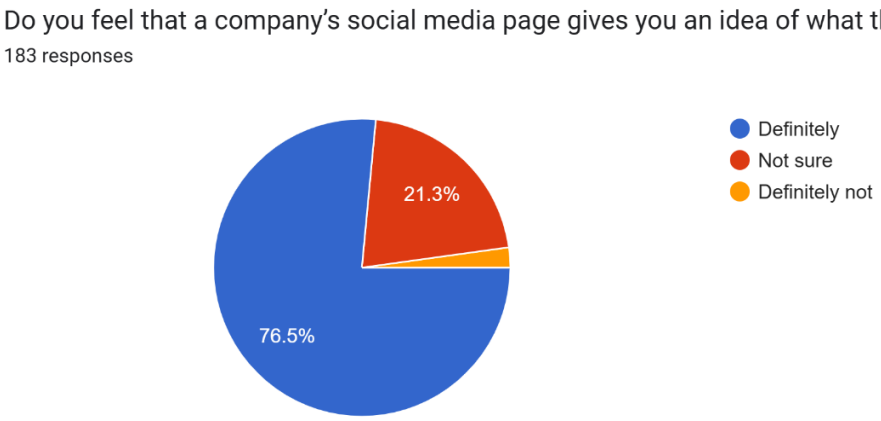


Figure 7. Whether a company's social media page gives an idea of what the brand is like.

Definitely was the most popular (76.5%), followed by Not Sure (21.3%) and Definitely Not (2.2%). Consumers may be able to identify a brands personality based on the logo, colours used, how products are presented and how they communicate. Stationery brands should keep their brand identity consistent so they stand out from their competitors.

9.8 Creative product presentations increase interest

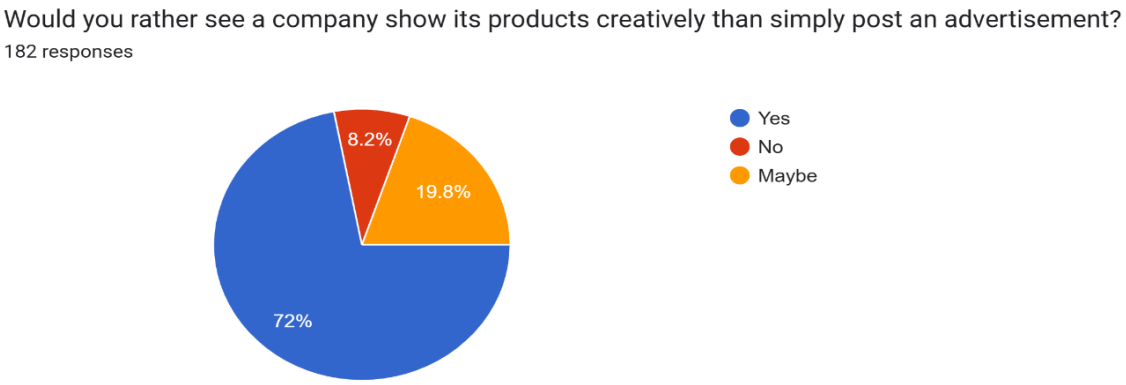


Figure 8. Preference for creative product presentation over a simple advertisement.

Definitely was the most popular (76.5%), followed by Not Sure (21.3%) and Definitely Not (2.2%). Consumers may be able to identify a brands personality based on the logo, colours used, how products are presented and how they communicate. Stationery brands should keep their brand identity consistent so they stand out from their competitors.

9.9 Online responses make a brand approachable

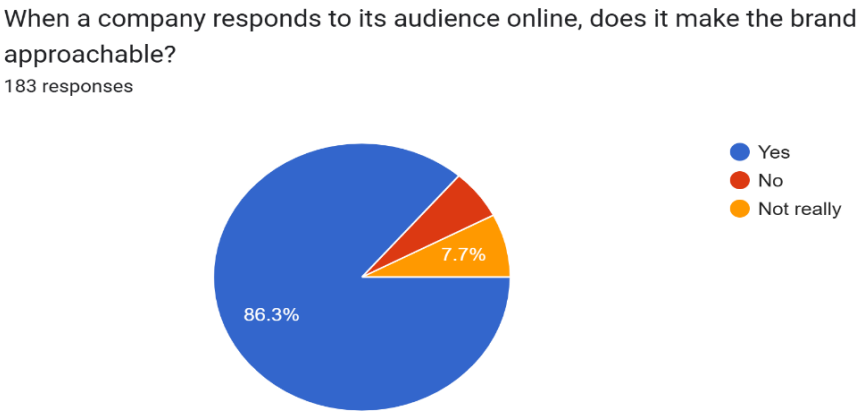


Figure 9. Whether responding to the audience online makes a brand seem more approachable.

Yes was the most popular (86.3%), followed by Not Really (7.7%) and No (5.9%).

Consumers may like brands which are quick to reply to questions. Stationery brands should reply to questions about pricing, stock availability, product quality and features to build trust with consumers.

