

Usefulness of Digital Marketing to the Government of India

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Abstract - Digital Marketing is the new way of connecting and informing people across the globe. In this age of Internet and the connectivity provided by it, organizations are getting rapidly connected. The coming of power of the current Modi lead government has set in a new face of the world's largest democracy and its functioning. With numerous digital initiatives the current government has turned the attention of the world towards the rising development. This paper aims to throw light on the various initiatives taken up by the government under the Digital India Initiative. The websites launched and the applications created to connect the citizens of India to the central structure through the efficient use of internet enabled technologies.

Keywords - Digital India, Mobile Governance, Vikaspedia, m-Governance, AppStore, E-Governance.

1. Introduction

India is the largest democracy of the world. It is also the country with the second largest population[6]. In such a scenario overall development pose a great challenge to the government. A robust plan and its efficient execution is needed for an efficient reach to every citizen throughout the country. When times and technology is changing at a fast pace, India as a nation cannot afford to lag behind. The demographic challenges and the existing infrastructural incapabilities makes the task at hand even more challenging to the government. The varied cultures and their reluctance to change from the existing pattern also pose a mammoth hurdle.

The current government led by Mr. Narendra Modi is working on bringing a new governance model, ushering in a fresh perspective of change. Yes, the task at hand is big but the elected are well versed with their plan of execution. A number of schemes are launched with the formation of new departments in the central government [7]. This wave of reforms introduced the country to Digital Connect and a Digitizes Country.

With schemes like Jan Dhan Yojna[8] (Citizen Money Schemes), LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) Subsidy Reforms, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission)[9], Bankruptcy Code, Real Estate to name a few. But the initiative that is behind the success of all the new schemes is of Digital India Initiative.

Under the Digital India Initiative the PMO (Prime Minister's Office) took the charge of developing one nation. A nation connected to all its citizens.

The Digital India programme was created to make India a nation united by knowledge. It emphasises on the establishment of a central technology to enable an effective change process. It is co-ordinated by DeitY but is monitored by all levels of the governing body. An important aspect of this initiative is that it pulled together existing policies and schemes and restructured them for an effective implementation across the nation.

2. Vision of Digital India

Digital Infrastructure as a utility to every citizen

- Governance and Services on demand
- Digital Empowerment of Citizens.

Under this campaign two major initiatives were launched to enable prompt connectivity between the government bodies and the people of India:

- 1) MyGov Website
- 2) Vikaspedia Website

MyGov Website empowered the citizen to get together, discuss and rectify the issues prevailing in the society. It is a platform where the citizens join hands to act, report, manage and rectify the issues existing in their own cities. Yes, this initiative brought power to the hands of the

masses. The actions reported and taken are directly dealt with by the PMO. This initiative enabled the central government to get to know the issues at the grass root level. Issues which existed in far reaching ends of the country.

Vikaspedia is what I would like to shift your focus to. Vikas - meaning development and pedia-is a collection of all information related queries. This portal is developed to cater to the daily questions of every citizen. It covers extensively the areas of Agriculture, Health, Education, Social Welfare, Energy and E-Governance.

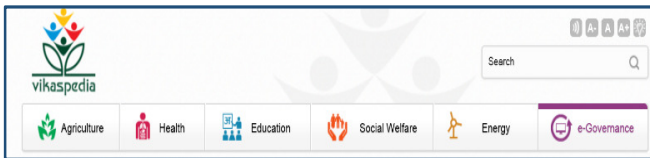


Fig 1: Vikaspedia

The E-Governance section explains extensively on:

- E-Governance in India
- Citizen Services
- Employment News
- Citizen Access to Information(RTI)
- Resources for VLEs
- Women and e-Governance
- Digital India
- Mobile Governance
- Best Practices
- E-Gov Services Online
- Judicial Services In India
- Discussion Forums

Our point of discussion in this paper would be on Mobile Governance. For Mobile Governance the website “The National Mobile Governance Initiative” was launched. This portal hosts every minute happening in the world of mobile governance. It details out on its homepage the following:

- Depts./Agencies Integrated
- No. of Push SMS Transactions
- App Downloads

These charts are updated daily routine and depict the actual values.

3. Why Mobile Governance?

Cell Phones in India account to 1033.20 million with 1.1 million monthly cell phones addition. With a teledensity of

81.35 India ranks 2nd in the world by the number of mobile phones used.[1][2]

As per an independent research portal [3], by 2018 the number of mobile phone users would increase to 775.5 million from 684.2 million in 2016. The statistics above, clearly prove that, to ensure governments reach to every citizen, they have to exploit these figures and make each initiative a success. With a mobile connectivity in every hand what power can be created if this potential is tapped? All these questions made the government to initiate The National Mobile Governance Initiative.

