A Study on Crowdsourcing Marketing Practices to Build Brand

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ABSTRACT

To study the conditions that make crowdsourcing possible both technical and conceptual to aid brands to promote, increase their reach, engage, and obtain insights from their consumers. This is an exploratory study that is conducted involving multiple case studies of various brands which are currently existing in the market. Brands are accepting this model and there has been an upsurge in ways they are trying to leverage crowdsourcing to build and gain innovative solutions for their brands. The results of the study imply the ways in which a brand can generate solutions and also do in-depth consumer research along with building the brand in the process. The study identifies that brands are looking forward to this model more in the digital space and crowdsource an innovative solution

Introduction

The Internet has long been a place for the growth of a participatory culture, but in the early 2000s, we first saw significant rise in organizations' involvement in using the mutual wisdom of online audiences to fulfil corporate purposes, enhance civic engagement in government, develop goods and solve problems. Businesses, non-profit organizations and government departments routinely incorporate the innovative resources of online groups into day-to-day activities, and many organizations have been founded solely on these structures. An intentional combination of the bottom-up, transparent, innovative method is called crowdsourcing, with top-down organizational goals. Crowdsourcing is a new business model post it was coined by Jeff Howe in 2006 has been prominent with many sectors. Conceptually, crowdsourcing can be explained by problem-solving and innovation processes as well as by group manifestations of mutual knowledge and the strength of the crowd. The criteria allowing for crowdsourcing are both technological and theoretical. The Internet and other social media platforms have a digital infrastructure that facilitates projects for crowdsourcing, and these innovations often establish some behaviours and strategies for engaging in a participatory community. Crowdsourcing marketing practices is not something new, it has been utilized by brands to promote, increase their reach, engage, and obtain insights from their consumers. Sectors that are leveraging the model of crowdsourcing extensively are Travel, Information Technology, Designing, FMCG, etc. We will be looking into the aspects of how a brand is built around this model with the cases of brands which has utilized it. The key pillars of crowdsourcing, according to a few dozen scholars who have published on the topic, are

1.   an organization that has a problem solving it needs to be performed,
2.   a group (crowd) with the skill sets needed and its willingness to execute the task freely,
3.   an open online forum enabling the research to happen and communicating the same to the organization, and
4.   shared benefit for both the organization and the community.

Crowdsourcing is also available in different forms. Primarily it is of four kinds as mentioned here: Crowd funding, crowd labor, crowd research and creative crowdsourcing.

Crowd funding. Crowd funding platforms use the open invitation to raise funds for fresh and ground breaking ideas, Kickstarter.com is an active medium for artistic projects delving into video creation, book creation, and comics.

Crowd labor. In crowd labor, people are hired via online "labor markets" from the likes of Crowdflower or Amazon Mechanical Turk to perform different activities, from very small and easy to more complicated. Most of the human beings are still needed to execute tasks that require cultural or societal judgment and others that require specific skills. Organizations typically rely on crowd labor for routine and labor-intensive assignments, may be subdivided into smaller activities, and machines can not be left to do so. Crowd workers may make a comfortable way of making money. It is in the hands of the petitioning organization to decide whether the outcomes meet their needs and fulfil their criteria.

Crowd research. Gathering insights from anticipated audiences is vital in public marketing and communication pertaining to health. Crowdsourcing provides many ways to obtain feedback very easily and cost-effectively. Market research online communities (MROCs) may be an alternate to focus groups and share a few of the same benefits (and drawbacks) as polling committees. MROCs are primarily used to gather critical feedback, listen to consumers, and discuss some of the issues in detail. An organization that sets up an MROC is a password-protected website wherein people with similar interest is employed to participate in regular, research pursuits on a common subject of interest. You may effectively reach various audience groups across

various online communities through factors such as gender, language, and medical conditions.

