

# The influence of 4Cs of Social Media Marketing on digital marketing of NADEC Products in KSA

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## 1. Introduction

The primary goal of digital marketing is to effectively engage customers with brands, facilitating both brand attraction and interactive opportunities for customer-brand interactions. Digital media enables users to conveniently access content at their desired time and location, regardless of geographical constraints. In the realm of digital media, consumers place their trust not solely on the assertions made by companies regarding their brand, but also on the diverse array of marketing strategies employed in the digital sphere. These tactics predominantly leverage the Internet as the principal platform for advertising, alongside mobile devices, traditional television, and radio, to promote services, products, and brands.

The advent and widespread use of telephony, radio, television, and subsequently cable television have established electronic media as the prevailing force in marketing. One of the primary advantages associated with social media marketing is the potential for cost reduction and expanded audience reach. The financial expenditure associated with utilizing a social media platform for marketing purposes is generally more economical compared to alternative marketing platforms, such as direct personal sales or sales facilitated by middlemen or distributors. Moreover, the utilization of social media marketing enables firms to effectively target customers who may be inaccessible through conventional distribution methods, primarily owing to temporal and geographical limitations. In the realm of digital media, consumers are not solely dependent on the company's self-promotion, but rather digital marketing encompasses a diverse array of strategies employed to promote various services (Singh, A. 2019).

This study aims to investigate the impact of the 4Cs variables on consumers' attitudes towards digital advertising of dairy products in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, the objective is to examine how these factors influence consumers' views of digital advertising and their willingness to engage with such advertisements. This can assist dairy marketers in designing digital advertising efforts that are more efficacious in resonating with Saudi customers. These characteristics hold significance as they possess the ability to impact customers' emotional reactions towards advertising, subsequently influencing their opinions towards the brand and the marketed goods. For instance, when customers see the advertising content as being of superior quality, pertinent, and captivating, they are inclined to develop a favorable disposition towards the company. Likewise, if customers perceive the advertising as convenient and easily accessible, their inclination to interact with it is likely to increase (Jarad, G. A. 2020).

Over the course of time, dairy enterprises in Saudi Arabia, namely Almarai, Al Safi Danone, and Halwani, have predominantly employed conventional advertising techniques as a means to establish communication channels with their prospective clientele. The prioritization of mass marketing by dairy industries stems from their belief that customers form their perceptions of dairy goods through exposure to mass communication channels. According to a survey by IPSOS (2020), the total value of the advertising market in Saudi Arabia is estimated to be \$1.2 billion in US currency. Saudi Companies allocated around 80% of their advertising budget to traditional advertising methods, while the remaining 20% was dedicated to digital advertising. Nevertheless, the allocation of funds towards digital advertising had a notable increase, reaching a significant milestone of 50% in the year 2020. Insufficient empirical evidence exists pertaining to the allocation of financial resources towards advertising activities within the Saudi Arabian dairy industry.

Historically, the purchase patterns of the majority of Saudi customers have been heavily influenced by cultural values, traditions, and customs. Numerous studies have demonstrated that a considerable number of customers adhere to a conventional approach, characterized by offline search and recommendations from family members and friends. This behavior can be attributed to the impact of national culture (Mohammed, 2020). Numerous empirical studies have indicated a notable lack of acceptance towards technology and digital media within the Saudi Arabian cultural context. This phenomenon can be attributed to concerns related to trust and the perceived complexity associated with technology usage (Ugur, 2017). Additionally, it is worth noting that Saudi Arabia has garnered substantial audience from the older demographic through traditional media platforms, including television, radio, and print media, up until 2016. Consequently, the decision to focus on conventional media channels proved to be a dependable strategy for dairy companies (Abuljadail, M. H., & Ha, L. 2019).

