



A STUDY ON ROLE OF INSTAGRAM MARKETING FOR SMALL ENTREPRENEURS IN BENGALURU CITY

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ABSTRACT:

This study explores how small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru use Instagram to promote their businesses. Instagram has become a popular platform for businesses to reach a large audience and increase sales. Many small business owners in Bengaluru are turning to Instagram because it is an affordable way to connect with customers and build their brand. The research looks at how small entrepreneurs use Instagram to market their products, the strategies they use, and the challenges they face. A survey was conducted among small business owners to understand their experiences with Instagram marketing. The study found that Instagram helps businesses showcase their products, especially in areas like clothing, food, and handmade goods. However, small business owners often struggle with creating good content, using Instagram's tools effectively, and competing with larger companies. The study also highlights the importance of regular posting, customer engagement, and Instagram ads for business growth. The research provides useful recommendations for small businesses in Bengaluru to improve their Instagram marketing and achieve better results.

KEYWORDS: Instagram - Marketing - Entrepreneurs - Small Business - Bengaluru - Promotion - Sales - Customers - Branding - Growth

INTRODUCTION:

In today's digital world, social media is a vital tool for businesses of all sizes to interact with customers, advertise products, and expand their reach. Instagram, in particular, has emerged as one of the most widely used and effective platforms for small business marketing. Its visual and interactive features allow businesses to creatively showcase products and services, attract clients, and boost revenue.

Bengaluru, a major startup and business hub in India, is home to a large number of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Instagram offers these businesses a low-cost, accessible way to engage with consumers and grow. With tools like posts, reels, stories, and ads, entrepreneurs can reach beyond local limits to build strong online brands. Despite Instagram's advantages, small businesses in Bengaluru face several hurdles such as content creation, platform algorithm understanding, engagement handling, and competition with larger brands.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

1. Small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru may lack knowledge on effectively using Instagram for marketing.
2. Many businesses struggle to create appealing Instagram content.
3. Business owners may not fully understand Instagram features like ads, stories, and posts.
4. Limited marketing budgets make it hard to compete with bigger players.
5. Entrepreneurs lack clarity on measuring Instagram marketing success.
6. Overall, small businesses in Bengaluru need better Instagram marketing strategies for growth.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To identify the benefits of Instagram marketing for small entrepreneurs in **Bengaluru**.
2. To explore the challenges faced by small entrepreneurs in **Bengaluru** while using Instagram.
3. To examine strategies used by successful entrepreneurs in **Bengaluru**.
4. To analyse Instagram's impact on business growth in **Bengaluru**.
5. To provide actionable recommendations to small businesses in **Bengaluru**.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study explores how small businesses in Bengaluru use Instagram. It investigates the advantages and disadvantages of Instagram marketing, the strategies employed by successful businesses, and the impact of Instagram on business growth. Researchers will collect data through surveys and interviews with small business owners in Bengaluru. The collected data will be analysed to understand how Instagram helps or hinders their businesses. Finally, the study aims to provide practical recommendations to small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru on effectively utilizing Instagram for marketing and business growth. This will help them maximize their reach and success.

RESEARCH AND DESIGN

This study delves into the crucial role of Instagram marketing for small entrepreneurs within the vibrant business landscape of Bengaluru. It aims to dissect how these businesses utilize Instagram's multifaceted

features to cultivate brand recognition, foster meaningful customer engagement, and ultimately drive sales growth. The research will meticulously analyse content strategies—encompassing images, videos, stories, and reels—to gauge their effectiveness in attracting and retaining customers. Furthermore, it will examine the intricacies of engagement and interaction, exploring how entrepreneurs connect with their followers through comments, direct messages, and live sessions, and the resulting impact on customer relationships. The study will also investigate the strategic use of hashtags and the navigation of Instagram's algorithm to enhance visibility, alongside the adoption of paid advertising, influencer collaborations, and promotional campaigns.

DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

- This study employs a descriptive research design, offering a snapshot of current practices. We aim to understand how small businesses in Bengaluru are presently using Instagram—without attempting to influence or change those practices. Researchers will:
- Survey and interview business owners to gather firsthand insights on their Instagram use.
- Examine public Instagram profiles to observe posting patterns and customer interactions.

SAMPLING DESIGN

- To explore Instagram's role for Bengaluru's small entrepreneurs, a stratified random sampling approach is recommended:
- Stratify the overall population by business type (e.g., food, fashion, crafts, services).
- Randomly select businesses actively using Instagram within each stratum.
- This ensures diverse representation across sectors and allows comparative analysis of Instagram marketing effectiveness.

