Comparison Of Two Most Popular Food Delivery Apps in India: A Case Study of Swiggy And Zomato

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Abstract

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Zomato,
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social media.

The new age technology based online food ordering services have brought a sea-change in the ways people select restaurants and order food of their choice. The developments in technology and improving penetration of the internet and increasing use of smartphones paved the way for online food ordering services. It was a new concept in India, when the founders of Zomato introduced a platform through which people could easily browse through menus of a variety of food from different restaurants, order online and the orders are delivered at their doorsteps. One fine day Mr Pankaj Chaddha and Mr Deepender Goyal noticed a long queue of people waiting to look through the menu and place an order for their meal. This led them to think of a solution to this problem and they came up with Foodiebay, which was the initial brand name for Zomato.

Right from the beginning in the year 2008, Zomato has witnessed a prominent growth. It started to serve as a food directory and gained popularity in Delhi NCR. Within 9 months their website became popular in different cities like Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and Bengaluru. In 2012, Zomato expanded its presence internationally in many countries like UAE, UK, Sri Lanka and Philippines etc. In a stable manner, the brand kept proliferating its customer database and also progressed into online table reservation, finding nearby restaurants. Following its footsteps, another unicorn disrupted the online food ordering services in the year 2014; Swiggy emerged as a simple food aggregator, focussing more on its strategies and logistics.

Swiggyemphasises on making a strong delivery network and a swift, technology-driven, logistic network. Some of its preferred strategies are that if an order is cancelled after being placed, the amount would still be credited to the restaurant. On the other hand, customers may also cancel the order if it is not delivered within the stipulated time-period. The delivery partners have a GPS-enabled strategy that enables real-time tracking.

Zomato, however, has also witnessed its share of crises. But be it because of its distinctive communication practices or other strategies, Zomato does not shy away from communicating with different stakeholders. Zomato doesn't hold back from responding and reaching out to their customers and community. Zomato and Swiggy have all the necessary elements that make them a successful case to be explored. Apart from crisis management, particularly during Covid-19 pandemic, they also have been able to strike the right chord

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with the sentiments of Indian customers by connecting with them at an emotional level. This case study delineates the journey of both the brands and analyses the communication strategies adopted by the two brands. The paper also studies the measures adopted by Zomato and Swiggy to emerge as a stronger brand as the country grappled with lockdowns and other restrictions during the Pandemic. The researchers have undertaken the evaluation using SWOT analysis to cover all aspects of the journey of the apps so far.

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Introduction

Online food delivery services in India have garnered a lot of attention in recent years. This is partly due to the increase in internet penetration in the country and strategies used by the online food delivery platforms to expand their customer base. This has opened vast options for people to not only choose the type of food but also choose and compare restaurants they want to dine-in, based on various reviews and ratings. Among most prominent online food delivery services, Zomato has emerged as a popularly recognized online food delivery service and restaurant aggregator. The success of Zomato is often credited to its strong online communication strategies using content that is well-received and widely shared by the target customer base. Zomato has also set a benchmark for its communication strategies during crisis situations. The competition for Zomato was further raised by the launch of Swiggy, which made its mark among the most sought-after online food delivery services. Unlike Zomato, Swiggy has a strong focus on its logistics and strives to excel in serving its customers. During the pandemic, Swiggy was able to bring forth the most desired services to address the concerns of people among restrictions due to the lockdown. To this end, the study explores interesting features of Zomato and Swiggy as well-known brands to understand their strengths and weaknesses.

Objectives:
To study the growth of Zomato and Swiggy since its inception to recognize the factors that contributed to its success.
To study the communication strategies used by Zomato and Swiggy to stay upbeat among its target group.
To explore different aspects of Zomato and Swiggy using a SWOT analysis.
The researchers employed a case study method to meet the above stated objectives. The framework involved analysing events, situations, communication strategies and a SWOT analysis.

Journey of Brand Zomato
Pankaj Chaddha and Deepinder Goyal launched Zomato under the name 'Foodiebay' in the year 2008 (Gupta M, 2019) as an online restaurant directory for the people of Delhi. Within nine months of its inception the venture gained popularity and was known throughout the country. It became the largest restaurant directory in Delhi NCR and from there it extended to Kolkata, Pune, Bengaluru and Mumbai. In 2010 their user base increased enough for the founders to bring in investors and the venture became international. Thus, 'Foodiebay' was reborn as 'Zomato'. In the next few years, Zomato witnessed a burgeoning presence in the business. This can be associated with the fact that it expanded its presence over different states as well as countries. The organisation's presence expanded abroad in the UK, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, South Africa, Qatar and UAE. By the year 2013 Turkey, Brazil and New Zealand were also added to its list. Bracing the challenges in international markets, Zomato worked on its technology. It made use of the prevailing trends and launched its app for smartphones. The company made rigorous efforts to get a strong foothold globally, so it went on to acquire some of its competitors. In 2014, it took over Gastronauci, a restaurant search service based in Poland and Cibando, an Italian restaurant finder. Soon after this in 2015 they acquired another US-based restaurant table reservation platform, NexTable and Urbanspoon after this. The venture faced issues post 2014. The rebranding of an acquired venture, Urbanspoon failed miserably, and they had to lay off as many as 300 employees. By