The transition from conventional advertisements to digital advertisements is occurring rapidly. According to (Abuljadail, M. H., & Ha, L. 2019), failure to adapt to the significant environmental impacts of technology could result in Saudi Arabian dairy industries falling behind. The potential consequences for companies include a decline in market share, challenges in accessing lucrative client segments, and an inability to meet the demands of existing customers. According to PwC's report in 2019, failure to allocate resources towards digital advertising may result in the industry missing out on the potential to engage the younger demographic.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has had a substantial increase in its young population in recent years, as reported by the Global Management Indicator (GMI, 2019). The population of Saudi Arabia, as reported by (GMI, 2019), stands at 34.14 million individuals. Among the surveyed population, it was found that 26% of individuals belong to the millennial generation. The inclusion of Generation Z with the millennial cohort results in a combined percentage of 54%. The younger demographic exhibits distinct consumer views toward purchasing in the digital age, resulting in varied advertising behaviors (Al-harbi, 2020). The significance of the youth population and their conduct holds paramount importance for the forthcoming two decades in Saudi Arabia, as they constitute a substantial proportion of the overall populace (GMI, 2020). The perspectives, behaviors, and attitudes of the younger generation, encompassing millennials and Generation Z, diverge from those of earlier generations. Hence, directing attention towards the younger generation is a pivotal component of this study.

According to (Indahingwati, A., et al. 2019), the decision-making and purchasing behaviors of millennials are observed to be impacted by technological advancements and economic factors. advancements in technology have facilitated the access of diverse content for the younger generation through various sources like social media, blogs, videos, and more. Furthermore, it has been shown that the older demographic exhibits a higher degree of loyalty towards various products and brands, as evidenced by studies conducted by (Phua et al. 2020).

The younger demographic in contemporary society has exhibited a reduced reliance on social media platforms as a means of making informed decisions regarding brand selection or product choice. This shift in behavior can be attributed to the multiple economic recessions that the present generation has encountered (Deloitte, 2019). Significantly, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has seen financial difficulties as a result of fluctuations in oil prices, as evidenced by (Deloitte, 2019). These economic struggles have had a discernible impact on the views of the younger demographic, as highlighted by (Phua et al.2020), leading them to adopt a more frugal approach and exhibit heightened cost-consciousness, as also noted (Deloitte,2019). Consequently, this has resulted in a reduction in their expenditure on various consumer goods and services.

## **2. The 4Cs factors**

**According to** (Idris, J. 2021).

### **1. Consumer**

The term "consumer" refers to a person or organization that makes purchases of goods or services for their own personal use. The consumer, who stands for the individual who is accountable for utilizing the services or products offered by the firm, is the most important stakeholder that needs to be taken into consideration. Instead of putting all of their efforts into developing new products, businesses should make it their top priority to learn about the needs and wants of customers, and only then should they work to find solutions that meet those needs and wants. The development of a buyer persona is the first step in the process of gaining a better understanding of the customer. This is a largely fictional picture of the ideal customer for your company, with a particular emphasis on the criteria and difficulties faced by this consumer type.

### **2. Cost**

The idea of cost is accorded a great deal of significance in the realm of marketing due to the fact that it has the capability of having an effect on the return on investment. As an illustration, a loss of \$50 is experienced when an investment is made in a product that has a production cost of \$100 but is then sold for a paltry \$50 upon its introduction. In this scenario, the investment results in a deficit of \$50. When it comes to the process of deciding how to allocate capital, the cost of doing so is an important factor to take into account. The influence of cost on the target audience is another component that has an effect on return on investment (ROI). This indicates that there is the possibility for increased sales when a product is introduced that is aimed toward youngsters who are fashion-conscious as compared to projecting the same product towards adults who have a preference for sports as their primary activity. When it comes to the process of developing a marketing plan and identifying the most suitable customers to advertise to, the cost factor is an extremely important consideration. When it comes down to it, the consideration of cost plays a crucial part in choosing the allocation of cash towards advertising activities or the selection of an appropriate discount rate for financial endeavors.

