Role of Digital Marketing in Promoting Training Programs: A Study in Bangalore

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Abstract:
Marketing is to make selling superfluous, marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself. The scope of marketing in the contemporary era has grown larger. Training is an organized procedure which brings semi-permanent changes in behaviour, for a definite purpose. The three main areas involved are skills, knowledge and attitudes. Training is an activity leading to skilled behaviour. It teaches not what we want but makes us learn how to reach it. The organizations are not satisfied with the available pool of candidates for their organizations due to huge skill gap. An attempt was made in this paper to study the perception of students about value added courses, usage of social media by students and student perception towards the media advertisements. Simple percentages and frequencies were used, PSPP software was used. Through the study it was found that a good number of students are interested for value added courses and social media plays important role for promoting value added courses.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Training Programs, Promotion, Student Perception.

1. Introduction

The economic challenges have forced public and private sector organizations to execute their strategies with thorough precision than ever. The organizations are forced to cut their size due to economic challenges and the demand from the customers is increasing in terms of sophistication, comfort and reasonable price have led to skill gaps in the organizations. A skill gap is gap between an organizations current capability and the skills it needs to achieve its goals. Organizations will always experience a skills gap if they want to stay ahead of changing conditions in their environment and shifting expectations from their competitors, shareholders and customers. The key to achieving success under such circumstances is to harness skilled talent. It became a challenging task in an increasingly global, virtual and changing world.

Unprepared workforce are hampering the performance and growth of an organization, they reduce profits, impede market share, create inefficiencies, lower morale, and increase attrition. More importantly, it can affect the quality of service provided to customers. 80% of U.S. manufacturers cannot find educated, skilled workers for their entry-level jobs. Without a skilled workforce, manufacturers cannot continue to be the drivers of innovation and will not be successful in the global economy. Ensuring a highly skilled workforce takes a commitment from many players/leaders in the public and private sectors, the education community, the workforce development system, as well as workplace learning professionals. Each of these communities contributes to the development of the workforce. The mode of bringing a change/ make learning happen is possible only through training.

Training is an organized procedure which brings about semi-permanent changes in behaviour, for a definite purpose. The three main areas involved are skills, knowledge and attitudes. It ensures that randomness is reduced and learning or behavioural change takes place in structured format. Many value added courses, training programs are available but still the people are finding it difficult to choose which course will be apt for them in a particular field. What to learn, from where to learn and when to learn is always big questions mark for those who are really interested in learning. Marketing and Digital marketing has to play strategically important roles in order to increase the awareness and availability of information by promotions.

The world is becoming smaller. Globalisation is becoming stronger. It became possible to connect with people across the globe at the click of a button. Companies started looking at international markets to increase both, market share and sales. Consumers started gaining more importance and the entire scope of Marketing from the company's orientation was overturned. Digital Marketing became the new media to market a brand/product/organisation and so on. Though there are a lot of activities that can be done, but digital marketing these is used as a promotional tool/place to retrieve information to educate the public. Creating an online identity for a brand helps increase the brand image and awareness. And it facilitates in reaching a wider target audience with efficiency.

Digital marketing is marketing that makes use of electronic devices such as computers, tablets, smart phones, cell phones, digital billboards, and game consoles to engage with consumers and other business partners. Internet Marketing is a major component of digital marketing. Due to non-dependence on the Internet, the field of digital marketing includes a whole lot of elements such as mobile phones or cell phones, display / banner ads, SMS /MMS, digital outdoor, and many more.

Increasing number of firms is turning to devices such as smart phones and tablets to reach out to new audiences. Marketing through these devices does not only represent a lower cost for firms, but a firm can also expand its marketing efforts to millions of people in a single campaign due to the vast use of these devices. Moreover, firms that make use of these devices are seen as innovative. Thus, such businesses are held in higher esteem by consumers compared to those firms that that are orthodox in nature.

Today's empowered and connected customers have the brand in their hands and they share their views. Social media is an important factor for marketing. Laptops, smart phones, and tablets have allowed users to bring the web with them wherever they have cell phone reception or Wi-Fi (even on buses, trains, and airplanes). The current generation of videogame consoles (Xbox 360, PlayStation 3), Blu-ray players, and TVs now come with seamless internet integration, which will help get internet media, such as YouTube, off of small laptops and tablets and onto much larger displays. These tech marvels are continuing to change the way that people interact with and absorb media and information.

To succeed in this new environment, marketers need to move away from one-way communication and towards a true value exchange, where consumers interact with the brand continuously because they are getting more than just a slogan, but an experience that transcends the product itself.

