Prospects and 'Aostc' of E-Marketing on Business in India

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Abstract

Internet marketing, also known as digital marketing, web marketing, online marketing, search marketing or e-marketing, is referred to as the marketing (generally promotion) of products or services over the Internet. iMarketing is used as an abbreviated form for Internet Marketing. Internet marketing is considered to be broad in scope[1] because it not only refers to marketing on the Internet, but also includes marketing done via e-mail and wireless media. Digital customer data and electronic customer relationship management (ECRM) systems are also often grouped together under internet marketing. Internet marketing ties together the creative and technical aspects of the Internet, including design, development, advertising and sales.[4]Internet marketing also refers to the placement of media along many different stages of the customer engagement cycle through search engine marketing (SEM), search engine optimization (SEO), banner ads on specific websites, email marketing, mobile advertising, and Web 2.0 strategies. In 2008, The New York Times, working with comScore, published an initial estimate to quantify the user data collected by large Internet-based companies. Counting four types of interactions with company websites in addition to the hits from advertisements served from advertising networks, the authors found that the potential for collecting data was up to 2,500 times per user per month.

Key words: Internet-marketing- SEO- SEM- Counting- potential- data

INTRODUCTION

E Marketing is essentially part of marketing. So the place to begin defining E Marketing is to consider where it fits within the subject of marketing. So let's start with a definition of marketing. The American Marketing Association (AMA) definition (2004) is as Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating; Communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. Therefore

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e marketing by its very nature is one aspect of an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. As such an aspect, e Marketing has its own approaches and tools that contribute to the achievement of marketing goals and objectives.

This also helps us to differentiate between e Marketing and E-commerce, since E-Commerce is simply buying and selling online.

Difference between e Marketing and Internet Marketing

There is no real difference between e Marketing and Internet Marketing. However, with the arrival of mobile technologies such as PDA's and 3G mobile phones, as well as Interactive Television, both terms tend to be stretched to include these new media technologies. On the other hand, others would see e Marketing and Internet marketing a subtly different, for example, Internet marketing is achieving marketing objectives through applying digital technologies. E Marketing is achieving marketing objectives through use of electronic communications technology. (Chaffey 2006)

Whilst this distinction is wholly acceptable, it is difficult to see where the distinction lies between digital technologies and electronic communications technologies, especially with the convergence of technologies such as mobile devices.

E Marketing tools

The Internet has a number of tools to offer to the marketer.

1. A company can distribute via the Internet e.g. Amazon.com.

2. A company can use the Internet as a way of building and maintaining a customer relationship e.g. Dell.com.

3. The money collection part of a transaction could be done online e.g. electricity and telephone bills.

4. Leads can be generated by attracting potential customers to sign-up for short periods of time, before signing up for the long-term e.g. which.co.uk.

5. The Internet could be used for advertising e.g. Google Ad words.

6. Finally, the web can be used as a way of collecting direct responses e.g. as part of a voting system for a game show.

Marketers Plan for E Marketing

There are two ways of looking at this.

1. An existing organization may embark upon some e marketing as part of their marketing plan.

2. An organization trades solely on the Internet and so their marketing plan focuses purely on e Marketing. The marketing plan in either case is the next step, whether focused upon e Marketing or all marketing. The next lessons focus upon a tailor-made e Marketing plan which conforms to the acronym AOSTC from our generic marketing planning lesson.

3. A - Audit - An audit of internal strengths and weaknesses, an external opportunities and threats.

4. O - Objectives - SMART e Marketing objectives.

5. S - Strategy – e marketing strategies.

6. T - Tactics - an e Marketing mix.

7. C - Controls - measuring the performance of our e Marketing plan.

The e Marketing Mix is essentially the same as the marketing mix. It is simply the adaptation of price, place, product and promotion to the e Marketing context. Of course one could also include physical

evidence, people and process when marketing planning for an online service. Below are a series of lessons that consider how markets can apply the e Marketing mix to their organization's own product, service, brand or solution.

E Marketing Price

The e marketing mix is simply an adaptation of the traditional marketing mix, and 'P' for price. However, the Internet has influenced how online businesses price in a number of ways.