### **3. Convenience**

The idea of convenience refers to the state or quality of being uncomplicated, productive, and applicable all at the same time. This relates to the degree to which consumers are able to interact with advertisements in a way that is user-friendly, hence aiding the consumers' capacity to gain extra information about the product being sold. Consumers have a greater propensity to create a positive attitude toward an advertisement when they are granted convenient access to extra information relevant to the product, including its pricing, nutritional composition, and retail availability. This is because consumers perceive advertisements as providing them with an opportunity to learn more about the product. The efficacy of advertising can be partially determined by the influence of interactive elements included in them, such as links that can be clicked on or QR codes that can be scanned

### **4. Communication**

Communication is the process of transmitting information and concepts from an individual or collective entity to another individual or collective entity. Communication can occur via various channels, including written, oral, and visual means. By employing effective communication strategies, individuals can successfully transmit their intended message, ensuring that it reaches the appropriate recipients. In the field of marketing, the act of communication entails the dissemination of pertinent information regarding one's organization and its offerings to prospective clientele. This can be achieved through conventional advertising methods, social media marketing initiatives, and oral recommendations. Proficiency in both the technical and non-technical dimensions of

communication is crucial for effectively engaging with one's intended audience. Establishing trust with one's target audience enhances the likelihood of securing their purchase over that of competitors. The establishment of trust and the enhancement of sales can be facilitated through the acquisition of a comprehensive comprehension of the linguistic preferences of the intended recipient group, along with the utilization of precise and appropriate messaging techniques (Ozturkoglu, Y. 2016).

➤ **When conducting this study, several factors must be taken into consideration:**

○ **Cultural Factors**

Saudi Arabia is a country that is distinguished by its steadfast devotion to the Islamic religion and by a culture that is predominately traditional in its outlook on life. It is anticipated that the impact of this phenomena will have an effect on the consumer behavior with regard to digital advertising in Saudi Arabia. Consumers residing in Saudi Arabia may demonstrate a greater inclination to hold favorable attitudes toward commercials that combine traditional values or advocate products that cater to family-oriented desires. This could be because traditional values are highly valued in Saudi Arabia.

○ **Technological factors**

You can use the term "external elements" to refer to the factors that have an impact on the creation, deployment, and use of technology inside a certain setting. The percentage of people in Saudi Arabia who have access to the internet is impressive, and the country also has a rapidly expanding market for mobile devices like smartphones. This suggests that there is a sizable demographic that is continually growing inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that is interested in digital advertising. Nevertheless, it is of the utmost importance to recognize that different clients in Saudi Arabia have varying degrees of access to technology resources. For instance, it is possible that people who live in rural areas have a reduced possibility of having internet connectivity or owning smartphones in comparison to their counterparts who live in urban areas.

**3. Challenges that face dairy industry in Saudi Arabia:**

According to (Alrobaish, W. S., et al 2021).

**1. The escalating expenses associated with the production process:**

In recent years, the production expenses associated with dairy products in Saudi Arabia have witnessed an upward trend, primarily attributed to elements encompassing escalating feed prices, surging energy expenditures, and a dearth of available workforce.

**2. The presence of imported products in the market has led to increased competition:**

Saudi Arabia is a country that mostly imports dairy products, and the presence of imported goods is exerting significant competitive strain on indigenous manufacturers.

**3. Government regulations:**

In recent years, the Saudi Arabian government has enacted a series of rules with the objective of enhancing the safety and quality of dairy products. Nevertheless, certain rules have posed challenges for domestic companies in terms of their ability to effectively compete.

**4. Water scarcity:**

Saudi Arabia is characterized by a scarcity of water resources, and the dairy industry within the country significantly contributes to the overall water consumption. The industry is confronted with a significant problem, particularly in light of the phenomenon of climate change.

**5. Consumer awareness:**

The lack of awareness among Saudi customers on the nutritional advantages associated with dairy products is impeding the expansion of the sector.

➤ **The Saudi Arabian government demonstrates cognizance of the obstacles encountered by the dairy sector and has implemented various measures to provide assistance and bolster the business. These measures include:**

According to (Alrwis, K. N., et al 2015).

**1. The provision of subsidies to dairy farmers:**

Dairy farmers receive subsidies from the government in order to mitigate the increasing expenses associated with production.

**2. The allocation of resources towards research and development endeavors:**

The government is allocating resources towards research and development initiatives aimed at enhancing the production and efficiency of the dairy industry.