Six main types of digital media communications channels which every business should consider as part of digital marketing:
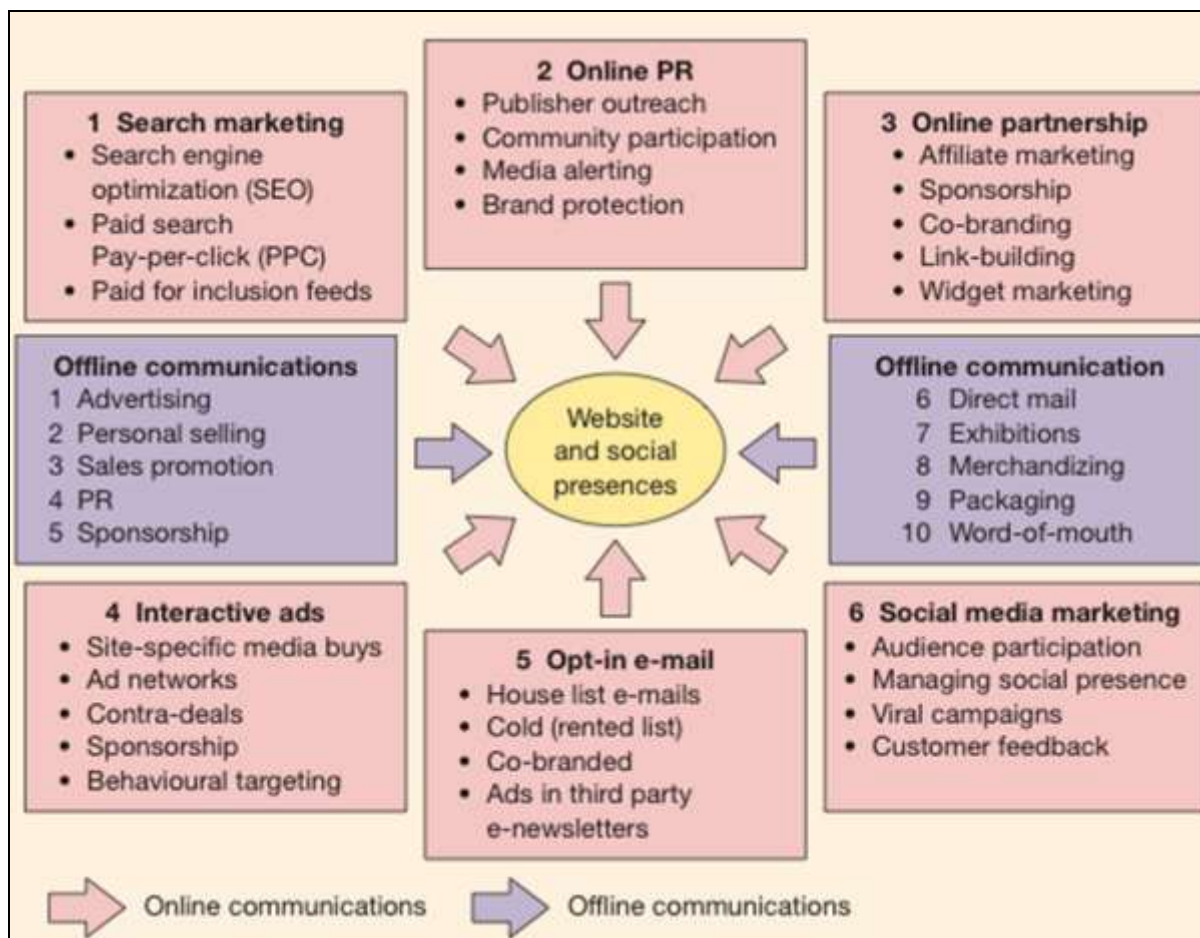

Figure 1: Communication channels

According to the research report of Goldman Sachs, India has emerged as the second largest Internet market in Asia after China with 150 million users in 2015. It estimates that Indian Internet Users will increase by 130% compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) from 0.5 million users recorded at end of 2013. Internet may not yet be as wide as that of other mass media, but given its unique advantages, it is undoubtedly the communication medium of the future.

1.1. Advertising Options Available on the Internet
The Internet offers a variety of options for the marketer to advertise her/his products/brands. These include
- Banner ads and their variations

- E-mailers and their variations
- Sponsorships
- Search Engines
- Affiliate marketing

The Variants of Banners include:
- Banner Ad - a graphical web advertising unit, typically measuring 468 pixels wide and 60 pixels tall (i.e. 468x60).
- Beyond the Banner - online advertising not involving standard GIF and JPEG banner ads.
- Button Ad- a graphical advertising unit, smaller than a banner ad
- HTML banner - a banner ad using HTML elements, often including interactive forms, instead of (or in addition to) standard graphical elements.
- Interstitial - an advertisement that loads between two content pages.
- Pop-up Ad - an ad that displays in a new browser window.
- Pop Under Ad - an ad that displays in a new browser window behind the current browser window.
- Rectangle Ad - any one of the large, rectangular banner sizes suggested by the IAB.
- Rich Media- new media that offers an enhanced experience relative to older, mainstream formats
- Skyscraper Ad- an online ad significantly taller than the 120x240 vertical banners.
- Text Ad - advertisement using text-based hyperlinks.

1.2. Internet Marketing Tactics
There are many different technologies to facilitate your Internet marketing strategy. Some of the most common and effective tools are:
Search Engines and Directories: Search engines are one of the most popular means of finding web sites, second only to following links on web pages. Search engines help people find relevant information on the Internet. Major search engines maintain huge databases of web sites that users can search by typing in keywords or phrases.
E-zines (Online magazines): These publications are focused on specific topics and may be a way to reach a target audience interested in that subject. Some companies have gathered the e-mail addresses of potential customers and used these lists to send out product information specific to client interests.

1.2.1. Seven Good Reasons to Establish an E-Zine
- Establishes Trust
- Brings Visitors Back
- Establishes You as an Expert
- Keeps Current & Potential Customers Up to Date on New Products & Services
- Builds Relationships
- Allows You to Build an Opt-In Email Marketing List
- Keeps Your Website Fresh in Visitors' Minds

E-mail: Ethical methods of gathering e-mail addresses are through on-line registration built into your corporate Web sites, or requests for information forms that request submission to your opt-in lists. Online customers are becoming increasingly selective about their relationships, the brands they trust, and what they consider relevant. While most marketers are aware of privacy issues and the risks of Spam, there is still need for improvement. Email marketing campaign management is still fairly unsophisticated even at the largest of organizations.

1.2.2. Affiliate Marketing
Affiliate Marketing enables you to increase online sales by promoting your products and services through a network of Affiliate sites on a payment-by-results basis.
It also provides the opportunity to generate additional revenue by exploiting your site's own content to promote the products and services of other online Merchants.
A Merchant recruits content sites to partner with them as Affiliates in exchange for commissions. A common third party provider such as Commission Junction can be used.
The Merchant provides their advertising banners and links to their Affiliates and assigns a commission for each click-through to their site, subscription to their service, or purchase of their products that is generated from those links.
Affiliates place the tracking code for these ads and links on their Web sites. This allows click trough's to be tracked online and commissions to be calculated. If a product or service is purchased, the customer pays the Merchant directly and the Affiliate is paid a commission for that transaction.

