

## **Social media : Empowering Women Entrepreneurs**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper dwells upon the role of social media on promoting women entrepreneurship in India. These days entrepreneurs are using social media as an important tool for promoting their businesses. It provides understanding into how digitalisation through social technologies enables micro-enterprises in exploiting their social networks for marketing. It's been nearly two decades since social media has become a powerful tool to communicate with friends and family all across the globe. Due to the adoption of 'Digital India' initiatives, digitization has reached the rural areas as well and this has opened the doors for women entrepreneurs in rural cities of India. Social media networks on the internet have enabled immediate connections to new markets, suppliers, and customers in ways that were not possible before. Social media with limitless connectivity has paved the ground for millions of people to find online jobs for themselves or create businesses for others globally. Women entrepreneurship is not an exception where millions of women are using these social media for business purposes. Moreover, this study explains how women use these social media effectively in their businesses and what are the factors which help these individual business women in the online business on social media. In addition, this study incorporates success stories of a few women entrepreneurs who have used digital media as a tool to give a boost to their businesses.

**KEYWORDS:** Women Entrepreneurs, Social media, Digital Marketing.

## **WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS**

The increasing presence of women as entrepreneurs has led to the change in the demographic characteristics of business and economic growth of the country. Women-owned businesses enterprises are playing a prominent role in society inspiring others and generating more employment opportunities in the country. There is a need for sustainable growth of women entrepreneurs, to promote a balanced growth in the country. Social media platforms with its dynamic nature and intensive reach have helped many women entrepreneurs to identify new business opportunities and sales leads online for developing their business. The idea of “Minimum investment, Maximum profit” in E-commerce business is helping women entrepreneurs to start their businesses while working from the comfort of their homes. Thousands of women are selling products around different categories like jewelry, home furnishing, handicrafts, home utility products, fashion apparel and accessories, etc through E-commerce platforms. Without stepping out of their home, they are generating business through Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram and many other platforms. Even women entrepreneurs with formal registered business also extensively use social media for deeper customer reach and developing their personal brands.

### **HOW SOCIAL MEDIA AND NETWORKING PLATFORMS EMPOWER WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS?**

Traditionally, women have been discouraged from working or building their independent businesses. But eventually, contemporary women are beginning to find success by building microbusinesses that rely on online tools like social media. Indian women in particular rely on social media for attracting the attention of new customers: 63 per cent of these enterprises use social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook for promotion. The role of social media in business allows female entrepreneurs to connect not only with other women who are building businesses but with their idyllic customers. Internet and the [use of social media in business](#) has made entrepreneurship newly accessible for millions of female entrepreneurs around the world.

The old fallacy that women are “technologically challenged” has been debunked by a new generation of tech savvy women entrepreneurs and the

traditional goal of finding a job has evolved into women now in the business creating them.

As per a study by the World Conference on Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, “Flexibility has been enthusiastically welcomed since it is believed that it provides a balance between work and personal life, especially in terms of women's participation. While concerning flexibility much of the literature focuses on women in terms of their family responsibilities. It is argued that flexible work arrangements help women with children by reducing their stress. Thus, they become more productive and satisfied with their jobs.”

### **BUILDING EASY NETWORKS AND CONNECTING WITH CUSTOMERS HAS BECOME EASIER**

Traditional forms of marketing relied on investing a lot of resources and managing all the expenditure by itself. Social media, on the other hand, has led to more effective ways of marketing. Marketing campaigns can be easily handled with the use of powerful social media marketing offers. This has helped women to invest significantly in social media for starting businesses. It allows easy collaboration with other entrepreneurs and building one's own social network has become easier.

### **DIRECT INTERACTION WITH CUSTOMERS WHICH CAN LEAD TO INCREASED ENGAGEMENT**

Nothing can outweigh the importance of directly building ones market through social media channels. With increasing social media marketing, companies can directly share their offers, product updates with customers to enhance their experience. Women entrepreneurs are exploiting this form of communication to increase their visibility in the market. According to reports, women are using social media channels to promote their businesses and personal brands by leaps and bounds as compared to male counterparts.

### **INCREASED COLLABORATIONS CAN LEAD TO HUGE PROFITS**

Building one's loyal customers using social media platforms can be a tedious task in hand. Women entrepreneurs can connect with a larger community of businesses to diversify their networks. Collaboration can be extremely helpful in this regard as it can lead to increased online visibility of one's own

brand. This can particularly benefit women as they are ready to help each other as compared to male counterparts.