**3. The promotion of dairy products to consumers:**

The government is actively engaging in the promotion of dairy products to customers by means of educational campaigns and several other efforts.

**➤ Examples of dairy companies in Saudi Arabia****○ Almarai company (Almarai)**

It was in the year 1977 when HH Prince Sultan bin Muhammed bin Saud Al-Kabeer had the idea to revolutionize the dairy business in the Kingdom, which led to the founding of the company. The company's name comes from the prince who conceived of the idea. This initiative aimed to satisfy the growing demand in the home market while also capitalizing on the technological advances that have been made in Europe. An Irish company called Masstock was hired as a consultant to develop the overarching structure for dairy production so that it would be in line with the most recent advances in technical innovation. Since then, Masstock has been heavily involved in the process of upgrading traditional Saudi dairy farming, making it one of the most advanced industries on a global scale as a result of their efforts. Almarai changed its business structure from that of a general partnership to that of a limited liability company in the year 1991. After then, in the year 2005, it went through yet another transformation, and this time it became a Saudi Joint Stock Company. After completing this transformation, Almarai was eventually able to achieve successful listing on the Saudi Arabian stock exchange. The firm was able to successfully achieve a position of leadership by establishing the brand name 'Almarai Company Trading Limited' and making the most of the good economic conditions in the region. Recognizing the strategic competitive advantage, it possessed, the firm launched a large investment project that resulted in cumulative capital expenditures of SR 1.1 billion (£ 174 million) between the years 1993 and 1997. This initiative was carried out in recognition of the company's strategic advantage. An innovative facility for the processing of dairy products has recently been built. This facility was designed to accommodate the manufacturing of both existing products as well as ones that will be developed in the future and has the possibility for further development within the next ten years. (Al Mheiri, et al. 2020) reports that four enormous dairy farms, each with a capacity of 10,000 cows, were created and outfitted with cutting-edge machinery.

The organizational structure of the company is comprised of three operational divisions, two central support departments, and a further department that is dedicated to the operations of marketing. The corporation in question is a comprehensive institution that spans the full food supply chain, beginning with dairy farms and continuing all the way to retail stores. This chain begins with the production of milk and ends with the sale of food in stores. According to (Hanaysha, J. R. 2023), the workforce of Almarai is comprised of people who are originally from a broad range of 27 different nations. These countries are spread across regions such as Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. The business deals in the marketing of an extensive variety of dairy products, including both perishable and non-perishable commodities such as fresh and long-life dairy products, fresh juices, cheese, butter, and a variety of other products that are not dairy-based. The substantial price hikes for milk and yogurt have been effectively tempered by the subsidies provided by the government.

**○ Al Safi Danone Company (Alsafi)**

The AlSafi enterprise was founded in 1979 by HR Prince Mohammad Bin Abdullah Al Faysal in the Sahbaa valley of the Kharj region. According to the Guinness Book of World Records in 1998, the farm holds the distinction of being the largest integrated enterprise globally. The integration of the system is comprehensive, including the entire process from the cultivation of fodder to the ultimate dissemination of milk and dairy products. A continuous operation is in place to guarantee the provision of fresh deliveries. The farm is completely computerized, interconnected, and equipped with cutting-edge in-house software technology. The farm's integrated privately-owned manufacturing demonstrates effective operational synergy with its affiliated

subsidiaries. Consequently, the factory and its subsidiaries possess the capacity to engage in the processing, packaging, and distribution of fresh milk, long-life milk, and milk-related products to diverse domestic and international markets. Based on the most recent information provided on the company's website, it possesses an estimated land area of 3500 hectares, a livestock population exceeding 32,000 Holstein-Friesian cattle, and a total of 14 automated milking parlours. The daily milk production is estimated to be roughly 600,000 liters. The company has tough competition in the domain of milk and milk-derived goods from competitors such as Almarai and Nadec. In response, the organization takes measures to ensure the health and well-being of its livestock, implementing a thorough and continuous program of preventative measures aimed at safeguarding them from various diseases. The corporation distinguishes itself in promotional campaigns by engaging in public relations and corporate social responsibility initiatives, such as organizing events like Youmul-Atfal (children's day), Nation's Cup football, and establishing the Safi Club to promote a friendly environment (Moses, G. 2018).