1.2.3. Banner Advertising

Banner advertising can play an extremely important role within your website strategy. One can use banner advertising as a means of promoting it's own products and services, raising awareness, or as a way of generating revenue by selling advertising space on your own website.

1.2.4. Purchasing Advertising
There are currently two widely recognized methods of purchasing banner advertising. The rates for these are usually quoted on a cost per thousand basis or (CPM). The rates you pay can vary tremendously as there is currently no standard price model - so be prepared to negotiate!

- *Pay-Per-Impression*: This method of purchasing banner advertising is based on a charge for the number of times someone sees your banner. There are no guarantees as to how many visitors will come to your site as a result of seeing your banner; you are simply paying for the number of times your banner is displayed. Websites that offer such programs include paypopup.com and adclicksor.com
- *Pay-Per-Visitor*: This method of purchasing banner advertising is based on a charge for the number of times someone visits your site as a result of clicking on your banner. This is a better method of purchasing banner advertising as you are only paying for results, although expect to pay a premium.
- *Pay-Per-Click*: The revenue model of the Internet giant google.com has its very own service which offers certain share of the profit that it makes by the click-thru that a website generates from its Ad Sense codes. The revenue model is known as google Ad Sense and almost every successful website uses this model to make profits. The Google Ad Sense ads can be seen on websites like Times of India, Moneycontrol.com, ManagementParadise.com and a lot many other reputed websites.
- *Branding*. While CTR and cost per sale relate to direct marketing objectives, another way of looking at banner ads is as "branding" tools. They create brand awareness, and a brand image in the viewer's mind, whether or not the viewer clicks on the ad. Branding is very difficult to measure, but can be very powerful.

The average click through ratio on banners is just under 1%, although with a well planned and executed advertising campaign using effective banners you can increase this to as much as 15%, but be prepared to work at it.

1.2.5. Conferences
By their nature conferences are organized for special interests. Advertising in conference literature, print and electronic, is an excellent way to contact target markets.
Collaborative Marketing: Team up with other business to:

- Cross-promote - e.g. setting up links from one corporate Web site to another or offering special promotions in partnership with complementary goods or services.
- Advertise - share advertising.
- Participate in joint sponsorship of events, initiatives, informational Web sites, mailing lists, bulletin board systems, directories, etc.

1.2.6. Sales Promotion
Employing methods to stimulate sales through immediate or delayed incentives to the customer. If the incentive is attractive, the price: value ratio is adjusted favorably enough to affect a sale. This strategy should integrate with the overall marketing mix to balance extra sales with long-term profit motives.

1.2.7. Subscriptions
Business marketers may use their Web sites to encourage visitors to subscribe to receive regular email messages from the company. These messages are called digests or newsletters, and are a clever way for marketers to push product news to willing customers.
Public Forums: These are often community-based or interest-based sites that allow visitors to communicate with one another. An opportunity for small businesses to reach to their intended target group via these forums is by posting messages or by sponsoring such a forum. E-mail based forums appeal to a wider audience due to the greater use of this application over Web-based forums. Web based forums are advantageous for their superior display of advertising images/messages

1.2.8. E-mail Links
Visitors to a site should have the opportunity to correspond with the host of that site, especially if out of the telephone area or time zone. E-mail links may be strategically placed throughout the site to elicit response from visitors for at various points. These are also useful for feedback on site maintenance problems.

1.2.9. On-line Surveys
Information may be collected on the visitors to a Web site through registration forms, on-line surveys, or through tracking of areas of site they visit. These websites also offer referrals wherein if you refer someone to their site and the person becomes a member then you are paid commission on that.

2. Problem of the Study

Many institutes are offering different value added courses / certification programs but the takers are very few. Industry also has dissatisfaction with the skill sets of the college passed outs. There are plenty of job opportunities but there is a skill mismatch in terms of what the candidates have learnt and what the industry demands. Very few takers are there for these certificate courses thus a study was undertaken with regard to the certification programs AUTOCAD, CAM

3. Objectives of the Study

- To study the students perceptions on value added courses/professional certifications.
- To identify the % usage of social media by students.
- To identify Students interest towards the online mode of learning.
- To study student Perception towards digital marketing.

4. Methodology

The study is based on primary data from the Bangalore city of Karnataka state. Bangalore was chosen as it is the most happening city in terms of manufacturing and IT sector and Bangalore is the preferred choice for students to pursue their academics. To cover the entire Bangalore region for the purpose of data collection colleges were identified from the north, south, east and west Bangalore based on their AICTE rankings. Purposive sampling method was used. To get a fair opinion of the students regarding the effectiveness and perception on the digital media as promotional tool all the colleges with different rankings like AAA+, AAA, AA+, AA, A+, A were approached. Only 15 colleges gave the permission for collecting the information. 2nd year, 3rd year and 4th year students of Mechanical, Aeronautical and industrial engineering students were contacted for collecting opinions regarding EDS software training programs. From each college 75 responses were collected amounting to 1125. From online 1500 responses were collected. Simple percentages and frequencies are used to analyse the data. PSPP software was used to analyse the data.

5. Analysis and Interpretation

5.1. Gender

Gender	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage
Male	766	1179	1945	77.8
Female	234	321	555	22.2
Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 1: Gender

It was identified that majority of the respondents are males (77.8%) and 22.2% are females. Most of the females don't opt for mechanical engineering due to the field work and due to the cultural practices and doctrines practised in India.