Creative crowdsourcing. Pillsbury had been running the Bakeoff for a long time before crowdsourcing, or in fact, the Internet existed to involve customers in the brand, increase market interest, and recognize the innovative applications of their goods. These and other app tournaments were the forerunners of today's imaginative crowdsourcing. Creative crowdsourcing has now evolved as the ultimate carved opportunity — the newest and the strongest when it comes down to producing new innovations, directly from customers, goods, services or advertising innovations. The strategy is the same for both the public and private sectors. A question is posted online, or an innovative brief, and site users are asked to respond to their own work. Significant prizes are awarded to the entries in the thousands, the prize winning ideas, and the firm leverages the ideas for its profit.

A brand is a name, design, symbol, or any other distinct features that help distinguish a company's product or service from others in a marketplace. As the brand grows, the followers of the brand also intensify. History suggests it takes a significant period of time for a brand to flourish and create a huge following. One of the major reasons for this phenomenon is the brand communities as mentioned by Bal, Weidner, Hanna & Mills (2016). Brand communities display a shared consciousness, common traditions/rituals, and a mutual sense of moral obligation. Brand communities can emerge around any brand and they generally form around brands with a strong image, a consistent and rich history, and fierce competition. For a brand to grow it needs to engage with the consumers in multiple ways, obtain their feedback and produce actionable insights from them, and come out with innovations in form of their products or services as well as through the marketing practices they are conducting.

Crowdsourcing tends to be the most prominent phenomenon to emphasize the importance of including individuals and organizations in their co-creation process from a social viewpoint. There has been a shift from traditional marketing to contemporary theoretical and institutional systems, in line with the notion of meaning co-creation as a means of developing a new corporate model. Marketing has started to abandon its transaction-oriented point of view in recent years to concentrate on the interactive point of view that realizes the fundamental economic concept in the interaction with the consumer. Crowdsourced platforms then have a significant effect on the authenticity and richness of knowledge and create social engagement for mutual intelligence production. This method may influence the business judgment of not only clients but also the staff of an organization and promote creative processes.

Literature Review

Crowdsourcing as a concept has had many explanations since 2006. As Brabham (2013) defines it, a methodical blend of the bottom-up, open, creative process with top-down organizational goals especially from online communities is called crowdsourcing. The key point referred to as a future scope is the study of strategic communication perspective which can eventually contribute to the success of crowdsourcing projects.

One of the very famous campaigns leveraging the crowdsourcing model was of PepsiCo's "Do Us A Flavor" campaign. PepsiCo has done a fantastic job leveraging global crowdsourcing to stimulate product growth, as an international corporation selling food, snacks and drinks, and rekindles customer passion selling their famous Lay's potato chip brand. In July 2012, in the U.S., Pepsico launched the campaign "Do Us A Flavor," a popup shop in Times Square that features its 22 Lay's flavors. The organization at that point built up a Facebook page that permitted members to helpfully demand thoughts for new kinds of potato chips. Clients gave, once presented, a made image of a Lay's sack tweaked to speak to the flavor they submitted. Members were able to share their Lay's picture on their online networking pages. PepsiCo likewise collaborated with Facebook to turn around the standard "Like" button on the platform to an "I'd Eat That" button. The spread photograph displayed on the Facebook page got utilized as a turning announcement with the top entries appeared. After the accommodation cutoff time, a board of judges comprising of superstar cook Michael Symon and entertainer Eva Longoria, assisted thin the entries down to the best 3. These flavors were then provided in stores for clients to purchase and test. PepsiCo then opened an ultimate conclusion up for an open vote. The maker of the triumphant chip flavor could win $1 million or 1% of the 2013 net deals of the triumphant flavor, whichever is most noteworthy. PepsiCo's first US publicly supporting effort was a colossal achievement and made an incentive for both the Company as well as its shoppers! Three flavors were chosen to be the finalist flavors: Cheesy Garlic Bread, Chicken and Waffles, and Sriracha.

The Corporation's objective was to produce web-based media talk within its millennial consumers inside the 18-34 age segment and get nearly 1.2 million flavor entries. Their expectation was this would in this way bring about a 3% increase to inspire in deals. During the Company's ten-month promotion, it got 3.8 million entries, accomplished over 22.5 million Facebook page visits, and at last encountered a business advancement of 12% year on year. The crusade was such a triumph, that PepsiCo decided to dispatch the battle all around.