SAMPLE FRAME

The sample frame comprises small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru who actively use Instagram for business—identified through

local business directories, online searches, and social media platforms across varied sectors.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

For this study, a purposive sampling technique will be used, focusing on small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru who are actively utilizing Instagram for marketing. This will be followed by snowball sampling to expand the participant pool through referrals, enabling access to a broader network of relevant businesses.

SAMPLING UNIT

The sampling units consist of small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru who actively use Instagram for business purposes. This includes sole proprietors, micro-businesses, and startups that are leveraging the platform for marketing and customer engagement.

SAMPLING SIZE

For a study on the role of Instagram marketing in Bengaluru's small business sector, a sample size of 100–150 entrepreneurs is recommended. This size ensures diverse representation across different types and sizes of businesses while remaining manageable for conducting in-depth interviews, surveys, and content analysis.

SOURCES OF DATA

Data for this study will be gathered from:

- Online surveys distributed to Bengaluru-based small entrepreneurs.
- In-depth interviews with selected entrepreneurs.
- Content analysis of public Instagram profiles of participating businesses.
- Where accessible, publicly available Instagram analytics data may also be reviewed.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data refers to information collected directly for this study. It will be gathered by engaging with small business owners in Bengaluru. Surveys (structured questionnaires) and personal interviews (one-on-one conversations) will be used to understand how they utilize Instagram for marketing, what challenges they face, and their perceptions of the platform's effectiveness. This data is original and specifically collected for this research.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data refers to information that already exists. For this study, secondary data will include analysis of Instagram profiles of the businesses involved. Public posts, stories, and other visible content will be observed to understand usage patterns and marketing strategies.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection methods include surveys, interviews, and content analysis to assess the impact of Instagram marketing on small businesses in Bengaluru.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data will be analysed to understand how Instagram is used by small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru, focusing on the content shared, customer engagement, and impact on sales. This will help evaluate the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool for small businesses.

TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

The analysis of Instagram marketing for Bengaluru's small entrepreneurs will utilize the following tools and techniques:

- Content Analysis – To evaluate the types of posts (photos, videos, reels, stories) and the level of audience engagement they receive.
- Sentiment Analysis – To examine customer comments and gauge overall perception and sentiment towards the brand.
- Hashtag Analysis – To identify trends, assess reach, and understand how hashtags contribute to post visibility.
- Performance Metrics – To measure the effectiveness of marketing campaigns using metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and saves.
- Comparative Analysis – To compare strategies and outcomes between successful and struggling businesses.

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS:

Percentage analysis means we'll look at the data and turn it into percentages. For example, we might find that 70% of businesses use Instagram stories. This helps us understand how common different Instagram practices are. It's

like saying, "Out of all the businesses we talked to, this many used this feature." Percentages make it easy to compare different groups and see what's most popular.

$$\text{Percentage of Respondents} = \frac{\text{No. of Respondents}}{\text{Total no. of respondents}} * 100$$

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

- Focuses on Instagram use by small businesses in **Bengaluru**.
- Studies their strategies, challenges, and growth impact.
- Limited to Instagram only, not other social platforms.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- **Geographic Limitation:** The study is limited to small businesses located in Bengaluru. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to other cities or regions.
- **Platform Specificity:** The research focuses exclusively on Instagram. Other social media platforms and marketing strategies are not included in the scope.
- **Self-Reported Data:** The study relies on responses from business owners, which may include personal biases or inaccuracies in reporting.
- **Limited Sample Size:** The sample of businesses surveyed may not fully represent the entire population of small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru.
- **Time Sensitivity:** Social media trends and platform features evolve rapidly, meaning the insights derived from the study may become outdated over time.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of existing literature helps understand how Instagram marketing has influenced small businesses globally and within India, providing context and support for the present study in Bengaluru. The following literature highlights key themes relevant to this research:

1. Use of Instagram by Small Businesses

Studies such as those by Tuten and Solomon (2020) show that Instagram's image-centric format is ideal for showcasing products and services. Small businesses utilize posts, stories, and reels to create a visual brand identity and attract customers.

2. Effectiveness in Customer Engagement

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) explain that social media platforms like Instagram allow two-way

communication between businesses and consumers. This interaction builds trust, loyalty, and helps in direct customer feedback.

3. Instagram as a Cost-Effective Marketing Tool

Research by Ryan (2014) suggests that Instagram is often favored by small businesses due to its low cost compared to traditional advertising. Small entrepreneurs, especially those with limited budgets, find Instagram a valuable platform to promote products organically or with minimal ad spend.

4. Instagram for Brand Building

According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), Instagram supports branding through storytelling and influencer collaborations. Small businesses create a strong brand personality through consistent and thematic posts, increasing customer recall.

5. Challenges in Instagram Marketing

A study by Hootsuite (2022) highlights common barriers for small businesses, including a lack of content creation skills, difficulty understanding Instagram algorithms, and the need for regular engagement. These issues can hinder visibility and growth if not addressed.