4. Analysis of Mobile Governance

With the setting up of mobile governance we can see that:

- There are 968 Live mobile applications
- 1085879 downloads are hosted as of now on the m-App Store
- The App Store has Applications by the Central Government and by the State Government
- The Application “AADHAR enrolment status” leads the list of downloads of the Central Government Applications, with 19375 downloads as of
- The state wise downloads of the applications is also displayed. In which Andhra Pradesh tops the list of most number of downloads with 12468 downloads as of 13th September 2016.[4]
- The Number of applications hosted by the state government of Maharashtra tops the list with 67 number of applications[4]
- There are 20 applications hosted to cater to the needs of the Kisan (farmers).
- Kisan Suvidha tops the list of maximum downloads of 2790 as of 13th September 2016.[4]
- Applications to learn Microsoft Presentations, Word Processing and Spreadsheet in 11 regional languages are provided.[4]
- Presentation Marathi Application tops the list of downloads with 142 downloads.[4]
- Under the Other Category “Road Safety Tips” Application is the most downloaded with 231 downloads. [4]

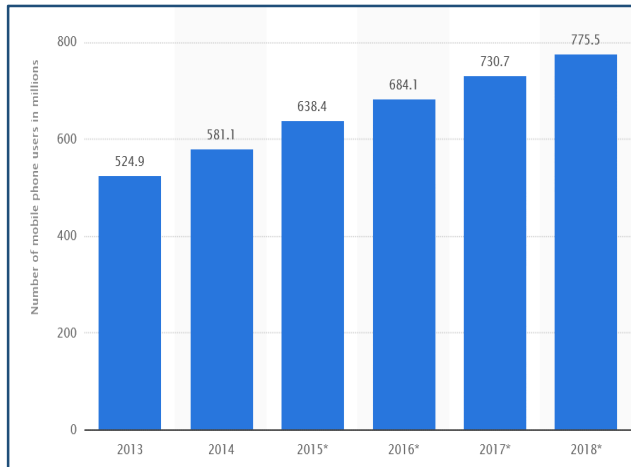


Figure 1: Prediction on the number of users by 2018

From the above facts and figures we can gauge the impact and awareness level of these services among the masses. Though the numbers may be low but the statistics are positive indicators of an acceptance. It indicates that the citizens are becoming technology friendly.

5. Impact of Mobile Governance

Mobile Governance impacted the citizen and the governance in the following ways:

- Raised awareness among the farmers
- Better harvest as farmers are becoming adept in information handling.
- Subsidy dispersion in an efficient way
- Raised awareness regarding personal hygiene and food habits

The government used the media technology to cater to the demands of its citizens.

6. Technical Discussions and Proposed Solutions

6.1 Technical Details

The Mobile Seva System (m-Governance) is an innovative initiative aimed at mainstreaming mobile governance in the country. It provides an integrated whole-of-government platform for all Government departments and agencies in the country for delivery of public services to citizens and businesses over mobile devices using SMS, USSD, IVRS, CBS, LBS, and mobile applications installed on mobile phones.[5]

Mobile Service Delivery Gateway(MSDG) enables delivery of public services over mobile devices via various mobile based channels.

The SMS Gateway provides the SMS based services to the people and businesses. These SMS portals are used to PUSH common informational messages to the citizens. They can also opt for a PULL SMS Service for specific information. Short codes 51969 and 166 have been allotted by Government of India for Mobile Governance.

Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) is used for applications demanding session management. As of now prepaid recharges and checking balances of financial accounts is only functional.

Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) is a speech recognition system. It has enabled the automation of a large amount of services and their delivery. For people who are not comfortable with the usage of keystrokes IVRS is a perfect solution for them. It is intended to cater to the G2C (Government to Customer) and C2G (Customer to Government)services.

Location Based Services(LBS) are the most important of them all. It enables a real time datacollection which furthersmoothens the process of data analytics. This Analytics allowsthe government to cater to the needs of the people in a customised way. MSDG will connect to the LBS to provide an efficient solution to the citizen.

Cell Broadcasting Services(CBS) are used to send out notification to the citizens. In times of disaster or emergency situation, information can be easily pushed to the citizen. It will allow real time updates and will cater to the safety of the people.

Mobile Payment Services are introduced to encourage card based payments. These systems are linked to the AADHAR of people thus facilitating better and transparent financial records. It facilitates the payment to government services with ease.

6.2 Proposed Solutions

With the advent of digitalisation of the nation certain parameters need to be taken care of.

- Phased execution of the projects: It has been observed that the sheer number of applications make the understanding of the application vague. A phased execution of applications will ensure better understanding.
- Robust Security Measures: With such a large database of information robust security measures need to be taken care of on priority. With the rise

in cyberattacks towards India and its organisations we need to have in place security to ensure a risk free interaction

- Trainings: With applications there need to be setup training centres to educate masses on the usage of applications. In the 600+ applications introduced, a lot of them have still not been heard of.
- Free SMS: Setting up of internet will demand an extensive planning. If free SMS services can be provided to enquire from the government, it would enable more citizens to get connected to the system.
- Low Cost Phones: The government can launch low cost phones with specialised applications pre-installed on the phones to enable quick usage of the applications. This will also enable faster connectivity.

7. Conclusion

Digital Connect will empower a digitized India. The benefits of Digitization are obviously positive but in the Indian scenario are still farfetched. These small steps are already giving positive signals of acceptance among the masses. Once fully implemented in our context, it would enable a transparent and a just governance.

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