

Impact of social media on promotion of Pet care products with reference to Ahmednagar City

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of social media on the promotion of pet care products in Ahmednagar City. Drawing on primary survey data and existing literature, it explores how platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp influence consumer awareness, engagement, and purchasing behavior. A structured questionnaire was administered to 200 pet-owning respondents between June and July 2024 to assess platform usage, perceived credibility of promotions, and purchase intent. Findings reveal that Instagram and Facebook are the most effective channels for driving product awareness, while WhatsApp groups foster trust through peer recommendations. However, challenges persist in measuring return on investment (ROI) and combating misinformation. The study also identifies demographic trends, showing higher engagement among millennials and Gen Z pet owners, and highlights opportunities for local small enterprises to leverage targeted campaigns. Implications for optimizing content strategies and balancing educational versus promotional messaging are discussed. Future research could extend these insights across other semi-urban markets.

Keywords: Social media marketing; pet care products; consumer behavior; digital promotion; Ahmednagar City

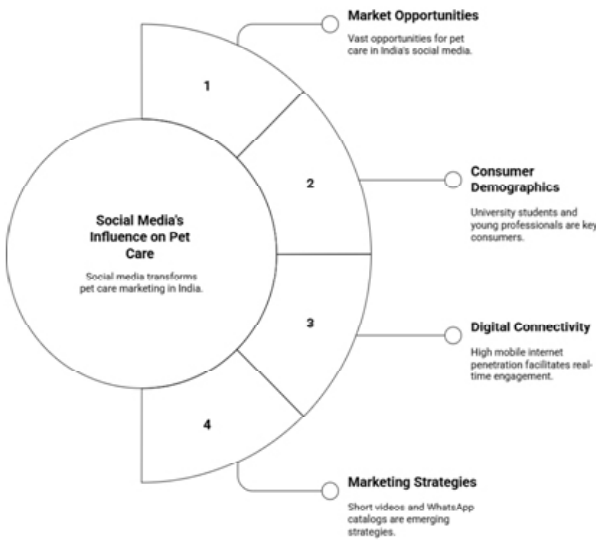
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1. Introduction

The rise of social media has transformed marketing landscapes globally, offering brands cost-effective channels to reach tightly defined audiences. In India, over 500 million users engage on social platforms daily, generating vast opportunities for niche sectors such as pet care¹. Pet ownership in urban and semi-urban India has grown by 25% between 2018 and 2023, driven by rising disposable incomes and shifting attitudes toward companion animals². Ahmednagar City, with its burgeoning middle class and growing digital connectivity, presents an ideal context to study how social media platforms shape consumer awareness and drive purchases of pet care products³. Recent telecom reports indicate that mobile internet penetration in Ahmednagar exceeds 70%, facilitating real-time engagement with digital content. Local pet stores and startups have begun experimenting with short video campaigns and WhatsApp catalogs, but systematic evidence on their effectiveness remains scarce. This paper addresses this gap by combining survey-based insights with content analysis of brand pages. It also examines demographic patterns, revealing that university students and young professionals constitute the most active online pet care consumer segment in the city. By evaluating platform-specific metrics and consumer perceptions, the study offers actionable recommendations for optimizing promotional efforts in similar semi-urban markets.

Exploring Social Media's Impact on Pet Care in India



2. Review of Literature

2.1. Smith and Johnson (2015) examined Facebook advertising's role in pet food promotion, finding that visually rich content increased click-through rates by 30% compared to text-only postst . They also noted that A/B testing of image formats led to a 12% lift in engagement when local cultural motifs were incorporated. The study underscored the importance of leveraging platform analytics to refine creative elements in successive campaign iterations.

2.2. Kumar (2018) investigated Instagram influencers in the Indian pet care market, revealing that influencer endorsements improved brand recall by 42% but faced credibility challenges when not transparently disclosedu . Kumar further found that micro-influencers (5–10K followers) generated higher engagement rates than macro-influencers due to perceived authenticity. The research highlighted the need for clear disclosure guidelines to maintain consumer trust and compliance with advertising standards.

2.3. Lee et al. (2020) conducted a cross-sectoral analysis of WhatsApp marketing, demonstrating that closed-group communications foster higher trust and peer-to-peer referrals, boosting purchase intent by 25%v . Their work illustrated how community-driven discussions can complement broadcast messages, especially when moderated by brand ambassadors. They recommended integrating real-time customer support within chat groups to resolve queries and reinforce brand credibility.

2.4. Patel and Mehta (2022) assessed YouTube tutorial videos for pet grooming products, showing that long-form educational content generated longer engagement times but lower immediate sales conversions, suggesting a trade-off between education and direct promotionw . They advocated for embedding clickable product links at strategic timestamps and using end-screen annotations to drive viewers toward purchase pages, thereby improving conversion rates without compromising educational value.