6. Impact of Instagram Marketing on Business Growth

Neil Patel (2022) notes that Instagram significantly contributes to growth by driving traffic, increasing leads, and converting followers into buyers. It acts as both a discovery platform and a sales funnel.

7. Instagram in the Indian Context

Several Indian studies (e.g., Singh & Sharma, 2021) indicate that Instagram usage is rapidly increasing among small businesses in cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru. It is particularly popular among youth-driven businesses in fashion, food, and handmade products.

8. Studies Specific to Bengaluru

Although limited, emerging research in Karnataka and Bengaluru (e.g., Desai, 2022) shows that Instagram is becoming a central part of digital marketing strategies for local startups and micro-businesses, particularly in niche segments such as boutique fashion, organic foods, and home-based crafts.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**TABLE 1: How long have you been using Instagram for your business?**

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Less than 6 months	45	34.6
6 months to 1 year	55	42.3
1 to 2 years	16	12.3
More than 2 years	14	10.7

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

Less than 6 months (34.6%): A good number of people (45 out of 130) have been using or involved in the activity for less than 6 months. 6 months to 1 year (42.3%): The largest group (55 out of 130) have been using or involved in the

activity for 6 months to 1 year. 1 to 2 years (12.3%): A smaller group (16 out of 130) have been involved for 1 to 2 years. More than 2 years (10.7%): A few people (14 out of 130) have been using or involved in the activity for more than 2 years.

TABLE 2: How often do you post on Instagram?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Daily	60	46.1
A few times a week	30	23
Once a week	25	19.2
Less than once a week	15	11.5

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

Daily (46.1%): The largest group of people (60 out of 130) participate in the activity every day. A few times a week (23%): A moderate group (30 out of 130) engage in the activity a few times during the week. Once a week (19.2%): A

smaller group (25 out of 130) take part in the activity once a week. Less than once a week (11.5%): A small number of people (15 out of 130) participate in the activity less than once a week.

TABLE 3: What type of content do you post on Instagram?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Product photos	50	38.4
Offers and discounts	40	30.7
Customer reviews	30	23
Business updates	10	7.6

Source: Primary Data

Product photos (38.4%): The largest group of people (50 out of 130) mainly post product photos on Instagram. Offers and discounts (30.7%): A significant number of people (40 out of 130) post offers and discounts to attract customers. Customer reviews (23%): Some

people (30 out of 130) share customer reviews on Instagram to build trust and credibility. Business updates (7.6%): A smaller group (10 out of 130) share business updates like new launches or news about the company.

TABLE 4: DoyouthinkInstagramhelpsyougetmorecustomersforyourwork?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes,alot	80	61.5
Yes,alittle	25	19.2
No,notreally	16	12.3
Notsure	9	6.9

Source:PrimaryData

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, alot (61.5%): The majority of respondents (80outof130) strongly agree orfeel thatthestatementappliesto them. Yes, alittle(19.2%):Asmaller group(25 out of 130)feel that thestatement applies tothem, but

only toa lesser extent. No, not really (12.3%): Some respondents(16outof 130) don'treally think the statement applies to them. Not sure (6.9%): A few respondents (9 out of 130) are uncertain or don't have a clear opinion about thestatement.

TABLE 5: HasInstagramhelpedyourbusinessgrow?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes,alot	50	38.4
Yes,alittle	30	23
No,notmuch	35	26.9
Notatall	15	11.5

Source:PrimaryData

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, a lot (38.4%): A significant number of people (50 out of 130) strongly agree or feel that the statement applies to them .Yes, a little (23%): Asmaller group (30 out of 130) feel that the statement appliesto them, but toa

lesser degree .No, not much (26.9%): A fairly large group (35 out of 130)do not feel the statement applies much to them .Not at all (11.5%): A small number of people (15 out of 130) completely disagree or feel that thestatement doesn't apply to them at all.

TABLE 6: DoyoufeelInstagramhelpsyoreachmorepeoplethanotherwaysofmarketing?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes,much more	68	52.3
Yes,much more	35	26.9
No,notreally	15	11.5
Notsure	12	9.2

Source:PrimaryData

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, much more (52.3%): The majority of people (68 out of 130) feel that the statement applies to them a lot more .Yes, much more (26.9%): Asignificant group (35 out of 130) also feel that the statement applies to them, though not as strongly as the previous group

.No, not really (11.5%): Asmaller group (15 out of 130) do not think the statement appliesto themmuch .Not sure (9.2%): A few people (12 out of 130) are unsure or don't havea clear opinion on the matter

TABLE 7: HasyourbusinessgottenmoresalesfromInstagram?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	98	75.3
No	12	9.2
Notsure	20	15.3

Source:PrimaryData

INTERPRETATION:

