

ROLE OF DIGITAL MARKETING IN THE SALE OF INDIAN ETHNIC WEAR**DR. VAISHALI SINGH AND MS. ROSHAL CHINNU VINU****ABSTRACT**

The growth and popularity of Indian ethnic clothes, which has a rich cultural history, have been made possible by digital marketing. This essay looks at how important digital platforms are to the selling of Indian ethnic clothes and how important digital marketing strategies are in this ever-changing sector.

Digitalization is driving a drastic revolution in the Indian ethnic wear market, which is expected to reach a valuation of USD 18.68 billion by the end of 2024. Online shopping platforms have made ethnic apparel more broadly available by offering a large selection of reasonably priced options. The surge in internet shopping has altered consumer behaviour and industry dynamics. The apparel market has grown at a remarkable rate of more than 50% in just one year.

Indian ethnic wear producers today need to use efficient digital marketing strategies in order to thrive in this digital age. Search engine optimisation (SEO) and social media marketing (SMM) are now the cornerstones of brand visibility and engagement. While SEO measures like on-page optimisation and the creation of high-quality content boost a business's online exposure, social media marketing (SMM) strategies leverage platforms like Facebook and Instagram to foster real-time engagement and brand loyalty.

Email campaigns, mobile outreach, and content marketing are all essential components of a comprehensive digital marketing strategy. Personalised email campaigns, mobile apps, SMS marketing, and the distribution of instructional materials are all ways that brands can boost customer engagement and boost revenue.

In order to demonstrate the success that may be achieved with adept usage of digital marketing strategies, Manyavar is utilised as a case study. Manyavar experienced a rise in website traffic, sales growth, and brand engagement through the implementation of influencer partnerships, targeted email marketing, and captivating social media campaigns. In this dynamic market, brands must embrace innovation, understand customer behaviour, and stay abreast of emerging trends if they are to succeed over the long term.

Keywords: *Indian ethnic wear, digital marketing, online shopping, consumer behaviour, digital platforms, brand visibility, brand engagement, digitalization, Manyavar, innovation*

INTRODUCTION:**The rich history and cultural significance of Indian ethnic wear**

Indian ethnic clothing is a topic of interest in the context of digital marketing because it has a rich cultural legacy and appeals to a broad spectrum of consumers. The great cultural diversity of the subcontinent is reflected in Indian traditional attire, which has its origins in centuries-old rituals and artistry (Anand, 2017).

For instance, in Indian culture, the saree is a specific article of clothing that stands for beauty, elegance, and tradition (Kapoor, 2019). With its historical origins, it has evolved into a versatile piece of apparel that complements a variety of combinations while maintaining a stylish appearance. Similar to the salwar kameez, lehenga choli, and kurta pyjama, these traditional Indian outfits are richly woven into the fabric of Indian culture and have regional variations (Singh & Sinha, 2015).

For many ceremonial and cultural occasions, including religious festivals and marriages, Indian ethnic attire is required (Kapoor, 2019). Every piece of clothing has deep symbolic importance, embodying the beliefs, customs, and rituals of numerous Indian communities (Anand, 2017).

Due to a number of factors, such as diaspora communities, globalisation, and the growing influence of Bollywood fashion, Indian traditional attire has grown in popularity recently on a global scale (Kaur, 2020). As a result, the market for Indian ethnic apparel has expanded significantly beyond previous limits and attracted a diverse clientele from both India and outside (Singh & Sinha, 2015).

Despite this, the advent of digital marketing has caused a paradigm shift in the way Indian ethnic clothing is promoted and consumed. Through the virtual marketplace on digital platforms, people may find, engage with, and purchase a range of Indian ethnic clothes from the comfort of their homes (Kaur, 2020).

Rise of online shopping in India and its impact on the fashion industry

The fashion industry in India has been greatly affected by the growth of online shopping, especially in the ethnic wear area. As per a report published by Statista in 2023, it is anticipated that the Indian e-commerce market will attain a valuation of 200 billion US dollars by 2027. Numerous causes, such as the ease provided by online shopping platforms, rising smartphone usage, and the expanding prevalence of the internet, can be ascribed to this exponential growth.