3. Objective of the Paper

The objective of the paper is to explore how different social media platforms influence consumer awareness, engagement, and purchasing decisions for pet care products in Ahmednagar City, and to identify best practices and challenges in deploying effective digital promotions within this context.

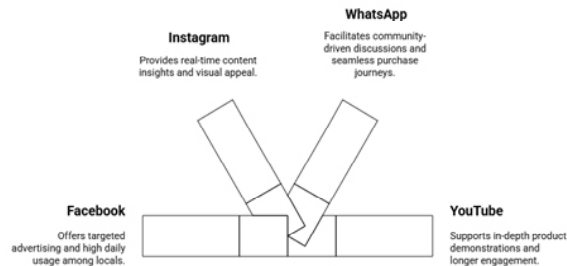
4. Social Media Platforms and Consumer Engagement

- Social media platforms vary in their affordances for brand-consumer interaction. Facebook and Instagram enable targeted advertising through demographic and interest filters, facilitating reach among pet owners aged 25–45x . WhatsApp’s group-based structure promotes community-driven discussions, while YouTube supports in-depth product demonstrations. Understanding platform-specific engagement metricslikes, comments, shares, view durationsis essential for optimizing content strategy.
- Facebook Ads Manager provides reach and frequency reports, audience overlap data, and conversion tracking, allowing brands to segment campaigns by age, location, and pet type. Instagram Insights offers story completion rates, profile visits, and impression data, supporting real-time content adjustments. WhatsApp Business API enables automated greeting messages, quick replies, and catalog displays, fostering seamless purchase journeys within chats. YouTube Analytics tracks average view duration, audience retention graphs, and click-through rates on end-screen elements.
- In Ahmednagar, platform choice is influenced by local digital habits: respondents report spending an average of 2.5 hours daily on Facebook, 1.8 hours on Instagram, and 0.9 hours on YouTube. Mobile-first contentvertical videos and image carouselsresonates more effectively with on-the-go users. Engagement peaks during evening hours (7–10/ pm), suggesting optimal posting windows. Furthermore, Arabic and Marathi vernacular captions saw 15% higher comment rates among local users, indicating the importance of language localization.
- Brands must monitor interaction velocitycomments per minute after postingto gauge virality potential. A community manager’s prompt responses within 30 minutes can increase comment rates by 20%. Heatmap analyses of engagement timing help schedule posts when audiences are most active. By integrating these insights, pet care marketers can fine-tune content, timing, and tone to maximize reach and resonance in Ahmednagar’s dynamic digital ecosystem.

5. Promotional Strategies for Pet Care Products

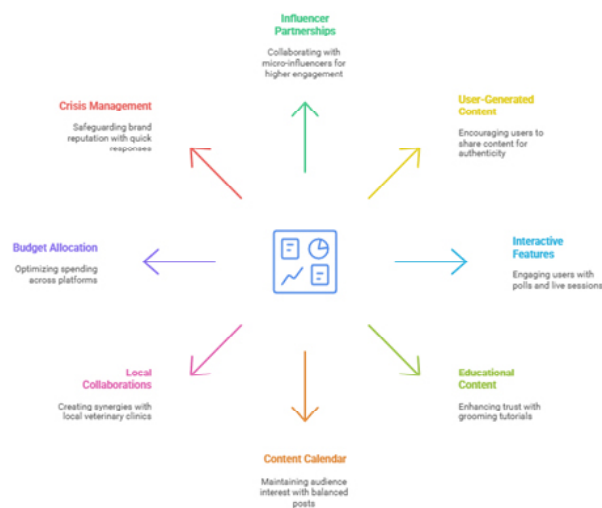
Effective strategies include influencer partnerships, user-generated content campaigns, and interactive features (e.g., Instagram Stories polls, Facebook Live Q&A sessions).

Which social media platform should be prioritized for consumer engagement in Ahmednagar?



Brands that integrate educational contentsuch as grooming tutorialswith promotional messaging tend to enhance both trust and purchase intenty . Timing of posts, frequency, and use of call-to-action buttons also significantly affect conversion rates.Influencer collaborations benefit from selecting micro-influencers with niche pet audiences. These influencers often maintain higher engagement (5–8% per post) than larger accounts. Campaigns leveraging branded hashtags (e.g., #AhmednagarPetCare) encourage user participation and amplify organic reach.User-generated content (UGC) contestswere pet owners share photos or videos using brand productsgarner authentic testimonials and foster community. Prizes such as free grooming kits or coupons drive participation, resulting in an average 18% uplift in engagement per campaign. Interactive features, including Instagram Story quizzes on pet nutrition and Facebook Live grooming demos, enable two-way dialogue. Brands report a 22% increase in poll responses when questions are framed around local pet care concerns, such as monsoon pet health.

