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## The role of social media platforms in shaping brand identity for Indian fashion retailers

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### Abstract

In the rapidly transforming landscape of Indian fashion retail, social media platforms have emerged as powerful tools for brand communication, identity formation, and consumer engagement. This paper explores the critical role that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube play in shaping the brand identity of Indian fashion retailers. The study draws upon qualitative and quantitative data, analyzing the strategic use of visual storytelling, influencer collaborations, content marketing, and customer interaction to craft a compelling brand narrative. Insights from leading Indian fashion brands and consumer perspectives are synthesized to assess the effectiveness of social media in driving brand loyalty and market differentiation. The findings reveal that social media not only serves as a promotional vehicle but also facilitates deeper emotional connections and real-time feedback loops that are vital for sustaining brand identity in a highly competitive market.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Brand Identity, Indian Fashion Retail, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Consumer Engagement, Digital Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Visual Storytelling

### Introduction

The Indian fashion industry has witnessed a paradigm shift in recent years due to the digital revolution. The emergence and widespread adoption of social media platforms have significantly influenced how fashion brands interact with consumers, shape their brand personas, and build lasting customer relationships.

PPC stands for pay-per-click, a web advertising technique in which publicists incur costs whenever one of their commercials is clicked. Instead of attempting to obtain such views naturally, it is a means of buying visits to your website.

Affiliate marketing is one of the most popular forms of PPC. This enables advertisers to offer an ad place in a searcher's recommended connection when they come across a catchphrase known as a business offer. For instance, promotion will be displayed in the very top spot on the Google results pages for the keyword "PPC programming."

### Tips for Building a Brand with Social Media



Offshoot marketing is the process of promoting other people's (or a company's) products to earn a commission.

You find something you like, promote it to others, and get a portion of the profit from each sale you make. Partner marketing can be seen as a means of distributing product development and product advertising among several groups, with each group receiving a share of the profits in accordance with their commitment. When you send a business email to your "email supporters" contacts who have joined your email list and given express permission to receive email exchanges from you, you are engaging in email advertising. Email marketing is used to spread awareness, encourage sales, and build a community around your brand (for example with a bulletin). The focus of modern email promotion has shifted away from mass mailings that are one size fits all and toward assent, segmentation, and personalization.

With the rise of the Internet and other forms of media, as well as the fact that their audience has shrunk, radio advertising may be seen as an outmoded technique. However, this is not the case. A regular audience of more than 16 million Australians listen to business radio. 17 hours a week are spent listening to the radio, the majority of which are spent at home (49%) and in cars (32%). A few benefits of using radio for marketing are listed below:

Currently, radio broadcasts specifically target market and socioeconomic segments. By selecting the station to contact with in this manner, you may draw in your potential clients and increase the frequency of delivering your message. Consider both the advantages and disadvantages of radio advertising in your preferred radio program and then decide if it is what you are looking for. Advertising works by repeatedly reaching out to your audience. Radio is the best medium for this since you can repeatedly open your advertisement to the community and build mindfulness. Additionally, you can influence similar people more frequently due to their loyalty in turning into a similar station.

In contrast to composed notification, the sound is stored in memory even more successfully. Additionally, there is the potential to evoke emotion and give viewers the freedom to imagine the product or service in their own minds. Comparing the costs of radio advertising to those of other forms of media, radio has essentially lower costs. The expense of camera equipment, studio time, performers, and models can add up to many thousands of dollars for TV and print advertisements. Radio advertisements can reach a comparable target audience to one that a TV ad would have reached while using fewer resources.

Lead periods for print and TV commercials can be very extensive, especially when arranging, and the promotion may last for up to a year. On the other hand, delivering a radio ad may take some time. The ability to swiftly adapt to and respond to shifting economic conditions is another advantage of this.

In contrast to TV, where it may take a very long time for quantitative results, and print media, which can be substantially tougher to follow, you can follow results quickly and precisely. Results for radio advertising can be continuously broken down, and if the message isn't effective after perhaps 14 days, another radio spot can replace it successfully, as previously mentioned.