Online purchasing has made traditional Indian clothing more accessible to a wider audience when it comes to ethnic apparel. To buy ethnic clothing, customers may now peruse a wide selection from the convenience of their homes rather of having to go to actual stores or drive to particular areas. According to a RedSeer Consulting report, the apparel industry, which includes ethnic wear, makes up a sizeable amount of e-commerce sales in India and is growing at a rate of more than 50% annually (RedSeer Consulting, 2022).

Online shopping platforms have also made it easier for niche and local firms to be discovered and to reach a wider audience outside of their local marketplaces. Customers are now exposed to a wide variety of styles, patterns, and pricing points as a result of this diversification of offers. As a result, smaller competitors now have opportunity to flourish as the larger fashion houses' traditional dominance is challenged.

Online purchasing has a greater influence on the fashion business than just sales numbers. It has also affected the expectations and behaviour of consumers. According to a study that was published in the International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education, consumers' expectations for product availability, delivery time, and customer service have increased due to the ease, variety, and transparency that online platforms provide (Hwang & Yoon, 2020). Traditional brick and mortar retailers have had to modify their business models in order to stay competitive in the digital era due to this shift in consumer thinking.

Customers may now make better informed purchases thanks to online purchasing. Before making a purchase, consumers may learn more about the fit, quality, and styling of ethnic clothing through user reviews, product ratings, and social media endorsements. The fashion industry has adopted a transparent and accountable culture as a result of the democratisation of information, which forces firms to put consumer pleasure and product quality first.

The fashion sector in India has experienced significant changes due to the growth of internet shopping, especially in the ethnic wear market. Businesses need to embrace innovation, adjust to shifting customer tastes, and harness the power of digital marketing if they want to remain relevant in this ever-changing marketplace as more and more consumers turn to digital platforms for their buying requirements.

Introduction to Digital Marketing for Indian Ethnic Wear Brands

A thriving and essential component of India's rich cultural legacy is the ethnic wear sector. Every Indian's wardrobe is adorned with a treasured collection of ethnic wear, ranging from classic sarees to stunning lehengas and designer Kurtis. Digital marketing is becoming increasingly important in determining how successful ethnic wear firms are as the market develops. This is the reason why:

1. Market Size and Growth: Research from Technavio indicates that the Indian ethnic wear market is projected to develop at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8% to reach USD 18.68 billion by the end of 2024. Growing middle class, greater disposable income, and a growing inclination towards traditional clothes are some of the factors behind this growth.

2. Demographics and Target Audience:

- **Age Groups:** The market serves a range of age groups, such as Gen Z and millennial. Younger shoppers are very interested in ethnic clothing, which is fuelling the market for modern fusion trends.
- **Geography:** Metro cities are important hubs for ethnic clothing buying, but both rural and urban areas contribute to the market. Demand is also higher in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities as a result of growing disposable incomes and easier access to fashion trends.
- **Psychographics:** A consumer's lifestyle and tastes affect the ethnic clothing they choose. While some people like traditional designs, others look for sustainable and modern modifications.

3. Competitive Landscape:

- A few of the major companies in the ethnic clothing business are Ritu Kumar, Anita Dongre, Biba, Manyavar, Fabindia, and W for Women. These companies have made a name for themselves with distinctive designs, high-quality goods, and robust distribution systems. Biba is the market leader in women's ethnic wear, while Manyavar is the market leader in men's ethnic wear.

4. Branding Strategies:

- **Heritage Storytelling:** To connect with customers looking for genuine ethnic wear experiences, brands can use their origin tales to highlight the cultural significance behind their designs.
- **Celebrities and Influencers:** Brand appeal is increased and a wider audience is reached through partnerships with social media influencers and Bollywood stars.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Promoting socially and environmentally conscientious production techniques draws in customers who care about the environment.
- **Digital marketing:** To connect tech-savvy consumers and remain relevant in the digital age, brands need to make investments in social media and online platforms.