#### ○ **National Agricultural Development Company**

In 1981, the National Agricultural Development Company, often known as NADEC, was established with the intention of producing and promoting goods of a high quality and nutritional value. The local public owns the remaining shares, and the government owns a twenty percent stake in the business. Together, these two groups make up the ownership structure of the organization. The business owns a total of six dairy farms, each of which can accommodate around 50,000 cows and other animals. These farms as a whole are responsible for producing around one million liters of milk each and every day. In addition, the corporation manages two separate dairy production plants. The principal objectives of the government's ownership stake are to reduce the country's dependency on imports from other countries and to maximize the agricultural sector's contribution to the overall performance of the local economy. The firm is making use of cutting-edge technology to efficiently utilize operational systems and protocols in order to set up automatic linkages and achieve seamless integration throughout the entirety of the company's procurement and delivery procedures. NADEC is able to retain its effectiveness and adherence to deadlines in its dealings with merchants and suppliers thanks to the utilization of the integrated system. NADEC has recently broadened its product offering and improved its public relations strategy, as well as rolled out a new, creative brand and created aesthetically pleasing packaging for its goods. According to (Sadi, M. A. 2014), the company has shown that it is dedicated to providing customers with high-quality nutrition and service and has exhibited a comprehensive strategy in this regard.

#### ➤ **Some ways to improve the dairy industry in Saudi Arabia:**

**According to** (Alrwis, K. N., et al.2015)

- Raise the amount of money that is invested in research and development. This could result in the development of novel dairy products, methods of production that are more efficient, and practices that are better for the welfare of animals.
- Assisting dairy farmers operating on a smaller scale. This could help to lessen our dependency on dairy products that are imported while also assisting rural communities in establishing new employment opportunities through the provision of financial aid.
- Encourage people to consume more goods made from milk. Campaigns aimed at raising awareness among the general public and educational initiatives could accomplish this goal.
- Increase the stringency of regulations on food safety. Consumers would be better protected from food-borne illness as a result of this measure.
- Foster the use of farming methods that are environmentally responsible. Offering financial incentives to dairy farmers would be beneficial to the protection of the environment and would assist in lessening the influence that the dairy sector has on the surrounding area.

#### ➤ **Using the 4Cs to improve digital advertising for dairy products in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:**

**According to** (Al-Nsour, I. A.2017)

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the attitudes of consumers toward digital advertising for dairy products are significantly influenced by the 4Cs of consumer, cost, convenience, and communication. In general, these factors have a substantial impact. It is likely that companies who are able to use digital advertising to successfully



target consumers, express their value proposition, and create an experience that is both convenient and engaging will see favorable outcomes.

- **Consumer:** Companies can utilize data analytics to learn more about the consumers they are trying to reach in order to design more specific advertising strategies. For instance, a company may tailor advertisements to consumers who have recently visited the website of a grocery shop or who have demonstrated an interest in dairy products on social media. This would allow the company to reach its target audience more effectively.
- **Cost:** Digital advertising platforms allow businesses to set budgets and track outcomes in real-time, which is beneficial for both parties. This enables businesses to maximize the effectiveness of their initiatives by better optimizing them. For instance, a company could establish a daily budget for its advertising campaign and then measure metrics like the number of impressions, clicks, and conversions to determine which aspects of the campaign are successful and which ones are not.
- **Convenience:** With digital advertising, businesses are able to contact customers on the electronic devices that are most frequently used by those customers. For instance, a company may develop mobile advertisements directed toward customers who are now browsing the grocery store's dairy section in order to reach these customers.
- **Communication:** There are a number of different avenues that may be taken when using digital advertising to communicate with customers. For instance, a company may produce a film advertisement that explains the story of its brand as well as the dairy products that it sells. Alternatively, a company could compose a written advertisement that draws attention to the merits of the dairy products it sells.

Businesses in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are able to develop digital advertising campaigns that are more successful in terms of reaching consumers and interacting with them if they make use of the opportunities presented by the 4Cs.

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