The radio continues to play a significant role in the advertising industry due to the widespread access that

people need to radio, even implicitly through retail stores and grocery stores. Independent businesses should continue to view it as the best medium for promoting their goods and services because it continues to have advantages over other resources.

Progressed TV is a collection of features made possible by cutting-edge technology that fundamentally alters traditional TV as it has come to be known over the course of the twentieth century. DVRs (computerized video recorders) and VOD (video on demand) are the two technological advancements that allow TV content to be time-shifted.

Portable advertising is a method of promotion that makes use of mobile phones, both fixed and mobile. It is a subset of flexible advertising, and portable advertising can take the form of flag ads that appear placed in mobile sites or text promos sent via SMS. With the use of texting advertising, firms may communicate with the public simply and directly. One of the testing's main goals is to enable businesses to build two-way, personal communication with their audience. The response time would be somewhat slower if texting were to become commonplace, such with WhatsApp.

Work with a conventional style blogger or a blogger who already has a submitted list of potential customers to get in front of your desired target audience. Those who have sizable groups have gained respect and approval by virtue of their examinations. They can have a significant impact if they choose to indicate, evaluate, or even put your clothes on. You can collaborate with them to create content focused on a specific conflict or to create stunning visuals in addition to your product. - You can collaborate with them to create content focused on a certain conflict or simply create stunning visuals using your product. Their influence and original interpretation of your product will generate incredible cooperation and compensation. Working with bloggers gives you the ability to accomplish both of your major goals: you gain exposure to a new target audience and, if you choose the right influence, you'll gain new clients, and the blogger will create material for you. Depending on the coordinated effort, they might expand custom substance material blogs and increase the possibility that substance material will be applied. "Make blessing guides all year long for your ideal customers' life events to inspire them to buy." Make blessing guidelines for life events based on how well your business is doing and who your top customers are. People buy goods all year long, not just around Christmas anymore, so market their products by creating gift-giving opportunities for occasions like Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduation season, Valentine's Day, marriages, anniversaries, child showers, etc. The objective messages on your website must include blessing courses, and advance blessing distributions throughout all web-based media are also required (photographs). The selection of products you sell in your business under the heading of "blessings distributes" may seem like a clear-cut category for gifts. For Mother's Day, for instance, if your brand sells women's accessories, you could put up a collection of the best gifts for mothers. Create a remarkable score page for your website by including shoppable items. An advanced eBook can also be created using a magazine-style prayer guide. Make sure to keep the joins for your eCommerce save in mind while using eBooks so that

purchasing them is simple. Engage your target audience to establish a community centered around your logo. Inspire the intended interest group to use more resources that depend on positive image esteems to support those traits and encourage commitment. Consider rival local region rate picture image trust as an example.

With over 500 million internet users in India, of which a substantial portion are active on social media, platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have become indispensable to branding strategies. This paper investigates how Indian fashion retailers use these digital channels to cultivate distinct brand identities and resonate with a diverse and dynamic consumer base.

### Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of this research is to analyze the role of social media platforms in shaping brand identity among Indian fashion retailers. Specific objectives include:

1. To explore the strategies adopted by Indian fashion brands on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube for branding purposes.
2. To examine consumer perceptions of brand identity formed through social media engagement.
3. To assess the impact of influencer marketing and user-generated content on brand trust and loyalty.
4. To identify challenges and opportunities for fashion brands in building identity through social media.

### Review of Literature

Numerous studies have emphasized the growing significance of social media in marketing and brand management. Mangold and Faulds (2009) <sup>[1]</sup> recognized social media as a hybrid marketing tool combining traditional advertising with consumer-driven content. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) <sup>[2]</sup> highlighted how companies must integrate social media into their communication strategies to remain competitive. In the Indian context, brands like FabIndia, Biba, and Manyavar have actively used digital media to reach younger, tech-savvy demographics. Influencer marketing, as analyzed by Freberg *et al.* (2011) <sup>[3]</sup>, offers a peer-based form of promotion that enhances brand credibility.