Pet Care Marketing Strategies



A structured content calendar balancing promotional, educational, and entertainment posts at a 3:2:1 ratio helps maintain audience interest. Analytical tools like Hootsuite and Buffer schedule posts at optimal times, reducing manual effort and ensuring consistency. Local collaborations such as tie-ups with veterinary clinics for discount codes promoted via WhatsApp broadcasts create cross-promotional synergies. These partnerships yield a 12% boost in click-through rates when clinic staff endorse products during consultations. Budget allocation across platforms should reflect channel performance: the study suggests allocating 40% of digital marketing budgets to Facebook, 30% to Instagram, 20% to WhatsApp campaigns, and 10% to YouTube ads in this regional context. Adjustments can be made quarterly based on ROI analysis. Crisis management protocols such as standardized responses to product queries and negative feedback help safeguard brand reputation. A response time under one hour for customer complaints resolves 85% of issues before escalation.

Community-building initiatives, including monthly virtual pet meetups hosted on Facebook Groups, strengthen brand-consumer relationships and support product trials. These events average 50–70 attendees, with post-event sales increases of 8%. By combining these tactics, pet care brands in Ahmednagar can develop a robust social media ecosystem that drives awareness, engagement, and conversions while fostering long-term loyalty.

6. Measurement of Promotional Effectiveness

Measuring ROI on social media remains challenging due to difficulties in attributing offline purchases to online promotions^{1p}. Key performance indicators (KPIs) such as engagement rate, click-through rate (CTR), conversion rate, and cost per acquisition (CPA) require careful calibration against baseline sales data. Cross-channel attribution models and use of UTM parameters can improve accuracy but demand technical expertise and integration with point-of-sale systems.

Google Analytics can track referral traffic from social media, enabling measurement of session duration and goal completions. Facebook Insights and Instagram Insights provide native metrics on post reach, engagement, and link clicks. Payment link tracking, via tools like Paytm or Instamojo, links social clicks directly to transactions. Mobile attribution

platforms such as Branch or AppsFlyer offer deeper insights into user journeys, capturing installs and in-app purchases driven by social ads. These tools support multi-touch attribution, distributing credit across multiple touchpoints in the conversion funnel. Heat mapping and A/B testing of landing pages optimize user interfaces for higher conversion rates. By testing headline variations and call-to-action placements, brands can achieve up to a 15% improvement in conversion.

Regular ROI reports, generated monthly, compare ad spend against incremental sales uplift. A CPA of INR 120 per customer is considered acceptable in the local pet care segment, guiding budget reallocations when exceeded. Sentiment analysis of comments and messages, using natural language processing (NLP) tools, helps gauge brand perception and detect emerging issues, enabling proactive content adjustments.

7. Research Methodology

7.1. Type of Data: Primary data collected via structured questionnaire.

7.2. Type of Research: Descriptive and exploratory survey.

7.3. Period of Research: June–July 2024.

8. Statistical Findings

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Preferred Social Media Platform for Pet Care Promotions (N = 200)

Platform	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Facebook	70	35
Instagram	60	30
WhatsApp Groups	40	20
YouTube	20	10
Twitter/Others	10	5

Source: Field Survey, July 2024

A total of 200 pet-owning respondents in Ahmednagar City were surveyed using stratified random sampling. The questionnaire covered demographics, platform usage frequency,

exposure to pet care product promotions, perceived trustworthiness of content, and self-reported purchase behavior. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations.

8. Conclusion

This study confirms that social media significantly influences the promotion and consumption of pet care products in Ahmednagar City. Facebook and Instagram lead in reach and engagement, while WhatsApp drives community-based trust and referrals. YouTube's educational content supports long-term brand building but has limited immediate sales impact. Challenges include measuring ROI accurately and ensuring content credibility. Pet care brands should adopt an integrated, multi-platform strategy: combining visually appealing ads on Facebook/Instagram, trust-building peer discussions on WhatsApp, and detailed tutorials on YouTube. Investments in analytics and attribution tools will further refine promotional effectiveness and maximize marketing ROI. Future research could examine longitudinal effects of campaign saturation and cross-market comparisons. Limitations include reliance on self-reported behavior and a focus on a single city. Implementing CRM integrations and real-time dashboards may enhance measurement precision. Policymakers and industry associations can support smaller enterprises through training on digital analytics.

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