5.2. Name of the College

S no	Institute	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	AMCEC	89	8.9
2	ASE	84	8.4
3	BIT	159	15.9
4	BMSIT	59	5.9
5	BTLIT	118	11.8
6	DSCE	85	8.5
7	KSSEM	34	3.4
8	MSRIT	26	2.6
9	OXFORD	50	5
10	PESIT	29	2.9
11	RNSIT	91	9.1
12	RVCE	44	4.4
13	SJBIT	40	4
14	SSEC	62	6.2
15	VIT	30	3
	Total	1000	

Table 2: Institute

Majority of the respondents were from BIT college (15.9%), followed by BTLIT (11.8%) and the least participation is seen from MSRIT (2.6%). This shows the lack of interest in the student community towards the research and poor awareness towards the career options available.

5.3. Branch

S no	Branch	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	IEM	44	4.4
2	MECH	871	87.1
3	aero	85	8.5
	Total	1000	

Table 3: Branch

Majority of respondents for the survey are from mechanical branch (87.1%) which shows their enthusiasm and inquisitiveness for enhancing and learning skills.
4. From which year you will be serious for the placements

S no	Year	Online	Offline	Total	Percentage of respondents(%)
1	2	291	423	714	28.6
2	3	499	790	1289	51.6
3	4	210	287	497	19.9
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 4: Year

Majority of the students are from the 3rd year (51.6%) followed by 2nd year students (28.6%). It is clearly evidenced that from 3rd year onwards they will be worried about the placement and thus is serious for learning the value added courses.
5. What is your career plan after completion of graduation?

S no	Career options	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents(%)
1	Higher Studies	324	533	857	34.3
2	Employment	556	768	1324	53.0
3	Start Own Business	70	157	227	9.1
4	others	50	42	92	3.7
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 5: Career Option

Majority of the respondents are concerned for employment and placement opportunities (53%), followed by (34.3%) of the students were aiming at higher studies. The percentages reflect the importance and the societal pressure for employment on the younger generation.
Gender vs Career options:

S no	Gender	Higher Studies	Employment	Start Own Business	others	Total
	Career options					
1	Male	694	995	201	55	1945
		35.68%	51.16%	10.33%	2.83%	
2	Female	163	329	26	37	555
		29.37%	59.28%	4.68%	6.67%	
	Total	857	1324	227	92	2500

Table 6: Gender vs Career options

Gender versus career options highlighted a shift in attitude of the females, where majority of the females (59.28%) are interested for employment compared to the male students with (51.16%) are interested for the employment option. There was reverse trend seen for gender versus career options, (35.68%) of male are interested for higher studies compared to (29.37%) of females are interested for higher studies.

6) Are you aware of the value added courses / professional certification in your area of career interest?

S no	Opinion	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Yes	742	908	1650	66.00
2	No	258	592	850	34.00
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 7: Aware of the Value Added Courses

Majority of the respondents (66%) are aware of the value added courses and (34%) of respondents are unaware. There exists a lot of scope for the training institutions in the area of promotion to create awareness about their programs.

7) If yes, how did you come to know about such professional certifications?

S no	Media	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	FM	196	452	648	39.27
2	Social media	420	427	1147	69.52
3	Fliers	195	345	540	32.73
4	News paper	156	323	479	29.03
5	newsletter	75	251	326	19.76
6	others	240	402	642	38.91

Table 8: Awareness about courses

Most of the respondents learning on professional courses was through social media (69.52%), followed by was through FM radio (39.27%) and other sources also educated the students about professional courses. News papers and news letter were the least in creating awareness to the students. By this study it was identified that social media plays a vital role in spreading awareness about value added courses.

8) Are you interested in the below mentioned value added courses / professional certifications?

S no	Courses	Num of respondents					Total	Rank
		1	2	3	4	5	1* (a) + 2 * (b) + 3* (c)	
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	+ 4 * (d) + 5 * (e)	
1	AUTO CAD	314	239	364	522	1061	9277	1
2	CATIA	255	524	451	578	692	8428	2
3	ENOVIA	487	529	706	546	232	7007	6
4	HYPER WORKS	500	608	587	493	312	7009	5
5	SIMULIA	596	619	506	475	244	6652	8
6	Invertor	579	574	574	510	263	6804	7
7	PRO ENGINEER	386	495	508	673	426	7758	3
8	SOLID WORKS	507	530	440	523	500	7479	4

Table 9: Value added courses

It is evident from the figures that AUTOCAD is the preferred value added courses followed by CATIA and PRO ENGINEER. AUTO CAD is the most preferred course because it is widely used by all types of industries for designing their products and CATIA is also preferred as it is the higher version of AUTOCAD, it is widely used in all industries.

9) Does your college provide above mentioned value added courses / professional certifications?

S no	Opinion	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Yes	320	645	965	38.6
2	No	680	855	1535	61.4
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 10: College provide courses

Most of the colleges (61.4%) were not guiding the students for the various value added courses. Very few respondents felt that their colleges are giving all the information relating to the different value added courses. The colleges are still bothered about the traditional approach of imparting the skills purely based on the syllabus.

10) Are you interested in the courses offered by external industry oriented training institutions in your campus?

S no	Opinion	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Yes	780	920	1700	68.00
2	No	220	580	800	32.00
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 11: Interested in courses

More than half of the respondents (68%) are interested in learning programs offered by the external industry oriented training institutions in their campus and 32% responded that they are not interested.

11) If yes, what time is convenient for you?

Sl no	Timings	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Weekdays				
	Mornings	201	267	468	27.53
	Evenings	579	653	1232	72.47
	Total	780	920	1700	
2	Weekdays				
	Mornings	526	508	1034	60.82
	Evenings	254	412	666	39.18
	Total	780	920	1700	

Table 12: Time of convenience

Majority of the respondents (72.7%) convenient time for attending the classes for value added courses during weekdays was evenings. For weekends the convenient time for the respondents (60.82%) was mornings.

12) Would you prefer Online Learning Mode in such training and certifications?

S no	Opinion	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Yes	410	831	1241	49.64
2	No	590	669	1259	50.36
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 13: Preference of online learning mode

Most of the respondents (50.36%) were not interested in online learning mode of instructions for the certification / value added course; very few of the students (49.64%) were interested in online mode of instruction for these courses.