The main advantage of PepsiCo's crowdsourcing program was that the firm had been able to gain visibility into customer tastes and actions at a gradual rate. The organization also generated strong brand recognition – especially with the millennial demographic that it was initially striving to entice. Also, launching the product in 10 months instead of the typical 15-20 months timeframe indicated that the company could significantly curtail the product life cycle by. Cost benefits are also linked to a diminished need for a sizeable research and development unit due to the outsourcing of product advancement to the community.

Although the company experienced a short-term boost in revenue as a result of the initiative, there are potential dangers involved with the use of crowdsourcing for the purpose of product creation. In addition, this could eventually lead to the creation of significant losses for the Company in relation to the non-sold inventory. When PepsiCo wants to use this strategy as a form of food creativity, it will need to question that winning flavors are

really a way of sustaining a brand for long-term or to add a freshness that will sharply wear off.

Starbucks is the best illustration of a crowdsourcing platform that has come from an unexpected venue. Baristas began to notice that Starbucks' signature white cups served as blank pieces for designers and artists to sketch on, so they transformed the idea to start a promotion around these humble designs. And the White Cup Contest did evolve in spring 2014. Customers decorated their Starbucks cup with an original design, took a photo, and were urged to submit it to social media with the # WhiteCupContest hashtag. Over a couple of months, more than 4,000 distinctive submissions were already collected. Pittsburgh art student Brita Lynn Thompson submitted the winning design, and the limited edition recyclable cup for 2014 incorporated her image on it. Every year, Starbucks launches a new concept for such reusable plastic cups that one can buy for a dollar and use over 30 times. In an opportunity to reduce litter, you can earn a discount of 10 cents every time you use one. So, basically, you get paid by Starbucks to use a sustainable product. This is also part of the corporation's continuing attempts to inspire consumers to go green and promote eco-conscious goods, and it seems to be a perfect way to showcase the creativity of a young artist.

Looking at an Airbnb event. Airbnb's marketing campaign has also concentrated on vibrant, prime quality images to provide users insight into various travel destinations and lodging. Nevertheless, they serve various locations around the world (more than 34,000, to be exact), they wanted help collecting images of each location. This is where crowdsourcing comes into play.

In 2013, the first Vine video program based on crowdsourcing was launched by Airbnb. They assembled a series of user-submitted videos to make them a short film entitled "Hollywood & Vine." The idea the film was based around was tourism and exploration across the world, and at the end of the day, 100 of these 6-second videos were chosen for about four and a half minutes of footage. This initiative was established in tandem with the 2013 sponsorship of Airbnb at the Sundance Film Festival.

Throughout 2014, a completely new approach to its initiative was taken, using Facebook to gather video donations. Using the # AirbnbShorts hashtag, users could submit 15-second videos summarizing why travellers would have that proclivity to visit their area. It was an effort to shine a light on possibly lesser-known sites, but at the same time providing the local sensation. The star of the campaign, Scott Allen Perry, won a free trip to London, a week's stay at the Airbnb home, and a permit to the Sundance Film Festival. His video offered us a sneak look at all that New Orleans has to offer.

Persuading people to discover places they have never been before and to do so at an inexpensive price was the main aim and objectives of these two campaigns which are closely linked to Airbnb's. By letting customers contribute to tales about their favourite city, individuals can get a more personalized look inside cities across the world and decide on their next adventure. It also draws parallels with what crowdsourcing is all about. Airbnb's premises are consumer provided accommodation and crowdsourcing is all about consumer provided concepts, and this may not have been a clearer complement to their promotion campaign.

While a few enterprises are still working out in what way to make effective use of crowdsourcing, many others have already taken advantage of this strategy. When a company is searching for opportunities to communicate with its clients on a more intimate basis, to get input on an idea, or to demonstrate their innovative side, crowdsourcing may be a successful tool for them. So it does not have to be a big multinational company to get engaged. Just taking up the time to question consumers on a new product and service proposition, host a challenge, or get input from market leaders in one's company are both effective and cost-efficient ways to facilitate one make the right choices about their companies.