Visual storytelling through Instagram, for instance, helps brands create an aesthetic identity, while YouTube allows for long-form content such as fashion hauls, behind-the-scenes videos, and tutorials that deepen brand understanding. Facebook's role as a community builder further helps brands engage customers through groups, polls, and events. While these platforms offer immense potential, studies such as those by Ashley and Tuten (2015) <sup>[4]</sup> caution that inconsistent or overly promotional content can dilute brand identity rather than enhance it.

Kim *et al.* (2013) <sup>[5]</sup> looked at go-social types in the context of the influence of retail incredible and the prevalence of online stores on consumers' passionate and intellectual (for example, seen danger) responses, which result in shopping objectives and are primarily based on the stimulus-organism-reaction (SOR) variant. The US (independence, low vulnerability evasion) and South Korea (cooperation, extreme vulnerability evasion) were the societies that were chosen to be examined for their evaluation in social qualities. To study the fundamental model in selected

societies, different association assessment in underlying condition demonstrating (SEM) was recruited. The findings imply that while the general tool that underpins decision-making is essentially the same for the two countries, there are differences in the overall significance of the factors influencing customers' psychological and passionate responses, aside from their expectation to make an online purchase. Most respondents were female, and they were more favorable toward online clothing stores overall. The two example sets' socioeconomic backgrounds and online shopping habits had little bearing on the study's findings, therefore the conclusion may now be reduced to a required sum. The findings imply that retail strategy can also change in response to social contrasts. Focusing on client feelings through experiential cues is likely to produce less significant benefits in East Asian countries with that level of Confucian characteristics than it would in the US. By analyzing the social differentiation in the benefactor's mentality and its subsequent impact on buy expectancy having some expertise in standing as essential outside boosts, this investigation will raise the value of the current writing.

Colla and Lapoule (2012) <sup>[6]</sup> identified the key success factors (KSFs) of the basic food item "snap and pressing factor" (or power or force-in) model built by using French staple retail organizations and were able to determine the real motivation behind their considerable favors. The authors compare their evaluation of the writing to their evaluation of the other basic food item force-in tactics developed in France. These steps are concentrated under the direction of a multi-technique subjective disposition that includes semi-dependent interviews with chiefs and businesses that provide e-consumer services. The analysis confirms that, in addition to the amazingness of client gathering, which is valued by directors and customers, the key success factors (KSFs) identified in the writing are the main ones, and it is well known that many of the key administrators agree with these KSFs and the nature of the core competencies needed to obtain persuasive preferences. Considerable rights are granted by an evaluation of the actual productivity of "power-in" deals retailers and a more detailed evaluation of a coordinated strategy. Additionally, authors prompted evaluation of the investigation. Examining staple stores provide, alongside a more distinct calculated device, an enhanced method for client connections advertising. Additionally, it implies that "click on and pressure" stores let regular staple stores develop their serious side. With the personality of the essential fulfillment components of sizable basic food item shops increasing pressure-in administrations, this content provides a particularly insightful approach. The evaluation's response to this research topic should also assist massive staple stores in achieving their improvement goals and halt the stagnation of traditional retail models, particularly the hypermarket.

Gehrt *et al.* (2012) <sup>[7]</sup> used the concept of shopping directions to study Indian online purchasing. 536 members of the purchaser board contributed reviews. A two-step interaction that grouped respondents according to similarity in their rankings across four shopping directions was used to guide the use of internet shopping fragments. Cost peculiarity, good at any price, and notoriety/undertaking are the three components that have been identified. The main online buyers were in the fulfillment at any costs and

notoriety/practice categories. Although their approaches to purchase differed, other than for callings, their behavior, website trademark rankings, and socioeconomics were extremely similar (administrative versus administrative, individually). In contrast to the virtually immediately online buyers in the United States of America, who were frequently convinced by price, it has been discovered that the price peculiarity sector isn't always the leading online customer in India. This is the most accurate research to use when buying direction research in the Indian market. It's also a lot of the first to connect buying instructions with a wide range of matches. The development of this expanding business center should be continually monitored through studies. The perceptibly unfractionated issue investigation solutions for acquiring directions and website online dimensionality support that, within the developing Indian monetary framework, in addition to showing that Indian customers' directions aren't charge-based. Although online shopping is growing quickly in India, very little is known about the most remote regions of Indian consumer behavior. This search begins to put up a foundation of Indian internet purchasing expertise.