13) Your perceptions on Online Learning Mode? Anytime and anywhere learning convenience

S no	Opinion	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Strongly agree	265	515	780	31.20
2	Agree	439	543	982	39.28
3	Undecided	128	191	319	12.76
4	Disagree	91	113	204	8.16
5	Strongly disagree	77	138	215	8.60
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 14: Opinion on Anytime and anywhere learning convenience

Most of the respondents (39.28%) were ready for learning the certification programs at anytime and anywhere, and (31.2%) of the respondents were very keen in learning at anytime and anywhere. It is understood that because flexibility in learning as an option most of them are interested in enhancing their skills.

14) Which media advertisements do you think is more informative?

S no	Opinion	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Strongly agree	390	671	1061	42.44
2	Agree	452	483	935	37.40
3	Undecided	45	172	217	8.68
4	Disagree	53	95	148	5.92
5	Strongly disagree	60	79	139	5.56
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 15: Opinion on E-Mails

Majority of the respondents (42.44%) felt that e-mail marketing is an effective media of advertisements. The present generation is highly tech savvy wand because of smart phones with every student this mode is an effective source. E-Mails are informative as large text files with clear images can be mailed and is a easy way to pass on the information as well it is easy for understanding.

15) Are the posts which are posted in social media as well as mails sent by training organizations are informative?

S no	Opinion	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents
1	Yes	777	986	1763	70.52
2	No	223	514	737	29.48
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 16: Opinion on posts and mails

Most of the respondents (70.52%) felt that the posts posted by the training institutes in social media are informative and (29.48%) respondents felt that they are not informative.

16) Which are the social networking sites that you prefer the most?

S no	Social media sites	Num of respondents					Total	Rank
		1 (a)	2 (b)	3 (c)	4 (d)	5 (e)	1* (a) + 2 * (b) + 3* (c) + 4 * (d) + 5 * (e)	
1	Face book	133	151	220	342	1654	10733	1
2	Twitter	489	539	489	635	348	6958	4
3	LinkedIn	533	518	324	462	267	7268	3
4	orkut	1135	694	373	191	107	4941	5
5	Google+	448	435	475	649	493	7804	2
6	My space	1321	564	366	148	101	4644	6

Table 17: Preferences of social media sites

Majority of the respondents preferred Face book followed by Google+ and LinkedIn as their favourite modes of social communication and least preferred was MySpace. The training institutes can choose them for communicating with the students about their training programs.

17) How frequently do you visit the social networking sites?

S no	Frequency	Offline	Online	Total	Percentage of respondents (%)
1	Everyday	730	990	1720	68.80
2	Once in a week	219	286	505	20.20
3	Once in a month	25	148	173	6.92
4	Once in a year	1	55	56	2.24
5	Never	25	21	46	1.84
	Total	1000	1500	2500	

Table 18: Frequency of visit to face book

The Majority of the respondents (68.8%) visit Face book every day, and (20.2%) respondents responded visit Face book once in a week and 1.84% respondents responded that they never visit. By this we can say that Face book is most preferred one among other social media sites.

6. Findings and Conclusion

From the study it was identified that most of the female students don't opt for the mechanical engineering course. 51.6% of the students start preparations for the job from their 3rd year of engineering. It was found that majority of students career options are employment as compared to higher studies, girls are more employment oriented in comparison with boys. A good number of students are aware of the value added courses/ certification programs. The sources through which they came to know about such courses are E-mails, Face book, Radio (FM). Almost every student spends their time on Face book on everyday for more than an hour. Face book, Google+ and Linked In are the favourite social Medias for the students. The colleges generally don't educate the students on value added courses/ certification programs and a large pool of students are going unaware of such courses. Social media is an effective medium to target all the students as students spend considerable time on these sites and it can be used informatively by the training institutes.