5. Opportunities and Challenges:

- **Online Presence:** The industry has grown as a result of the popularity of large ethnic wear companies among young people and their online presence.
- **Innovation:** To adapt to changing consumer demands, brands must innovate in sustainability, customisation, and design.
- **Competition:** Since entering the ethnic market, international brands like Van Heusen, H&M, Raymond, and Peter England have increased the level of competition.

In an increasingly digital world, digital marketing is essential for Indian ethnic wear brands to engage with customers, boost brand awareness, and increase sales.

Image 1: Ethnic Wear Market Size, Share, Growth & Forecast expected to 2031.



Source: www.alliedmarketresearch.com

The digital marketing landscape for Indian ethnic wear, focusing on Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Social Media Marketing (SMM)

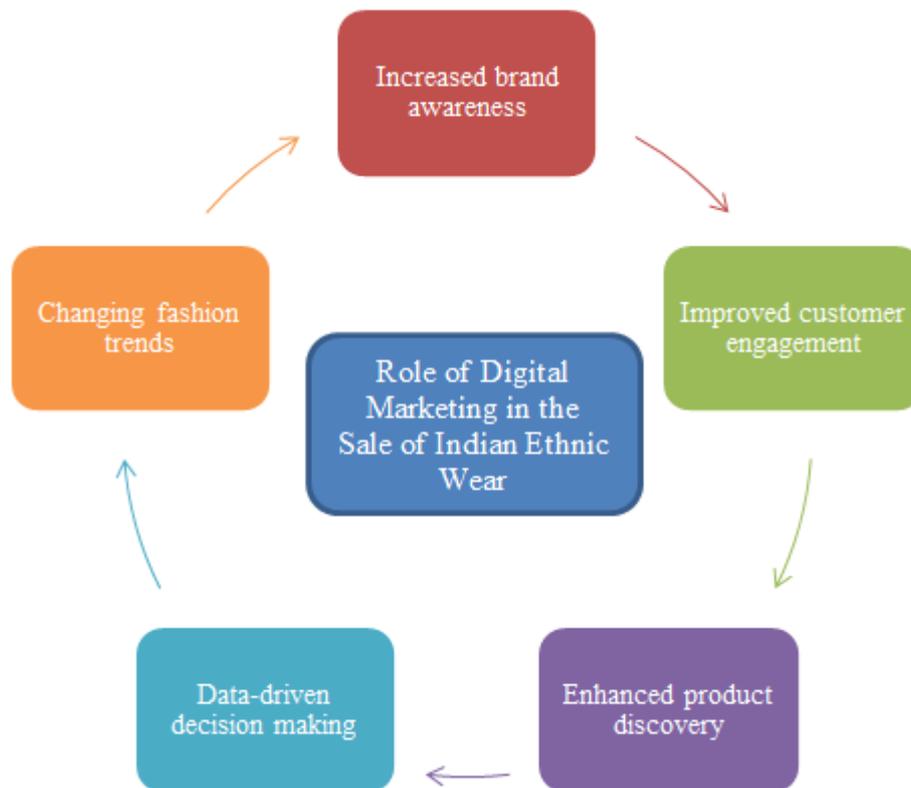


Fig 1: The Role of Digital Marketing in Selling Indian Ethnic Wear

1. Search Engine Optimization (SEO):

Definition: Increasing a website's exposure in natural search engine results is done through SEO. The objective is to appear higher for certain Indian ethnic wear-related keywords on search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo.

- **On-Page SEO:** This entails making the website's content more optimised. URL structures, meta descriptions, and titles are important components. It is important to properly place target keywords in order to improve ranking and relevance.
- **Backlinks:** Establishing authority and credibility can be facilitated by constructing high-quality backlinks from reliable websites.
- **Quality Content:** It's crucial to produce insightful, worthwhile material that appeals to the intended audience.

➤ **Benefits:**

- **Long-Term Impact:** Over time, steady organic traffic is driven by SEO efforts, which produce results that last.
- **Authority Building:** Trust and authority for a brand are increased by effective SEO.
- **Economical:** Constant advertising expenditure is not necessary for organic traffic.