E Marketing Place

The e Marketing space consists of new Internet companies that have emerged as the Internet has developed, as well as those pre-existing companies that now employ e Marketing approaches as part of their overall marketing plan. For some companies the Internet is an additional channel that enhances or replaces their traditional channel(s) or place.

E Marketing Product

We've already considered product as part of the marketing mix. Two previous tools for product decision-making have been introduced - Product Life Cycle (PLC) and the Three Levels of a Product.

E Marketing Promotion

This lesson looks at ways of increasing the popularity of your website by looking at the **internal optimization** of the website itself. It considers many important ways of building your traffic, including Search Engine Optimization (SEO) approaches.

1. This lesson looks at ways of increasing the popularity of your website by looking at external sources of Internet Advertising.

E Marketing Product

We've already considered product as part of the marketing mix. Two previous tools for product decision-making have been introduced - Product Life Cycle (PLC) and the Three Levels of a Product. Both of these tools are equally applicable to the context of e Marketing**,** and can be easily applied to include e Marketing and product.

For example a product marketed solely online will go through a life cycle in the same unpredictable way as a product marketed through any traditional channel (PLC). Products marketed online will have a core benefit to the consumer, be an actual tangible product, with augmentation that adds value such as insurance, warranties and so on (Three Levels of a Product). Although tools actually specify the term 'product,' they can be easily adapted to include brands, services or solutions.

The e Marketing Product/Business Matrix (depicted below) should be used in conjunction with Product Life Cycle (PLC) and the Three Levels of a Product. It represents an additional tool for audit that bridges existing businesses and new online start-ups, and existing products and new products. It allows marketers to categories those marketing on the Internet as an Online Extender, an Online Alternative, an Online Innovator (Existing Business), or an Online Innovator (Online Start-Up). Let's take a look at it in more detail.

Chart-1
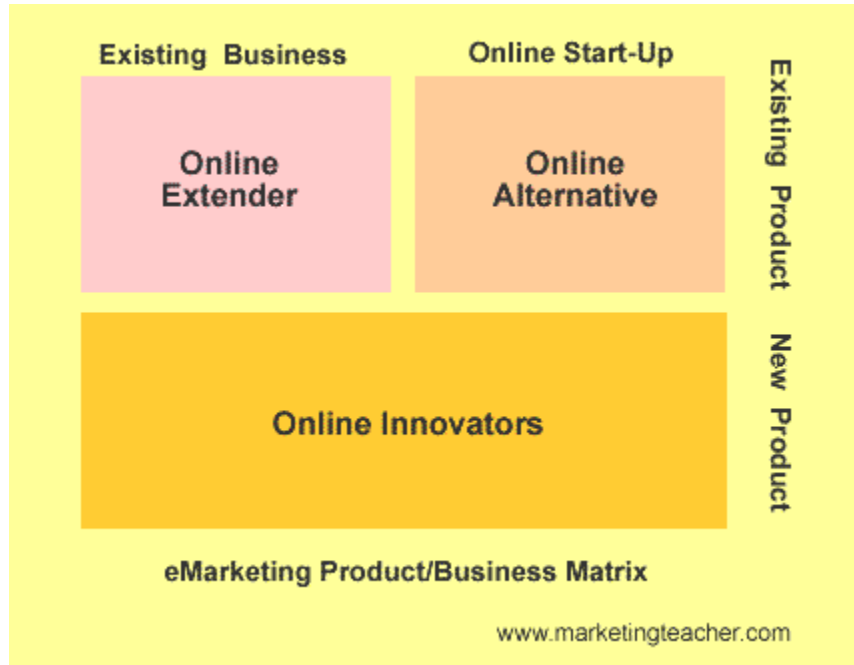
Source: compiled from internet-2009

A - Online Extender

An Online Extender is an existing business that has a strategy whereby it extends its marketing activities to the Internet. It could be any traditional, terrestrial organization that has historically grown through using traditional channels of distribution to get existing products, brands, services or solutions to market.

B - Online Alternative

The Online Alternative is a new start-up that uses the Internet as an original channel of distribution to get products, brands, services or solutions, currently available elsewhere, to market. Some segments may be better targeted with this online alternative, for example remote or fragmented markets.