Most of the aforementioned activities can be done by focusing on the perception of the online community in order to engage with the brand and generate solutions for it. As Hosseini, Phalp, Taylor & Ali (2014) pointed out for the community to be one of the major pillars of the success of the model. Their research highlighted the fact that along with the community the platform and the tools being used for facilitating them empower the complete model of crowdsourcing. As there is a huge amount of data associated with any actions taken up in this model. Tools can be developed to identify clusters to collect the information in significant ways and to confirm quality. Bal et al (2016) highlights in their research that although there are huge prospects in utilizing crowdsourcing in the space of branding, gaining consumer inputs, feedback and generating ideas on marketing activities, there are also a few limitations to it. First, as the business environment is rapidly evolving today, we expect many, often rapid, changes to occur. The relationship between the power of the brand culture and brand controls can be further explored in the future. Additionally, these researches do provide general guidance for companies working with crowds, the typology of the brand community is a multi-dimensional, dynamic resource that companies can use accordingly. As we move ahead, we have encapsulated such aspects that may alter the communication, marketing, and consumer insights which a brand performs and obtains to build themselves.

Research Methodology

In order to understand the pillars of crowdsourcing and how it aid brands to promote, increase their reach, engage, and obtain insights from their consumers, we gathered articles from diverse fields of research in which crowdsourcing was used, as crowdsourcing is a multidisciplinary procedure. We also noted that crowdsourcing is used in numerous areas of research, involving, though not limited to, computer science, business and administration, psychology, environmental sciences, and sociology. Analyzing and evaluating these papers, we discovered that crowdsourcing practices have brought in innovative ideas, delighting consumers, consumer engagement, product promotion and eventually building the brand.

After gathering and assessing the research papers and discovering the fundamental foundations of crowdsourcing, we re-examined these papers to obtain further information about them. In specific, we looked at the various definitions that these papers suggested on crowdsourcing and strived to ascertain the characteristics and subsets of these four parts

of crowdsourcing. We defined these attributes and subsections by presenting a description of a material review. In our meaning study, it was crucial to be able to recognize specific terms and catch phrases used in various meanings that referred to the identical theory.

Feature extraction and segment abstraction have been done using a multi-stage process, i.e. we have reviewed descriptions from the first through the last many times through insure that none of the features and subsections are left overlooked, and the second assessor has also checked the list of unearthed features and subcategories by running through the papers and definitions and accepting the list of extracted features. Where in question, the two reviewers debated on if a certain element or category would be taken from a given description and, if they did not find any consensus, a third assessor was convened upon to resolve the conflict.

The following step in our work was to catalog and assign these features into well-known and well-received divisions. Although it was sometimes prevalent in the literature to find these classifications, we had to suggest a few classifications ourselves at other times. In order to carry out this, we have received the help of the second and third reviewers and, once again, we have undergone a multi-stage review procedure to ensure the authenticity of our categorization.

Objective Of The Research

The objective of the research was to study the conditions that make crowdsourcing possible both technical and conceptual to aid brands to promote, increase their reach, engage, and obtain insights from their consumers. The study when analyzed lead us to classify the tasks taken up by the organizations currently focusing on the crowdsourcing practices and the methodology to gain a lead in the spaces they are targeting.

Results And Discussions

On the basis of the academic papers and case studies related to and evaluated, we have been able to identify the cases and their processes as invention, design, etc.

A. Crowdsourcing innovation

Extensive examples where companies are increasingly leveraging crowdsourcing to help generate or derive demand from customers by introducing new goods and services dependent on mutual inputs. For example, Threadless.com utilizes a crowdsourced concept to produce t-shirts that are subsequently distributed to consumers. When members join up the site, they can plan, vote, talk with new users and buy t-shirt items from others. If the user wishes to engage himself in the design process, they create a blueprint for use with freely licensed design applications, such as Adobe Illustrator, and upload a finished design. Meanwhile, all users on the platform have the capacity to rate and condemn added designs and eventually select weekly "winners" who are paid $2,500 combined with $500 each moment in time their design is reproduced. In exchange, Threadless.com controls the concept and makes considerable income through the process. According to Howe, as of June 2006,

Threadless.com sold 60,000 t-shirts every month with a gross revenue of $18 million and a profit margin of 35 percent. Now in its 10th year of business, Threadless.com, which is privately owned, has grown globally by publishing its website in four languages and is undoubtedly growing significantly in terms of traffic, distinctive users and revenue.