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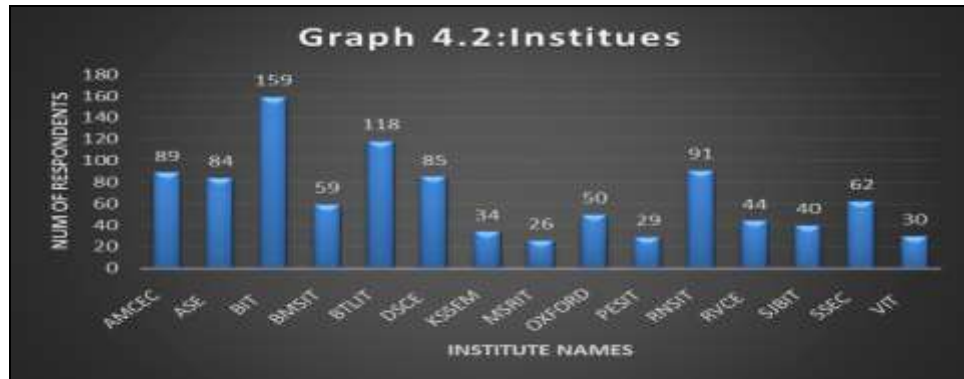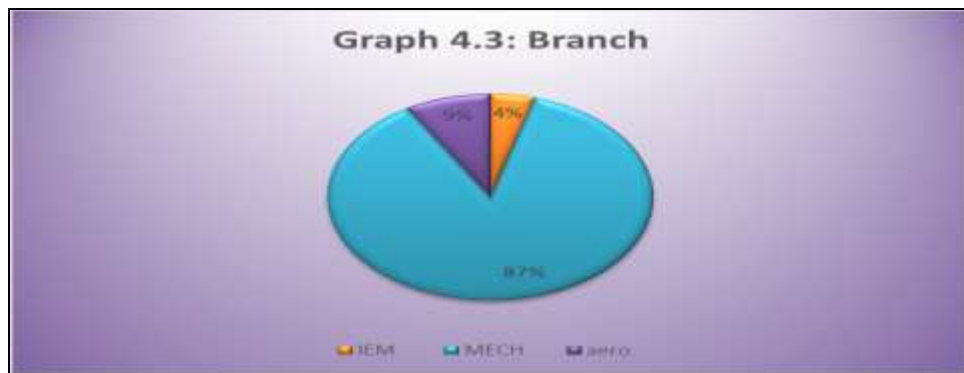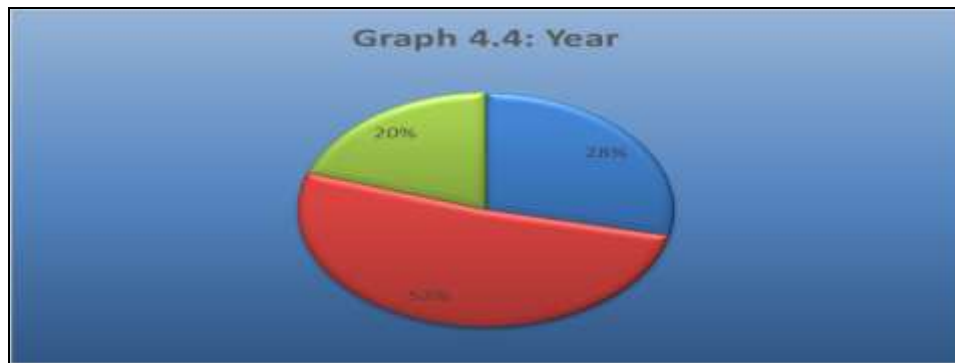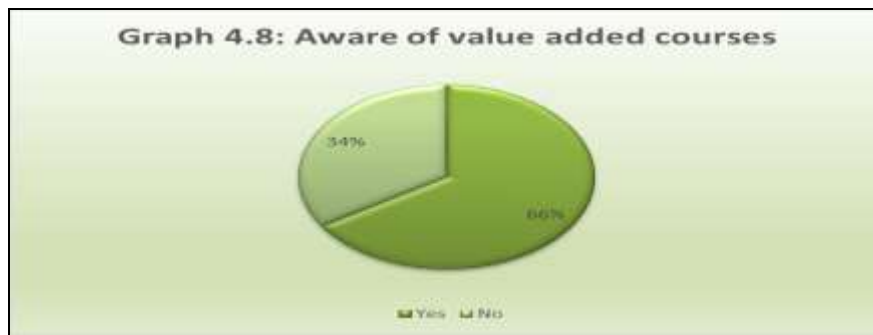
Annexure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4
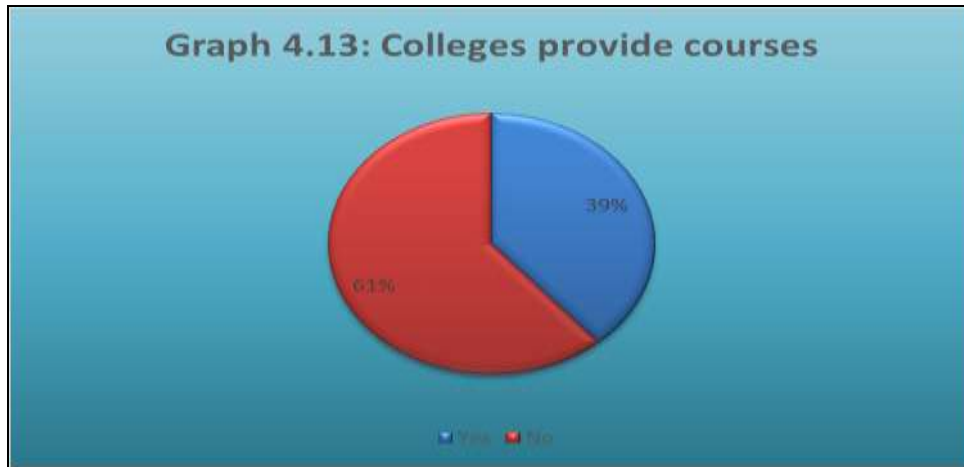

Figure 5

Figure 6

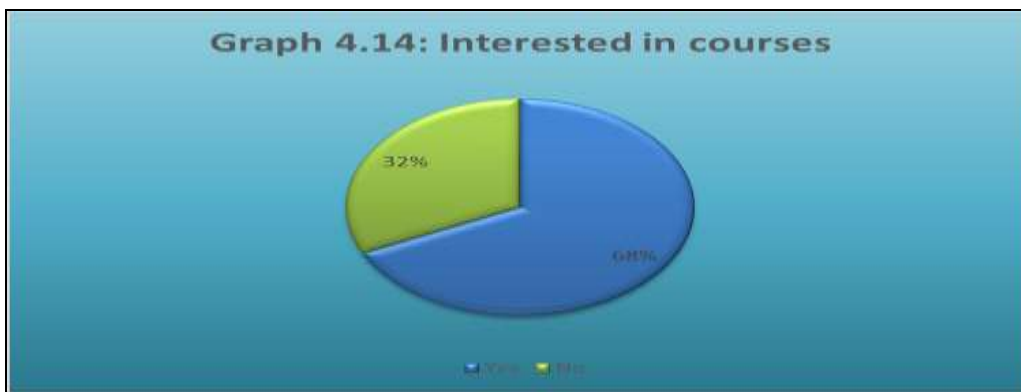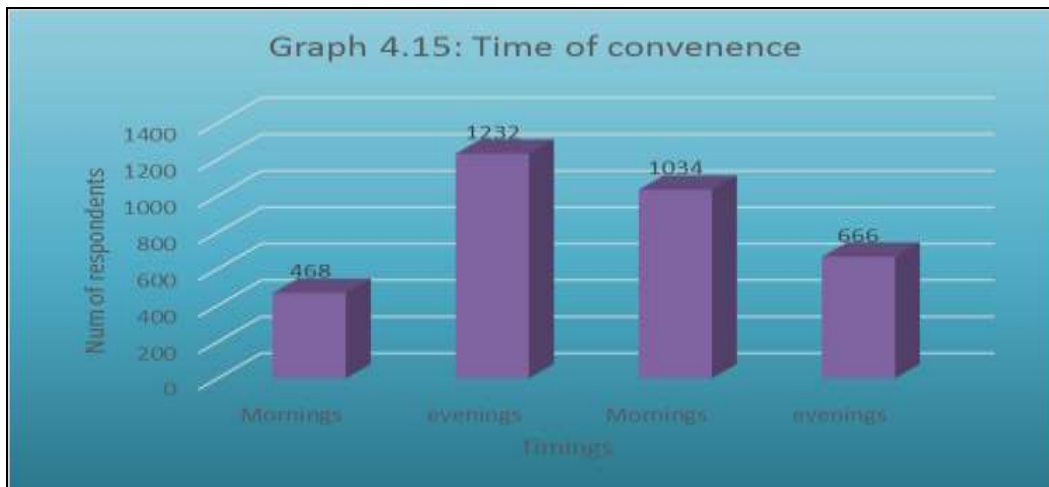*Figure 7*