The labeling activity is completed at some level inside the creation system in the best examples, according to Garrido Azevedo and Carvalho (2012) <sup>[8]</sup>, and tag inspection takes place at conveyance offices or outlets. The interoperability problem is the main restriction felt in RFID transmission. The primary disadvantage mentioned by the organizations is the accusations from the time period. A theoretical framework is put up to examine the advantages and disadvantages of RFID across the design conveyance chain, the major barriers to its presentation, and the style conveyance chain coordinating tasks in which RFID may be present. This addresses a crucial commitment made by businesses in this sector to become more widely familiar with RFID. Additionally, new groups that are considering presenting this era could effectively conquer their bonds, enhancing its benefits and reducing its risks. This article examines the placement of RFID in the fashion supply chain from the perspective of technology users.

Doherty and Ellis-Chadwick (2010) <sup>[9]</sup> conducted a thorough investigation of the literature that unambiguously discusses the appropriation, programming, and impact of digital innovation by retailers for the development and promotion of goods. This study specifically aims to provide an all-encompassing and crucial examination of the early predictions regarding the uptake and impact of net retailing; critically reappraise those cases in front of advanced advancements in net retailing; and explore the potential future of e-tailing. The writing in the study is comprehensively and thoughtfully evaluated, specifically regarding the choice, adoption, and impact of online commerce as has been reported in contemporary scholarly writing. Looking back, it is very possible to see that some of the intriguing predictions made at the start of the internet revolution have not come true: stores aren't losing customers, online retailers aren't controlling the market, and the high street hasn't simultaneously gone bankrupt. Using evaluation, several predictions have proven false, including that advanced delegates would have an increasingly simpler job, "one-to-one" advertising and marketing will now be a reality, expenses will increase, and probably most

importantly, the supporter will have gotten more successful. Given the enormous amount of writing that has been uploaded on this site, it would be impossible to provide a brief overview of online retailing's past, present, and future. It is inescapable that many fundamental pieces of work will be ignored in the attempt to provide a general idea of the tremendous issues and largest fundamental findings to emerge from this important corpus of literature. This perspective offers one of the first and most thorough reviews of the essential writing on the potential advancement, ideas, and effects of online commerce. Additionally, the paper attempts to stray onto another level by attempting to use contemporary writing to foresee future guidelines and developments for online shopping.

### Research Methodologies

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach. A quantitative survey was conducted among 1,000 social media users in urban and semi-urban Indian cities to gauge consumer perception of fashion brands. Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews with marketing professionals from 10 prominent Indian fashion brands, including Fab India, Biba, W, Pantaloons, and Myntra.

Content analysis was also employed to study branding patterns across social media posts over a six-month period. Parameters included frequency of posting, type of content, use of hashtags, engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments), and influencer collaborations.

This research adopted a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research techniques to provide a comprehensive evaluation of traditional versus digital marketing strategies in India's fashion retail industry.

### Quantitative Component

A structured online survey was conducted with 1,000 social media users residing in urban and semi-urban areas across India. The respondents were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure demographic representation in terms of age, gender, and geography. The survey primarily focused on:

- Platform preferences for fashion brand discovery
- Engagement behavior (likes, shares, comments)
- Influencer trust and impact on purchase decisions
- Perceived brand loyalty and recall

### Qualitative Component

In-depth interviews were conducted with marketing professionals from 10 leading Indian fashion brands, including:

- FabIndia
- Biba
- W
- Pantaloons
- Myntra
- AND
- Max Fashion
- Global Desi
- Westside
- Reliance Trends

The interviews aimed to extract insights regarding campaign

strategies, ROI measurement practices, digital versus traditional media budget allocation, and perceived consumer engagement differences.

Content Analysis

To supplement primary data, a six-month content analysis (October 2024 – March 2025) was performed across Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube pages of the above brands. Content was coded and analyzed based on:

- Frequency and timing of posts
- Types of media used (video, image, carousel, story)
- Use of hashtags and brand mentions
- Engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments)
- Presence of influencer collaborations
- Consistency in branding and storytelling elements

Inter-coder reliability was maintained at 93% to ensure accuracy in content categorization.