C and D - Online Innovators

Online Innovators come in two forms:

1. C - Online Innovators are existing businesses that see a benefit to launching new and innovative products, brands, services or solutions online by leveraging new technology. Existing businesses have a wealth of knowledge and learning that underpin their moves onto the Web. Remember, the Internet is not a business paradigm shift (at least not yet) and so current business approaches are often adapted for the Internet. Existing businesses have experience.

2. D - Online Innovators are start-ups that seize the opportunity to launch new and innovative products, brands, services or solutions online. Despite not having as much knowledge and learning as some of their competitors, they are flexible and can move much more quickly. Start-ups often lack experience.

E Marketing Price

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The e marketing mix is simply an adaptation of the traditional marketing mix, and 'P' for price. However, the Internet has influenced how online businesses price in a number of ways.

1. International pricing and competition give consumers access to the lowest price for any generic good. For example, British consumers benefit when buying products from the United States since there are almost two Dollars to the Pound. Conversely this makes British goods more expensive to the American consumer. So it's cheap to buy spectacles from a US website and then to import them into the UK (even including transport costs and import taxes).

2. Online auctions are a popular and innovative way of pricing, for example eBay. Here you register with the online auction company as a seller and/or a buyer. You can place an item into auction where buyers bid against each other. The highest bidder wins. The auction website takes a commission. The commission is factored into the price you pay.

3. Greater access to pricing information, more quickly and in a format that makes pricing comparable and transparent. There are a number of sites that will compare and contrast prices for the same or similar goods and services e.g. prices on car insurance.

4. Pricing could also include the cost of an online advertising medium such as Google Ad words. Here an online supplier would buy a keyword located in a text or image based advert onto Google's own search engine or onto a website belonging to a Google publisher. For example you search for the term 'hair straighteners' on Google and you are directed to a site about hair dressing. On this site is plenty of information about hair straightening, placed next to some contextual adverts. You click on the advert and are taken to a site selling hair dressing supplies. You buy the hair straighteners, and your suppliers pay a small 'pay- per-click' fee which is split between Google and their publisher. This is factored into the price you pay.

Traditional Pricing Tactics Used in e Marketing

Of course the Internet marketer still has a whole selection of other more traditional pricing approaches to choose from that can be adapted to e marketing scenarios:

1. **Premium pricing** e.g. selling music via iTunes.

2. **Penetration pricing** e.g. giving away free subscriptions to land grab market share for new start-ups such as Youtube.com and Myspace.com.

3. **Economy pricing** e.g. selling basic products and services online likes basic web design or paperclips.

4. **Price skimming** e.g. new product launches online such as albums or games.

5. **Psychological pricing** e.g. products and services sold at 99p or $99.99 (Price Point Perspective).

6. **Product line pricing** e.g. subscription 1 @ free, subscription 2 @ $10.00 (with added value) and subscription 3 @ $49.99 for 10 years.

7. **Pricing variations** e.g. budget airlines selling tickets online where the first tickets bought are the cheapest, and the last ones bought tend to be more expensive.

8. **Optional product pricing** e.g. selling a holiday online with travel insurance.

9. **Captive product pricing** e.g. once you buy virus software from one brand, your updates must also come from them.

10. **Product bundle pricing** e.g. buying Internet access which comes with free online phone calls.

11. **Promotional pricing** e.g. Betting incentives, such as free Dollars to gamble online for current customers that gamble on football

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games to tempt them to play online poker, or vouchers with codes sent by e-mail as rewards e.g. Amazon.com.

12. **Geographical pricing** e.g. Microsoft pricing in different currencies in different international markets.

E Marketing Place

The e Marketing space consists of new Internet companies that have emerged as the Internet has developed, as well as those pre-existing companies that now employ e Marketing approaches as part of their overall marketing plan. For some companies the Internet is an additional channel that enhances or replaces their traditional channel(s). For others the Internet has provided the opportunity for a new online company.

New Internet companies

These companies only trade on the Internet.

1. New online retail brand e.g. Amazon, Lastminute.com - Essentially these companies could not have been conceived without the creation of the Internet. New companies sprang up as the Internet began to be adopted. Entrepreneurs were investing heavily in all sorts of start- ups.