The impression of mutual wisdom is now being used to improve the method of research and development in bigger, more developed organizations by a mechanism known as "open innovation." Numerous of these companies have noticed that various professionals exist outside of their organizational walls than inside them. In addition, the number of patents owned by small businesses and people rose from 5 % to 20% in the middle of 1970 and 1992. As a consequence, many companies have started to primarily focus on external sources of investment to support and supplement their core research and development activities. Chesbrough states that "rather than limiting technologies to a specific market course, open innovation encourages firms to pursue the most suitable business model for commercializing a product offering, whether it occurs within the company or essentially be pursued by external licensing, collaborating, or converting".

An especially remarkable instance of open innovation is the company InnoCentive, originally developed as a research initiative by pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly. InnoCentive lets businesses (called 'seekers') to provide financial incentives to emerging innovators by in disguise uploading questions towards its expert group. If big corporations like Proctor & Gamble, Monsanto, BASF and others are shocked by a confounding research issue, they will obtain access to InnoCentive's worldwide network of more than 100,000 specialists who propose ideas in the expectation that they will be chosen as the winning idea.

Harvard professor Karim Lakhani undertook work to assess the importance of gathering information from such a large ground of professionals by looking at 166 topics in the InnoCentive culture. Remarkably, 29.5 percent of these challenges were overcome effectively and the average participant spent barely 74 hours in the process compared to 6 to 24 months expended unsuccessfully by "seekers" firms. "Not only did the chances of a solver's success significantly improve in areas beyond his knowledge," he wrote, similar to mathematicians taking on chemistry or biologists staring at physics, "however the more an obstacle his skill faced, the greater the probability of success. It is really counter-intuitive". Again, this points to the fact that there are more professionals beyond the boundaries of an organization than within, and this fresh knowledge will also contribute to creative approaches.

B. Design

In industry after industry, high-performance businesses demonstrate creativity in the entirety of their way of undertaking business. This clarifies why the latest IBM survey of more than 765 CEOs reveals that business model creativity is the problem that most of them are grappling with. Throughout the absence of a single brilliant founder or king, one of the problems facing industry nowadays is to establish a cycle of open innovation that builds on the

imagination of the partners in the company to generate a sustainable business model. Current creativity models, which focus exclusively on "creative types," typically within the context of R&D activities, are substituted by digital creativity. Idealized architecture is one of the most important open engineering systems. Initially conceived as an organizational method to facilitate corporate strategy by Russell L. Ackoff, idealized concept theory is increasingly being utilized for incentive identification.

Nowadays it is most apparent that, while inspired innovations are often credited to creative people, it is most frequently the situation that the organizing team produces solutions. The collective bits of intelligence of team leaders, often from various backgrounds, may create an analytical atmosphere in which genuinely innovative concepts arise. The main thing is to have the best combination of expertise and skills so that the collective awareness and empathy of the person can be centred on the problem. In a realistic scenario, this situation is made possible by the involvement of various variables, such as partners, communication devices, implementors and the catalysing impact of the dynamic preparation procedure itself. Obviously, the result of the participatory collaborative development progression can be influenced by a number of variables unique to the societal structure in question.However, given the idiosyncratic characteristics of each project and the unique features of the entity involved, such procedures are standardized and contribute to the effectiveness of all these collaborative planning applications.

The challenge of enterprise model modernization is to formulate a process that sets out the ideal strategic directions and encourages stakeholders to invest in the successful implementation of this strategy. An establishment that imbibes the right strategy, but cannot implement it, will fail to succeed. Similarly, a firm that executes the erroneous strategy competently is also unfortunate.