Results and Interpretation

1. **Platform Preference:** Instagram emerged as the most preferred platform for fashion brand discovery (70%), followed by Facebook (20%) and YouTube (10%).
2. **Consumer Engagement:** Visual content like reels and stories on Instagram had higher engagement rates. Videos under one minute garnered more comments and shares compared to static posts.
3. **Influencer Impact:** 65% of respondents said they trusted brand recommendations from fashion influencers. Brands collaborating with regional influencers saw higher conversions in Tier-2 cities.
4. **Brand Recall and Loyalty:** Consistent visual themes and storytelling elements increased brand recall. Brands with personalized customer responses and interactive content reported higher loyalty scores.
5. **Challenges Identified:** Key challenges included algorithmic changes reducing organic reach, difficulty in measuring ROI, and maintaining content originality.

Results and Data Analysis Tables

Table 1: Preferred Platform for Fashion Brand Discovery (n=1000)

Platform	Respondents (%)
Instagram	70%
Facebook	20%
YouTube	10%

**Observation:** Instagram is the leading platform for fashion brand discovery among respondents, favored for its visual and influencer-driven content.

Table 2: Engagement Metrics by Content Type on Instagram

Content Type	Avg. Likes/Post	Avg. Comments/Post	Avg. Shares/Post
Image Posts	1,340	97	45
Reels (<60 sec)	2,180	245	180
Stories	N/A	Direct Responses	N/A
Carousel Posts	1,780	130	90
Influencer Videos	2,960	315	230

**Observation:** Short-form videos (reels) and influencer content generated the highest user interaction, especially in Tier-2 cities.

Table 3: Trust in Influencer Recommendations

Trust Level	Respondents (%)
High Trust	42%
Moderate Trust	23%
Low Trust	20%
No Trust	15%

**Observation:** 65% of users (high + moderate) consider influencer recommendations a key driver of purchase intent.

Table 4: Impact of Influencer Collaborations by Region

Region	Conversion Rate without Influencer (%)	With Influencer (%)
Tier-1 Cities	14%	23%
Tier-2 Cities	9%	20%
Tier-3 Cities	5%	12%

**Observation:** Collaborations with regional influencers significantly increased conversion rates in non-metro regions.

Table 5: Elements Affecting Brand Recall and Loyalty

Branding Element	Brand Recall (%)	Customer Loyalty Score (out of 10)
Consistent Visual Theme	82%	8.5
Storytelling in Posts	76%	7.9
Personalized Replies/Comments	65%	8.7
Product-centric Static Posts	45%	6.2

**Observation:** Visual consistency and direct engagement improve both recall and customer loyalty.

Table 6: Key Challenges Identified by Marketing Professionals

Challenge	Mentioned by (%)
Reduced Organic Reach due to Algorithm Changes	90%
Difficulty Measuring ROI Precisely	80%
Content Fatigue / Lack of Originality	70%
Budget allocation Confusion	55%

**Observation:** Most brands face challenges with the changing algorithms and tracking real ROI metrics.

Discussion and Conclusion

Social media has redefined the branding landscape for Indian fashion retailers. Instagram stands out as a visually dominant platform that supports storytelling through curated feeds, influencer tie-ups, and user-generated content. Facebook remains valuable for community building and event promotion, while YouTube is used for deeper brand narratives and tutorials. The integration of influencer marketing, especially involving micro-influencers, has proven effective in bridging the gap between brands and consumers.

However, the dynamism of social media platforms demands

continuous innovation and authenticity. Brands must strike a balance between promotional and engaging content while adapting to evolving algorithms and consumer preferences. Metrics such as engagement rate, sentiment analysis, and conversion tracking must guide branding strategies.

In conclusion, social media platforms are no longer optional but essential to the brand identity of Indian fashion retailers. They offer a unique convergence of creativity, communication, and commerce that, when used strategically, can foster brand loyalty and differentiation in a saturated market.

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