Cc **Chart-2**
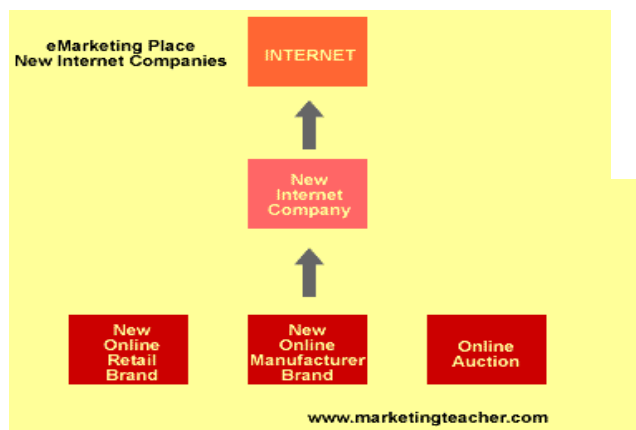
2.

        Source: compiled from internet-2009

3. New online manufacturer brand e.g. Dell.com - Entrepreneurs saw opportunities for developing online manufacturers' brands that took advantage of online technologies that enabled innovative new products to be adapted to customer preferences, and by using IT to enable efficient and effective operations such as assembly and logistics.

4. Online Auction e.g. eBay. In common with new online retail brands, before the emergence of Internet technologies, this concept was not possible. Essentially eBay is a Consumer-to-Consumer (C2C) business. For more information on how online auctions work, see the lesson on e Marketing and price.

Pre-existing companies that have adopted e Marketing

These are traditional companies that trade on the Internet.

1. Banking and financial Services e.g. HSBC Bank. Banks and financial services have benefited tremendously from the popularity of Internet usage. There is a mixture of new online banks and traditional banks, both offering online banking services. Essentially banks no longer need to invest in high cost, high street selling units i.e. old fashioned town-based banks. Labor costs have also been reduced since much of the traditional banking bureaucracy is done using IT, and the use of overseas call centers has meant that salaries are much lower. Software also means that customers can be retained by using Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Chart-3

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2. eMarketing   approaches.

3. Existing online retail brand e.g. Wal-Mart, took advantage of this new mode of distribution by extending products and services to consumers via the medium of the Internet. E Marketing enhances their traditional marketing.

4. Direct distribution channel e.g. New York Yankees' shop. Organizations have access to consumers worldwide. So brand loyal consumers such as sports fans are now able to buy directly from their preferred club, which pockets the entire profit without having to give a cut to intermediaries.

5. Wholesalers e.g. C and S wholesale Grocers. IT allows retailers to order directly from their wholesale partners via their website. Retailers can check stocks and look at current promotions. This approach is more effective than depending entirely on merchandisers.

6. Agents e.g. Avon Representatives. There are a number of different types of agents. One well known example is that of Avon cosmetics and their workforce of extremely loyal representatives. The representatives are in reality agents. E Marketing allows customers

to choose between the services of their traditional Avon rep or the Avon Online Shop i.e. using an agent or going direct.

7. Franchises e.g. KFC. There are many examples of franchises. The online equivalent of a franchise is an affiliation or affiliate. This gives the franchise owner the opportunity to develop a network of affiliates that display goods, services or solutions on the affiliate website. A commonly cited example is that of Amazon.com. So if you are a golf enthusiast, and you have developed a site that give tips on how to play better golf, then you can apply to Amazon.com for an affiliation that allows you to place tailored Amazon ad boxes on your site. They can be adapted to sell golfing books and you as the site owner can adapt the ads to match the feel of your site. For every golf book sale that your leads generate, you are paid a commission.

8. Vending and automated retailers e.g. Coke machines. Vending is very much based upon the physical location of machines near to where they are most likely to sell product. However, vending machines can use IT and the Internet to communicate with a central server, giving information on what is currently selling well, or what might need replacing.

Internet Marketing and Promotion
a. Advertising
This lesson looks at ways of increasing the popularity of your website by looking at external sources of Internet Advertising.