2. Social Media Marketing (SMM)

Definition: SMM makes use of social media sites (including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn) to establish a connection with the public, increase brand recognition, and increase website traffic.

➤ Strategies:

- **Content Creation:** Producing interesting posts videos, and photographs on Indian traditional attire.
- **Paid Advertising:** Using social media channels to run focused ad campaigns.
- **Community Engagement:** Creating a sense of community by interacting with followers and answering their remarks.

➤ Immediate Benefits:

- **Brand Visibility:** SMM expands a brand's reach rapidly.
- **Real-Time Interaction:** Direct communication with possible clients.
- **Viral Potential:** Shareable material has the potential to go viral.

➤ Considerations:

- **Consistency:** It's important to post and monitor on a regular basis.
- **Platform Selection:** Pick spaces that are appropriate for your target audience.
- **Analytics:** Monitor key performance indicators.

In the Indian ethnic wear sector, combining SEO and SMM into a comprehensive digital marketing approach is crucial. While social media marketing (SMM) delivers instant visibility and engagement, SEO offers long-term benefits.

1. Content Marketing:

- **Definition:** In order to draw in and keep the interest of a target audience, content marketing entails producing and disseminating worthwhile, timely, and consistent information. Blog entries, videos, social media updates, and educational pieces about traditional attire, styling advice, and cultural importance can all be considered content for Indian ethnic wear brands.

➤ Benefits:

- **Brand Awareness:** The authority and exposure of a brand are established through consistent content.
- **Audience Engagement:** People connect with and become loyal to high-quality content.
- **SEO Boost:** Content that is relevant raises its position in search results.

As example, a company may write a blog series detailing the evolution of various saree draping techniques or providing behind-the-scenes looks at their creative process.

2. Email Marketing:

- **Purpose:** Personalised emails from brands enable direct communication with their audience through email marketing. Regarding ethnic clothing companies:
- **Product Updates:** Talk about new products, special offers, and seasonal collections.
- **Loyalty Programmes:** Offer exclusive deals to devoted clients.
- **Instructional Content:** Offer styling advice, maintenance guidelines, and cultural context.

➤ Best Practices:

- **Segmentation:** Customise emails according to the tastes and actions of your recipients.
- **Captivating Subject Lines:** Make the recipient want to click through to the email.
- **Mobile Optimisation:** Make sure emails work properly on smaller screens.

As an example, an Indian ethnic clothing company may send out an email featuring Diwali-specific attire along with a customised discount coupon.

3. Mobile Marketing:

- **Mobile Apps:** For flawless shopping experiences, brands can create mobile apps.
- **SMS marketing:** Disseminate customised SMS messages regarding specials, the latest arrivals, and events.
- **Push Notifications:** Engage consumers with app notifications.
- **Location-Based Marketing:** Deliver offers to users in the vicinity of real-world establishments.

Example: A smartphone app for a company that sells ethnic clothing would let customers digitally try on lehengas or sarees and get tailored recommendations.

Email campaigns, mobile outreach, and content marketing should all be a part of an all-encompassing digital marketing plan for Indian ethnic clothing.

CASE STUDY: A DIGITAL SUCCESS STORY

This is a case study of an Indian ethnic wear company's digital success story, the Manyavar. This company has achieved amazing success by skilfully utilising digital marketing techniques.

Manyavar: A Digital Triumph

Background

When Ravi Modi created Manyavar in 1999, it changed the Indian market for ethnic menswear. Realising there weren't many competitors in this market, Modi decided to launch a company that honours traditional attire while adding a contemporary touch.

Digital Marketing Strategies:

1. **Influencer Partnerships:** Manyavar has partnered with social media influencers and Bollywood celebrities. These collaborations increased brand awareness and connected with the intended market.
 - Influencers produced aspirational content by showcasing Manyavar clothing at weddings, festivals, and other special events.
2. **Interactive Social Media Campaigns:** Using Facebook and Instagram, Manyavar ran interactive campaigns to engage users.
 - User-generated content, surveys, and contests boosted engagement and the relationship between the brand and the community.
3. **Personalised Email Marketing:** Manyavar shared product updates, special deals, and styling advice via email marketing.
 - User preference-based personalisation increased engagement and increased revenue.