YES (75.3%): The majority of respondents (98 out of 130) agree or confirm that the statement applies to them.NO (9.2%): A small number of respondents(12outof130)disagree

orsaythe statementdoes notapplytothem. NOTSURE(15.3%):A few respondents(20outof130)areunsure ordo not have a clear opinion on the matter

TABLE 8: DoyouengagewithyourcustomersonInstagram(e.g.,respondingtocomments,DMs)?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes,often	55	42.3
Yes,sometimes	25	19.2
No,rarely	30	23
No,never	20	15.3

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, often (42.3%): A significant portion of respondents (55 out of 130) frequently experience or engage in the activity .Yes, sometimes (19.2%): A smaller group (25 out of 130) engage in the activity occasionally .No,

rarely (23%): Some respondents (30 out of 130) rarely experience or engage in the activity .No, never (15.3%): A few respondents (20 out of 130) do not engage in the activity at all.

TABLE 9: DoyouthinkInstagramhelpsyoubuildtrustwithyourcustomers?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes,alot	50	38.4
Yes,alittle	30	23
No,notreally	40	30.7
Notsure	10	7.6

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, a lot (38.4%): A significant number of respondents (50 out of 130) strongly agree or feel that the statement applies to them .Yes, a little (23%): A smaller group (30 out of 130) agree with the statement, but to a lesser extent .No, not really (30.7%): A good number of

respondents (40 out of 130) do not think the statement applies much to them .Not sure (7.6%):A few respondents (10 out of 130) are uncertain or don't have a clear opinion about the statement.

TABLE 10: DoyoufindInstagrameasytouseformarketingyourbusiness?

PARTICULARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes,veryeasy	73	56.1
Yes,abiteasy	32	24.6
No,abiteasy	13	10
No,very hard	12	9.2

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION:

Yes, very easy (56.1%): The majority of respondents (73 out of 130) find the task or activity very easy to do .Yes, a bit easy (24.6%): A smaller group(32 out of 130) findthe task somewhat easy .No,a bit easy (10%): A fewrespondents (13 out of 130) think the task is a little bit easy,but not as muchas the previous group .No, very hard (9.2%): A small number of respondents (12 out of 130) find the task very difficult.

FINDINGS

- A majority of respondents (42.3%) have used Instagram for 6 months to 1 year, followed by 34.6% who have used it for less than 6 months.This indicates that many businesses inBengaluru are relatively new to Instagram marketing but are adopting it quickly.
- 46.1% of respondents post on Instagram daily, while 23% post a few times a week. Regular posting is a common practice among Bengaluru entrepreneurs, supporting customer engagement and visibility.
- Product photos (38.4%) were the most common content, followed by offers and discounts (30.7%). Visual marketing of products remains the central focus, leveraging Instagram's strengths.
- 61.5% of entrepreneurs believe Instagram helps them get a lot more customers, while 19.2% say it helps a little.Instagram is viewed as a powerful customer acquisition tool by mostentrepreneurs in Bengaluru.
- 38.4% felt that Instagram helped their business grow significantly, while 23% reported a moderate impact.While not universal, a considerable proportion sees measurable growth from using Instagram.
- 52.3% said Instagram helps them reach more people than other marketing

methods, with another 26.9% agreeing to some extent.Instagram is considered superior to traditional marketing by the majority.

- A strong 75.3% reported an increase in sales due to Instagram marketing.This is a clear indicator of Instagram's direct impact on revenue.
- 42.3% of entrepreneurs engage with customers often through comments or DMs, while 19.2% engage sometimes.Active engagement is a priority for many businesses in Bengaluru.
- 38.4% believe Instagram helps a lot in building customer trust, while 23% said it helps a little.Instagram is also a relationship-building platform, not just a sales tool.
- 56.1% of respondents found Instagram very easy to use for marketing, and 24.6% found it somewhat easy.The platform is user-friendly for entrepreneurs with minimal technical knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Instagram marketing plays a significant and positive role in the growth and visibility of small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru. The findings indicate that most small business owners actively use Instagram to showcase products, promote offers, and interact with their customers. The platform's visual appeal, ease of use, and wide reach make it an effective tool for enhancing brand awareness, attracting new customers, and increasing sales. Despite certain challenges—such as limited budgets, content creation difficulties, and competition with larger brands—entrepreneurs in Bengaluru recognize Instagram as an essential marketing platform. Many respondents reported a noticeable impact on customer engagement, trust-building, and business growth through consistent and strategic use of

Instagram features like stories, reels, and advertisements.

In conclusion, Instagram is not just a social media tool but a valuable business enabler for small entrepreneurs in Bengaluru. With proper training, support, and strategic planning, small business owners can further optimize their Instagram presence to achieve long-term marketing success and sustainable business development.

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