Pay-Per-Click Advertising
Google Ad words
Google Ad words are a cost-per-click (CPC) online advertising programme. Essentially that means that you decide upon a keyword that relates closely to your product or service. Using Google's tools, you price how much it would cost your per-click for your chosen keyword - this could be 10 cents,

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$1.50 or more, depending on the popularity of the keyword. So the keyword marketing would be more expensive than the keyword marketing cheese china because of its level of popularity. You then allocate a budget, and pay Google by credit card. You can control the length of your campaign, or end it as soon as the money runs out.

Adverts appear alongside Google search results - so go to Google and search for 'marketing.' The ad's appearing along side the main search results are CPC. Ad's also appear on selected content websites - such as www.chichesteruk.com - look at the adverts along the top, and down the right hand column - this is where ad's based upon the keyword Chichester would appear. You only pay for adverts that get clicked - not for page views - so you pay nothing if your advert is simply viewed.

There is also an opportunity for 'Smart Pricing' whereby you pay more for the advert if a sale is guaranteed e.g. you have a website based upon fishing - you write a review of a new type of fishing rod, the visitor then sees an ad for the same rod in an Ad words text ad running on the 'same page,' then clicks on it - and buys from the advertiser.

Ad words is a very targeted and controllable way of online advertising - hence the huge rises in income and profit for Google over recent times. Click here to go to Google Ad words.

Search Marketing

Overture and Yahoo

Overture is the Yahoo equivalent of Google's Ad words. Now known as Yahoo! Search Marketing, Overture has a series of sub-products that make up its Internet marketing programme. Here are some examples:

(a) Sponsored search - displays your advert at the top of the search engine results. So your potential customers search for a keyword and your advert appears at the top of the results page (this is very similar to Ad words). Again, as with Ad words, the advertisers bid against each other to obtain the position that will generate the most convertible traffic to their site. Popular keywords will cost more - obviously.

(b) Local Advertising - gets your business listed in Yahoo's business directory. So if you wish to promote products in specific regions next to specific search keywords, this is a much targeted geographical service. Overture ahs many other similar services such as Search Submit, Product Submit, Travel Submit and Directory Submit that could be considered. Click here to go to Yahoo Search Marketing (Overture).

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing is where an organization offers and incentive to other web-based organizations to market the products or services that it offers. So a company selling surfboards could have an affiliate programme that is offered to other web-based organizations that offer information on surfing destinations. The affiliate programme is supplied by one organization - whereas the 'affiliate' is the website that promotes on behalf of the supplying organization.

Put simply - affiliate marketing is a basic agency arrangement. There is rarely any pay-per-click cash, but affiliates tend to take a commission on any goods sold as a result of the click. What does it look like? Affiliate marketing sees a banners advert or a text advert placed upon an affiliate's website. When the advert attracts a click, the visitor is taken through to the site that originated the affiliate programme. No cash changes

hands until there is a sale, but affiliate rewards tend to be higher than regular pay-per-click. Commission Junction (CJ) is a well-known example of an Affiliate Marketing company. CJ acts as an intermediary between affiliate programme suppliers of all types and sizes. So if you have a successful website, that does well in the search engines and is popular with visitors, you should register with CJ and place affiliate adds onto your site. Click here to visit Commission Junction.

Offline Promotions Strategies

Of course to promote website you should also consider offline promotion strategies such as those used by non- Internet businesses. Our Lesson store contains lessons on Promotion (as part of the Marketing Mix) and also marketing Communications (and its own mix).

Here a selection of other suitable approaches to offline promotion:

1. Create a media release or announce a media conference regarding your website.
2. Advertise using other media such as TV, billboards, radio, newspapers and magazines, or the cinema.
3. Send out direct mail shots and run campaigns.
4. Print your domain name and e-mail contact addresses upon all of your corporate material.
5. Offer free products and services. FREE is one of the most powerful words in marketing.
6. Provide free material e.g. fact sheets or guides that could be posted or e-mailed to customers.
7. Offer competitions or quizzes (with prizes when possible).
8. And many, many others.

b. Website Optimization

This lesson looks at ways of increasing the popularity of your website by looking at the **internal optimization** of the website itself.

It considers many important ways of building your traffic, including Search Engine Optimization (SEO) approaches.

Build your traffic.