the year 2016, they had to withdraw operations from US, UK, Brazil, Chile, Sri Lanka, Canada, Italy, Slovakia, and Ireland due to increasing losses in the business.

Zomato worked on increasing its customer base and its business of food delivery. Working on its delivery model, Zomato charges commission from restaurants which varies according to the number of orders. When the users pay the fee, it is split between the company and delivery partners.

As Unicorns (unlisted start-ups) which are valued privately almost above a billion dollars are growing in numbers and are booming in the market, Zomato, which is India's biggest food delivery service, also issued its shares to the public and was largely oversubscribed (Aiyar, 2021). This helped in positioning Zomato among the business giants. It spearheaded the involvement of digital wallets and then diverged into various fintech niches. Zomato has simple payment gateways, which makes it suitable to order anything one wants by just glancing through the restaurant reviews on their smartphones (C.Parthik, 2021). Today, Zomato exists in almost 24 countries and is offering its services to over 100 million customers from more than 10000 cities. Technology convergence of mobile phones and internet access has caused significant shifts in consumer awareness, outlook, expectations and their buying behaviour (Jaisani L, Godbole P, Sharma A, Nag S, Malik R, Malhotra D, et al, 2018). The rising curve of Zomato encountered hurdles at times due to its quirky online responses, its unconventional advertising or some failures in its acquisitions. Zomato has been able to pass through these hurdles due to its innovative communication strategies that could connect with the public sentiments.

Journey of Brand Swiggy

Swiggy has established itself as a food ordering and delivery platform in India. It is undoubtedly one of the largest online food delivery services. This foodtech unicorn started operations in 2014 from Bengaluru. It was initially designed to be a courier and shipping service website called Bundl ("Swiggy vs Zomato - Who does it better? [Case Study]", 2021). It operates now as a bridge between customers and restaurants. It makes use of a technology platform that enables customers to order food from restaurants in their vicinity and delivers it to their doorsteps. The founders of Swiggy are SriharshaMajety, Nandan Reddy (Co-founder) and Rahul Jamini (Co-founder). They follow a Business Model that is B2C and B2B. It is known to be one of India's fastest growing unicorns. From being a late participant in the online food ordering space in 2014, Swiggy has made its way to billion-dollar valuation in a short span. They are focussed on logistics as they were convinced that the only way to make through the food delivery market was to build an all-embracing logistics network (Sen, 2018).

Zomato's Branding Strategies

Zomato's social media team has been actively posting creative content on trending topics and responding regularly. This is what has helped them to stay connected and expand users. Their clear philosophy and communication strategies contribute to its positive image among the users.

Zomato is popular for its content which is largely appreciated and shared by people. This gives them more visibility among the target groups and reflects strong brand position and brand image. The strategic significance of brand positioning has been presented by Kotler (1994) who places positioning in his STP concept (Segmenting, Targeting, Positioning). This can be viewed in the pattern in which Zomato functions.

Targeting and Segmentation - Zomato's target audience includes people between 18 to 35 years of age who have access to smartphones and are comfortable in using apps. (Shastri, 2021). They have reached the target segment where working professionals want food to be delivered at their doorstep and dine out, for which Zomato offers desirable services.

They use light and relatable infographics that the audience can relate with.

They also target current/ trending topics in news, this adds to the better retention in the minds of the target group.

Current Affairs- Relating with the elements of timing of sharing relevant content according to festivals, seasons etc. they share things that bring humour appeal.

Connectivity with the audience- They also connect with the target audience through titles of popular shows. They understand the use of robust branding strategies to involve shows that are most talked-about so that their content trends among the users.

Social media marketing has shown great impact by distributing merits and demerits of media techniques on Zomato (Dhakal, 2019). Their ad campaigns are creative and catch audience attention. They also put efforts in Search Engine Optimization and attract organic traffic using organic keywords. Zomato uses Google Adwords, targeting keywords related to food, online food ordering, restaurants, and targeting users who are looking for ordering food online. It uses social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and likes to target users through it. Only 2% of its total revenue comes from online food orders. Restaurant advertising contributes to 72% ("Zomato Digital Marketing Strategy - Naukri Learning", 2022).