Social media and networking platforms are powerful tools in the present times. They play an important role in empowering women entrepreneurs especially in rural cities in various ways. Some of the major ways through which they extend a helping hand is by :

- Helping women connect with existing and prospective consumers
- Enabling them to connect with each other and enforce the creation of a network or community that fosters a collaborative environment
- Giving them the flexibility to work from home while simultaneously managing their homes and families
- Giving them a platform to transform their dream or concept into a business venture
- Providing them access to necessary training and resources
- Accessing business activities and deals from the comfort of their homes
- Helping increase their sales and revenue
- Helping them build their brand
- Helping bridge the technical gap by providing necessary trainings to build knowledge and skills

### **SOCIAL MEDIA TREND: INSTAGRAM VS. FACEBOOK**

The Facebook still preserves its function as a primary source of marketing communication, it seems that it has lost the ground to a more recent social networking site, Instagram. All Participants except one state that Instagram is more eligible for businesses since it permits to communicate with not only acquaintances but also people that one does not somehow know. This new platform serves more for marketing communications by its feature as “hashtaging” (#).

### **MALE VS FEMALE: WHO USES MORE SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING FOR BUSINESSES?**

- An Intel study reveals that 33% of women in Latin America use Facebook as a way to communicate with friends and that 8 out of 10

prefer using social networks to connect better with others through chats. Men mostly tend to compile information, check videos and create content, and prefer giving their opinion on different issues on Twitter.

- As to content generated by different brands on social networks, we can also make distinctions between the two genders. While women tend to know the news, sales and discounts, men only follow them because they like them or because they identify with the brand but they do not engage in a relationship with the company that they are following. Women, however, generate feedback; they give their opinion on products and participate in sweepstakes, among others.

Women are more active on social media; they use it more and participate more than men. This is why it is believed that they will mark trends from now on, since they have typically adapted more and better to the technology. The increasing active participation of women and teens is in part due to an emotional component that prevails in each action that they carry out on social networks, including purchases. This is why many brands and institutions have strategies that directly target women with messages using touchy pictures, warm colors, direct but kind language, and videos with catchy yet sophisticated music.

## **SUCCESS STORIES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS USING SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **Falguni Nayyar**

One of the fastest growing e-com websites in the country is Nykaa.com. Falguni Nayyar is the woman behind it all. She has tied up with multiple makeup brands to become the biggest beauty and wellness online retailer in the country. After working 20 years as an investment banker with Kotak Mahindra, she left the job to pursue her own dream. In 2012, she started company Nykaa, which sells online cosmetic and wellness products. Today, the company has become so famous among Indian women. The company offers more than 850 brands and has introduced 35 physical stores. In 2017, she got the title of “Most powerful business “by Business Today. She also received the “Woman Ahead” award at the Economic Times.

### **Sabina Chopra**

Sabina Chopra is the Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer (COO) of corporate hotels at [Yatra Online Inc.](#). Yatra Online Inc. is an Indian company which offers online travel agency services. It is headquartered in [Gurugram](#), Haryana, India. It enables its users to book airline, railway and bus tickets online as well as car and hotel accommodations for customers. Under her leadership, the company experienced a substantial growth. Yatra is today one of the largest online travel-related websites in India.

### **Richa Kar**

Eradicating a very big social stigma of women being embarrassed for purchasing lingerie at brick and mortar shops in India, Richa Kar has successfully founded Zivame, one of the country's leading online lingerie portals that is now changing and enhancing consumer behaviour in this space.

### **Suchi Mukherjee**

In 2012, Suchi Mukherjee created an online clothing and lifestyle accessories marketplace named Limeroad. Today this company is known as India's most stylish online shopping website for men and women.

### **Aditi Gupta – The Co-founder of Menstrupedia**

Aditi Gupta is an author and co-founder of Menstrupedia. Aditi and her husband created a comic book to illustrate and educate girls about menstruation. Later, they created a website called menstrupedia.com. In 2014, Menstrupedia became a partner with Whisper India for their school contact program and presented “Touch the Pickle”; this movement occurred in four different cities.

### **Radhika Ghai**

Equipped with more than 15 years of marketing experience in several industries such as Fashion & lifestyle, advertising & public relations, and others. She became Co-founder of Shopclues.com. Today, this e-commerce business has become India's largest fully managed marketplace and has over 7 million visitors each month. The company serves more than 9 thousand cities. Her achievement makes her innovative tech [women entrepreneurs in India](#).

## **CONCLUSION :**

### **Challenges Faced while using Social Media for Businesses**

While social media gives you the chance to build brand awareness and customer loyalty, there are also dangers in participating in a public conversation forum. You need to have a clear idea of how to handle negative feedback about your business. You need to ensure that what you post and how you interact with people presents a professional image to the world. Writing down a set of rules for how you will manage social media can help you to steer through the challenges. It's important to consider the [legal implications and best practice using social media](#) in order to avoid problems. Business use of social media has also raised customer expectations. They now expect immediacy in their online interactions - where content is regularly updated and any comments they make are quickly replied to. You should consider how these expectations will be managed. Although social media facilitates potential customers to access the online portfolios of participants, this open access to photos also causes their rivals who follow them to imitate their works. Thus, this characteristic of social media works has both merits and demerits. Also, there have been an unlimited number of potential customers on social media, it is not always possible for entrepreneurs to identify their target audience. Anyone who has access to social media has to be considered among the target audience even if not. And this means they may waste time and effort for the audience who are out of their target.

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