9.10 Social media helps build relationships with consumers

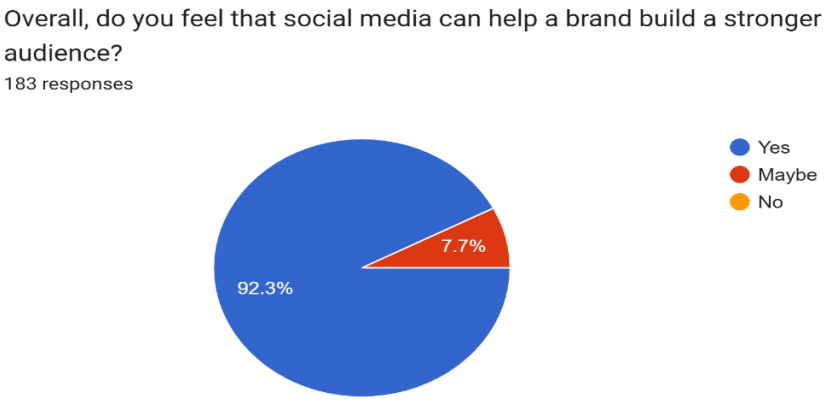


Figure 10. Whether social media can help a brand build a stronger connection with its audience.

Yes was the most popular (92.3%), followed by Maybe (7.7%). Social media allows brands to interact with consumers via comments, messages, polls and feedback. Stationery brands can encourage customers to share their creative work, enter competitions and give product suggestions.

10 Key findings on social media and consumer perceptions

- Social media can be effective in creating brand awareness.
- Instagram is the most popular platform. Visual content can give users an understanding of how to use the products.

- Reels, short videos and demonstrations had the most attention. Generally, more interesting content meant greater brand awareness.
- Creative presentation of products meant a higher level of interest. Therefore, to improve interest, stationery brands should consider providing clear visual examples and demonstrations of their products.
- Most people agreed that information can be gained from the brand's social media page.
- Commenting and messaging with customers increases perception of the brand being friendly.
- Most people agreed that using social media helps brands form better relationships with consumers.

11 Discussion

77.5% of people discovered brands via social media. This backs up Saima and Khan (2021) as it highlights the effect credible influencers and high quality content has.

Instagram was the most popular social media platform (79.1%), and Reels received the most attention (48.1%). Therefore supporting Rajarathinam et al. (2022) as it highlights how social media marketing and engagement can influence buyer behaviour.

64.3% felt that interesting content increased brand recognition. This supports Sharma et al. (2024) as it highlights the importance of online recommendations and reviews for increasing brand awareness, and intending to make purchases.

86.3% place value on responses given by brands online. This supports Meenu (2025) as it highlights how brand reliability and communication via online platforms can increase consumer engagement.

Lastly, 92.3% feel that social media improves the relationship between brands and audiences. This supports Garima and Sheokand (2024) as they investigated how social media marketing and online recommendations can affect consumer attitudes.

12 Recommendations for stationery brands

12.1 Variety of content

A variety of content should be posted in line with your target audience (students, professionals, parents, artists). This could include informative content, how-to guides, inspirational designs, new product updates and behind the scenes content.

12.2 Clear and helpful information

It is important to provide clear information on features, materials, sizes, colours, what they can be used for and the benefits of products. This can be done using eye-catching images, short videos and brief descriptions. This will allow customers to have a better understanding of stationery products.

12.3 Brand consistency

Across all social media platforms, stationery brands should be consistent with brand style, image style of products and tone of content. However, content can be tailored to each platform.

12.4 Engagement

Questions and comments should be replied to in a timely and respectful fashion. Including polls, asking questions and requesting feedback can allow stationery businesses to understand more about their audience interests and create engagement.

12.5 Partner with relevant creators

Stationery brands can partner with creators who are relevant to writing/ study/ journaling/ art/ organisation/ or office. Partnerships should be authentic, trustworthy and fit in with the aims of the campaign.

13 Conclusion

It appears that social media marketing has had a positive effect on increasing awareness, influencing preferences and creating engagement within consumers. Instagram was the most popular platform used by respondents. Reels, short videos, and product demonstrations had the highest engagement. Interesting content may lead to increased brand recognition. Creativity within product demonstrations may increase interest in products. Responding to comments online can create a brand that feels more accessible.

Therefore, creating visually engaging content, providing useful information about products, creating brand consistency, and responding to customers may be effective ways for stationery brands to engage with consumers. This could allow for features and uses of stationery products to be communicated to consumers, increasing brand recognition. It should be noted however, that the questions asked in this questionnaire were very general regarding brand perception and social media, so the results do not give specific information about stationery choices, or preferences of specific stationery brands.

To effectively perform social media marketing, brands must know their audience. They must provide appropriate content types that inform consumers effectively on their product. Good customer relations must be formed, and performance should be measured. Having a planned digital strategy in stationery brands within India can be effective at increasing brand awareness and engagement. However, more research should be conducted into the effectiveness of this strategy in the stationery market with respect to influencing purchasing decisions.

14 Limitations and future scope

Due to the nature of the survey it is possible that results do not accurately portray all consumer types, ages and regions within India. The results do not provide factual data on brand choices and consumer purchasing habits as specific brands of stationery, company sales data and campaign effectiveness was not investigated.

Further research could be conducted with a wider variety of participants. Questions relating to specific brands of stationery, and what type, quality, design, price, how often and where consumers purchase stationery products could be included. A comparison between different social media platforms and content to determine the most effective marketing strategies for different consumer groups could be considered.

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