Figure 8
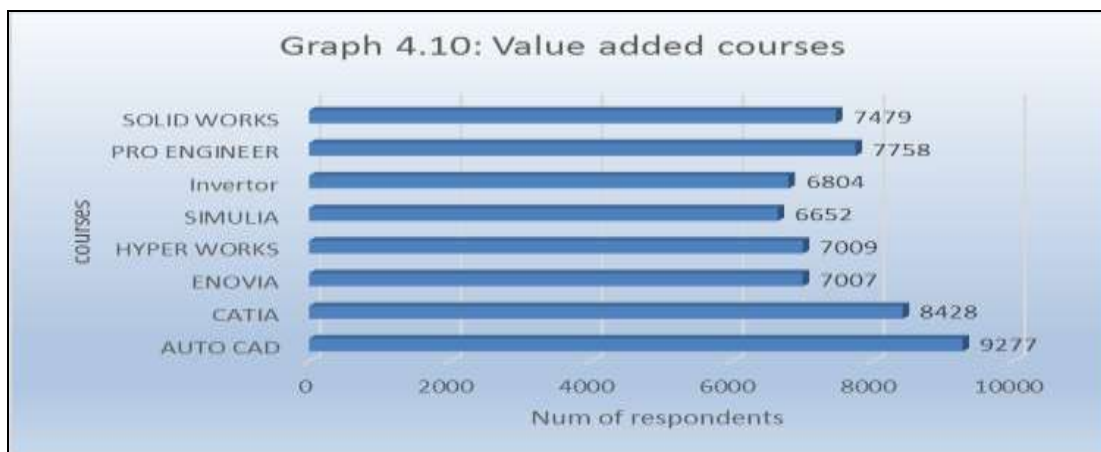
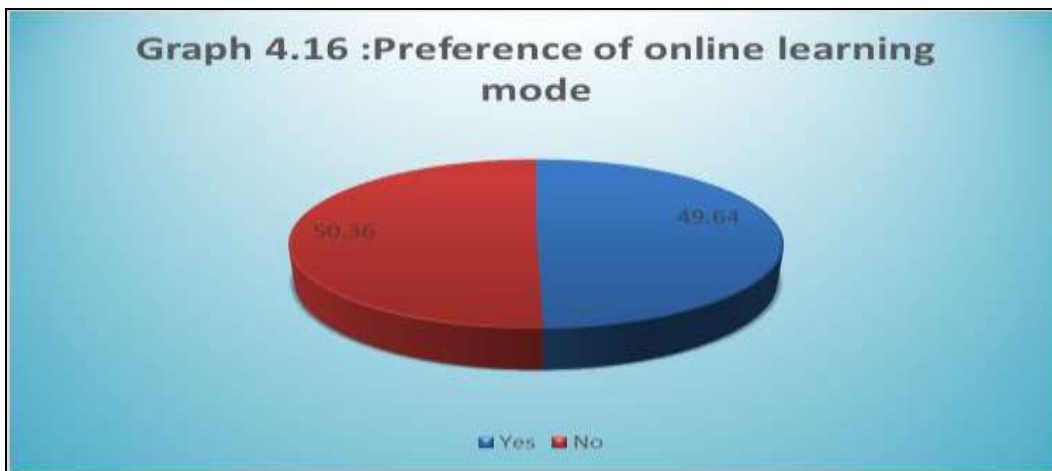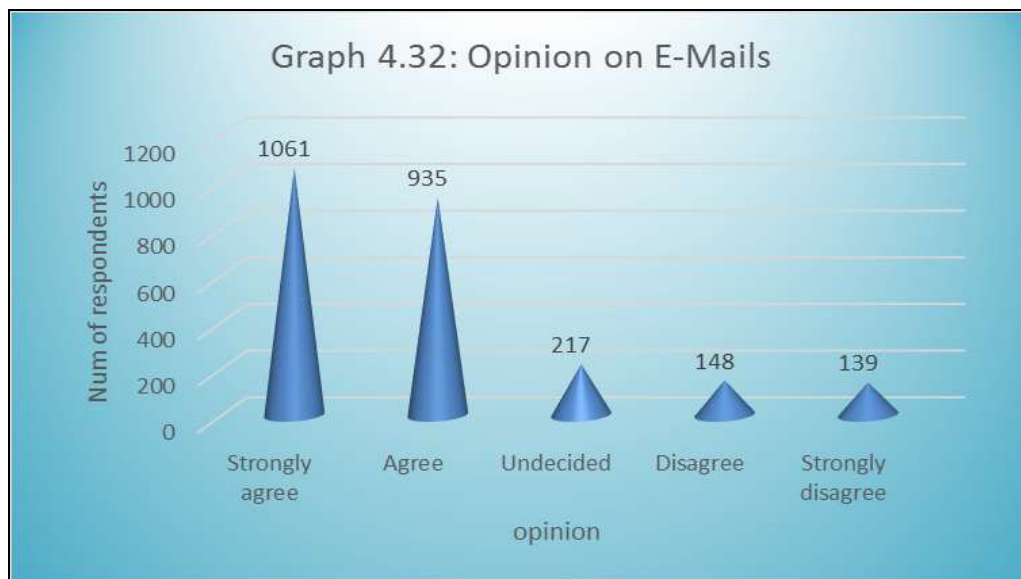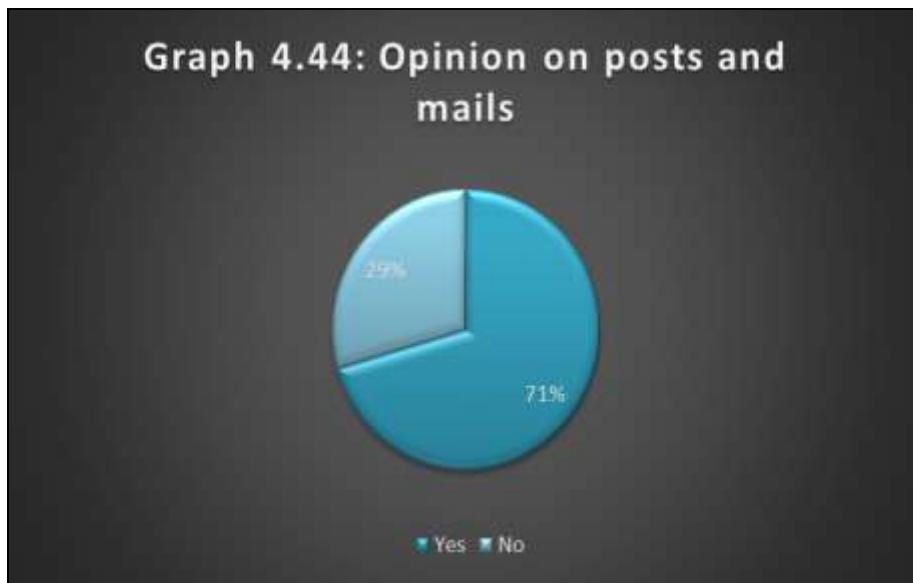*Figure 9*