Results:

1. **Increased Website Traffic:** Manyavar's digital initiatives brought about a sharp increase in website traffic. Enthusiasts of ethnic attire went to their easily navigable website to view the newest collections.
 2. **Sales Growth:** A significant increase in sales was a result of the brand's internet presence. Quality ethnic apparel has been a favourite option for shoppers using Manyavar's e-commerce platform.
 3. **Brand Engagement:** Personalised mailings, influencer partnerships, and social media exchanges all promoted robust brand engagement.
 - Customers were moved by Manyavar's promotions, which strengthened their adherence to the brand.
- Manyavar became a household name in India thanks to its skill in digital marketing. Manyavar achieved tremendous success in the highly competitive ethnic apparel sector by utilising influencers, interactive advertising, and personalised communication.

Table 1: Comparing the digital marketing strategies used by the Manyavar different platforms (website, social media, email).

Digital Marketing Strategy	Website	Social Media	Email
Content	Detailed product descriptions, lookbooks, and style guides.	Engaging posts featuring customer testimonials, behind-the-scenes footage, and user-generated content.	Personalized newsletters with exclusive offers, new arrivals, and styling tips.
Engagement	Live chat support for customer queries, easy navigation, and intuitive design.	Direct engagement through likes, comments, and shares. Prompt responses to customer queries. Influencer collaborations.	Interactive emails with call-to-action buttons and feedback forms. Segmenting email lists for targeted campaigns based on customer behavior. A/B testing subject lines and content. Regularly updating email list. Analyzing email open and click rates.
Personalization	Customized product recommendations based on browsing history.	Tailored content based on user preferences and demographics. Targeted ads based on user behavior. Geotargeted promotions.	Personalized subject lines and content based on past purchases and browsing behavior. Dynamic content insertion.
Performance Tracking	Conversion tracking for purchases, page views, and bounce rates. Integration with Google Analytics.	Social media analytics tracking for engagement, reach, and follower growth. Monitoring hashtags and mentions. Competitor analysis.	Email open rates, click-through rates (CTR), conversion rates, and unsubscribes rates. Split testing different email designs and content formats. Monitoring email deliverability and spam complaints.

CONCLUSION

The world of traditional clothes has changed as a result of the convergence of digital marketing and Indian ethnic wear. The main conclusions are as follows:

1. **Digital Transformation:** - The way ethnic clothing brands interact with customers has been transformed by digital marketing. Brands today connect consumers through a variety of touch points, from influencer partnerships to customised email marketing.

- Online platforms have replaced traditional brick-and-mortar retailers, which has increased sales and brand awareness.

2. **Effect on Consumer Behaviour:** - Today's consumers shop for ethnic clothing online, compare prices, and do their homework. Their purchasing decisions are influenced by digital outlets.

- Social media sites function as online marketplaces where companies may present their merchandise and engage with prospective customers.

3. **Upcoming Trends:** - Social Commerce: As social commerce gains traction, it incorporates shopping straight into social media networks. Facebook Marketplace and Instagram Shopping are two examples of services that brands may use to increase sales.

Individualised Suggestions: Algorithms powered by AI examine user behaviour to provide customised product recommendations. Companies that use this strategy improve consumer experiences and increase conversions.

4. **Constant Innovation and Adaptation:** - The digital world is changing quickly. Companies need to remain flexible and adjust to the evolving tastes of their customers.

- The future of ethnic wear marketing will be shaped by innovations like virtual try-ons, augmented reality-powered purchasing experiences, and sustainable practices.

Digital marketing is now a must for Indian ethnic wear brands—it is no longer a choice. These brands may prosper in the fast-paced digital age by embracing technology, comprehending consumer behaviour, and keeping up with the latest developments.

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