C. Marketing opportunities

In order to illustrate the reputation of including groups and entities in the process of co-creation from a social lens, crowdsourcing tends to be the utmost common phenomena. Value co-creation as a concept is a way of creating a new organizational version, there has been a shift from conventional marketing to innovative procedural and operational methodologies. In current years, in order to focus on the relational point of view that sees its fundamental architype in the association with the customer marketing has begun to leave the transactional point of view. In fact, the progression of the marketing trend comes from a profound understanding of the customer and his much more descriptive, nuanced and evolving tastes. Companies must define and track these developments to address consumer demands, taking into explanation increasing competition in the short and intermediate term, industry segmentation and commodity life cycle (Kotler, 2004). Communication with consumers in the manufacturing chain can allow businesses to prevent poor outcomes in terms of customer loyalty and to establish new ways of rivalry in directive to negotiate effectively with other companies, in relations to product and process technology, demand analysis and competitive business

surveillance and managerial culture (Kotler, 2004). In fact, companies must foresee and handle shifts and threats on the world market: they should view them as opportunities instead of obstacles. This suggests that companies must take a strategic – and not only a responsive – role in developing new technologies and marketing strategies that can favourablyimpact the preferences of consumers, the actions of rivals, and the general economic conditions. The collaborative cycle with consumers helps to build their desired satisfaction, increase market performance and productivity (Grönroos, 2011). The existing scenario indicates that marketing executives have to focus on:

- co-creating a brand understanding with the consumer in a mutual relationship;
- handle the customers community;
- manage the brand policy in a much collaborative and multiple channel approach;
- evaluate the communication-mix, delivering it to new users-managed and monitored media.

Such premises form the basis for the concept of crowdsourcing, in which the consumer takes an important part in the co-creation of resources. Crowdsourcing means assigning a job (which has historically been contracted to a single outside organization as outsourcing) to a broad and previously unknown number of people who are approached in an open request. The simple premise is that "crowd" is more practical than a single person due to its talent, innovation, and extraordinary competitiveness (Howe, 2010). Crowdsourcing platforms are also capable of having a significant effect on the security and diversity of knowledge and of building mutual cohesion for the creation of collective wisdom (Stieger et al. 2012). This cycle can include not only clients but also members of an organization, influencing its strategic judgment and encouraging creative processes.

Via web-based services, companies are able to combine various and spread external competencies (such as researchers, experts, practitioners, or innovative individuals) as well as internal structured groups (available via open-source software) (Chanal& Caron-Fasan, 2008). In the diverse cases of crowdsourcing, corresponding to a product creativity methodology, we examine the crowdsourcing of innovative practices that apply not only to information exchange but also to knowledge sharing, to solve problems (Brabham, 2008).

This trend is explained by the growing number of technical advancements and, above all, by the potential for consumers to provide direct and autonomous access to the needed network. When crowdsourcing eliminates spatial space, it poses obstacles in determining the distinctions amongst an novice and a skilled worker, and therefore in distinguishing the individual skills and proficiencies of the network. It is consequently a medium in which the company can come up with feedback, proposals and thoughts on: new concepts for occupational products or web site illustrations; new approaches to science or technical challenges (open innovation); brand new knowledge on the field, as an author or editor (e.g. Wikipedia); new innovative recommendations for operations.

Conclusion

In the light of the findings, the present work examines the manner in which organizations approach the public in order to generate greater interest and shared profit, with some features.

First, in today's business climate, the co-creation of resolutions is of crucial significance to the company in order to achieve a strategic edge. The crowd reflects the deployment of competences (Vargo, &Lusch, 2004) that are capable of creating innovative ideas for organizations, economies, culture and the global world. The exchanging of information, expertise and skills between tourists and the virtual community produces a word of mouth (Brown &Reingen, 1987) that impacts and forms the mindsets and desires of tourists at both an organic and a stimulated stage.

The crowdsourcing model as we have seen has great potential to create great opportunities for the brand building with virtually unlimited resources in a digital space. As and how the organizations are moving forward to adopt the model, there should also be a further scope in this line of research to be done in terms of intellectual property for the solutions generated by the crowd such that they are not exploited. There is also scope for research on the lines of data infringement and data privacy while sharing the company's confidential information with the crowd.

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