Figure 10

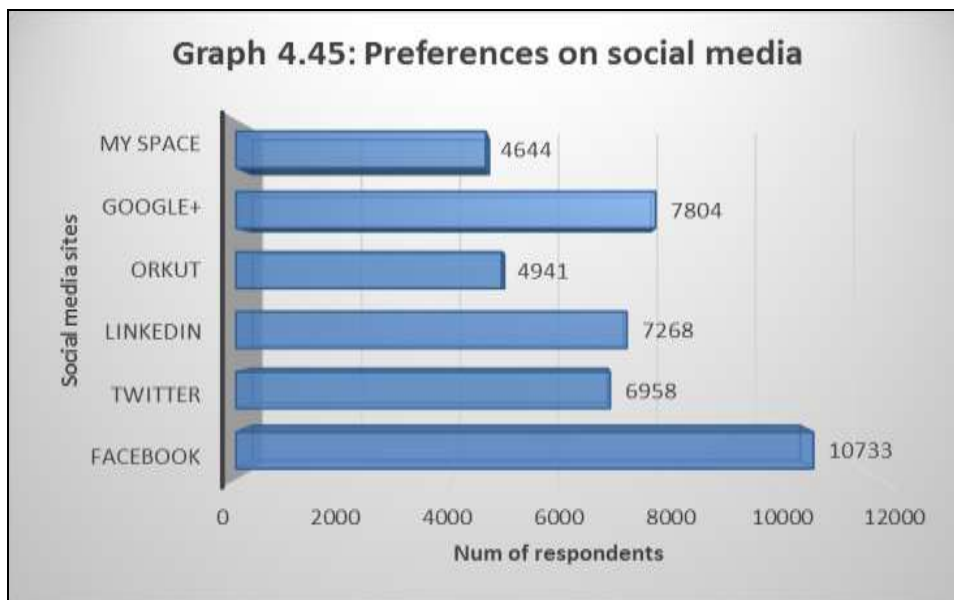*Figure 11*

Figure 12
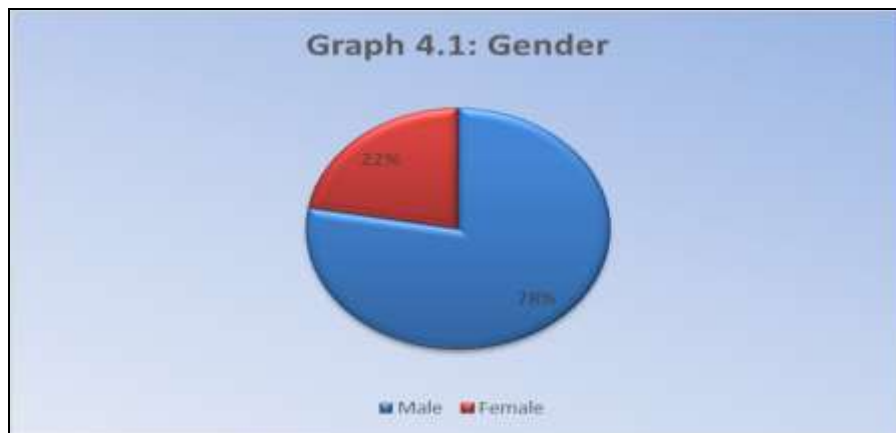
Figure 13

Figure 14

Figure 15

Figure 16

Figure 17

Figure 18