Content is king. Write good quality content that visitor's value and that keeps them coming back. This is a golden rule. Try to make sure that you have substantial content before putting your site online. No site is better than one that is poorly prepared. Make the content easy to read and digest. Keep it focused upon keywords, and keep content up-to-date. Remember, your site is not an online brochure or gimmicky sales promotion.

Your domain name should be innovative and does not necessarily have to say what your site does. For example British Airways has an online ticket websites called Opodo.com.

When building the site, keep the design simple. Flash, Java and Java script look great but have been known to confuse spiders. Keep It Short and Simple (KISS). Remember that not all visitors will have fast Internet connections - much of The World still uses 56k modems.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is important. This will help search engines to read your pages. There are many ways to do this - try to include keywords in your title, in your description tag, in your heading tag, in your URL (if possible), and some would also say try to represent your keyword in content - in bold, in italics, and high in the page.

Word density - your keyword should not represent more than 20% of your total wordage.

Try to link between your pages. This is call 'cross linking.' So if one of your pages attracts high numbers of visitors through search engine, then link to less exposed

pages around your site. Then add links to the top pages of your site a.k.a. 'root' pages. Try not to be more than two clicks away from root pages. This makes it easier for visitors to stick around.

Submit to search engines where you can. However this is becoming more difficult. Today it is more likely that the search engines will find you - when you obtain in links, spiders and bots will come through your site as they follow outbound links form other sites. You could also try to get listed in directories such as DMOZ.

Once your site is online monitor its progress. This is how you control your online presence. You need a stats package that monitors every detail of your site's logs including inbound links, keyword searches, page views, visitor number (rather than hits), and page popularity - data needs to be available for every day of the year.

Links To your site - especially form higher-ranking sites - are very important. Links need to be from sites that have similar keywords to those of your pages. This is time consuming and you need to build slowly. Contact sites and offer to exchange links. Links in text are better that stand alone URL's, so put links from your site in paragraphs of text that allow visitors to click on them as they read you content. However, try not to offer too many outbound links because visitors need to be kept on your site as long as possible.

Alternative strategies

Encourage other sites to reprint your content (with credit given to you, and links back to your main site).

1. Post information about your site in communities, forums and chat groups.
2. Set up your own affiliate programme, and pay commission.
3. Encourage visitors to bookmark your site.

4. Create a mailing list, and send newsletters. Betters still, create a dynamic site that encompasses a CRM strategy.
5. Hire professionals to code your site, and to manage Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

Conclusion

As you plan for e Marketing and during the plan's implementation, one needs to pay careful attention to the activities of competitors. So **competitor research for e Marketing** is essential when attempting to answer the question where are we now There are a number of approaches that can be employed, with the emphasis on each approach shifting depending upon the nature of our e Business and market. Here are some key tools of competitor research for e Marketing

1. Use search engines
a. General topics such as Google, Yahoo and MSN.
b. Type names of competitors.
c. Type industry, product or term.
d. Search down into a directory structure e.g. Yahoo
e. Search a competitor's web site.
f. Product information, press releases, job opportunities.
g. Pricing information.
h. Distribution information such as where to buy.
i. (So publish only what you'd give away at a trade show)

2. Hunt for trade associations
a. Search for personal pages or Blogs.
b. Different perspective e.g. fans, ex-employees.
c. E.g. www.blogger.com, www.myspace.com, www.youtube.com

3. Ask your target market
a. Send questions to named personnel, newsgroups, personal pages, mailing lists.
b. Conduct a survey using.

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c. Buy secondary reports e.g. Data monitor, Mintel.

4. Newsgroups and post queries

a. Newsgroups on bulleting boards or forums.
b. Deja.com (Google).
c. Read online financial information.
d. Research public companies.
e. III.co.uk Ample UK.
f. FT.com UK.

5. Read online competitive information

a. E.g. Hoovers.com - Paid for, in US.

6. Study demographic reports

a. Statistics.gov.uk/census in UK.
b. Census.gov in US.

7. Original source material

a. Business Source Elite, Newspapers, Kelly's, Kompass.

8. Monitor special interest material

a. E.g. Marketing Week (BSE), Campaign (BSE), Marketing (BSE).

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