Brand Positioning- Zomato has positioned itself as a platform that brings restaurants, suppliers, consumers, food suppliers, and logistics partners together (Bhasin, 2019). Zomato targeted itself among the youth to become their most preferred option before ordering food or going for dine-in. With Zomato sharing ratings and reviews, it became mandatory to check these everytime whether ordering food or eating out. The company which was primarily known for restaurant reviews gradually expanded into other areas of foodtech business like online ordering and delivery of food, table bookings, and developing applications software for managing the operations of restaurants (Prashant Raman, 2018). A study reveals that online reviews and star ratings available on Zomato significantly impact the willingness to purchase (Vaishnavi Vajjhala&Munmun Ghosh, 2021).

Zomato uses its blog as its mouthpiece to share all the updates. They advertise, give discounts on food ordering and cash backs that attract the consumers. (Ranjani S Shukla, 2019).

Key parts of their strategy are- creating attention grabbing content using images and graphics, using current affairs like controversies, crisis situations, current news in the content. They have been able to engage customers and provide them with personalised customer service, making use of debatable content to attract attention and crisp social media posts**.**

Branding strategy of Swiggy

• Segmentation:

Swiggy under demographic segmentation mainly targets the younger generation. The segmentation ages include the teenagers, who would find it very convenient for food to be delivered to their doorstep, the next target group are the college-going students and the ones who work at the office and find it difficult to commute to their favourite restaurant. The focus, however, has been on the millennial customers and all the brand-building efforts have been made to make Swiggy their go-to-app when it comes to food delivery. Under behavioural segmentation, it has found a market segment who looks for convenience when it comes to food and prefers staying at home and having a quick meal. The psychographic segmentation targets the customer who believes that it is better to have food delivered to them than go all the way to the restaurant and avoid all the traffic in the city. Swiggy targets people who want to live a convenient lifestyle.

• Targeting:

Swiggy has been able to cater to a huge target audience and these audiences have varied characteristics, ages, and behaviour. Looking at India's market size, Swiggy has a great population to target but its main and ideal target audience is the ages of 18-35. These are the people who are college students, working professionals or entrepreneurs who have a good lifestyle and are living in posh localities.

• Positioning:

Swiggy has made the food delivery not just an extended arm of restaurants and has profited well out of this business. The main positioning strategy of Swiggy is an app that helped customers get the food they want, wherever they want. All the marketing efforts made by Swiggy have helped create an image that Swiggy makes life convenient and easy for its customers and promises the best customer experience and aims to keep every customer both partner restaurants and the customers satisfied with the services. It is positioned to revolutionise the way people eat their food. It has the motto that "no customers go hungry" and helps customers connect with their favourite restaurants with a click of a button.

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths –

1. Fast Delivery

Swiggy is famous for its quick delivery service. Its technical platform is prepared in such a way that it accepts orders from customers based on its location, and the food would be taken from the nearest hotel to the customers. The customers would get the hotels that are near to them in their interface. With this model, Swiggy can efficiently process the orders for every customer.

2. Immaculate User Interface

For customers to view comfortably, Swiggy has maintained an excellent interface to take their orders. Its user interface is neatly arranged in a way that the hotels are listed, and its menu and rates can be seen by clicking the hotel. When the customers choose their hotel and food, its payment gateways are also simple, and all the offers that the customers are eligible for are listed. Then it takes to the payment process, and the transaction gets completed. Once the order is done, customers can also check the live update of their order.

3. Trained Employees

One main strength of the brand is its trained employees. The front and the back-end teams are well-trained and get the service delivered to the customers.

4. Wide Selection

Yet another strength of the brand is the wide selection it has of the eateries. It provides various selections of eateries at a nearby location and with an extensive menu available there. It would also show you the

eateries based on your preference, whether vegetarian or nonvegetarian or also people who are health conscious or follow specific diets.

Weaknesses -

1. Targets Zonal Restaurants

Swiggy takes orders that are only from the restaurants located within the zone of the customers. Many competitors increase the customer's requirements and expand to more restaurants.

2. Increase in Brand Name

Currently, Swiggy's brand awareness is less, and it needs to pay more attention to branding. Swiggy should create more strategies to have the right brand image.

3. Delivery Charges

The brand incurs some delivery and packing charges from the customer wherein the total bill amount would increase. So, this is a great weakness for the brand because some customers might hesitate to order through the platform as it might cost an extra amount**.**

Opportunities -

1. Introducing new services during Covid-19

During Covid-19 lockdown, along with the safety measures, Swiggy introduced services like SwiggyInstamart and Genie to provide unparalleled convenience to its customers. This move was highly appreciated by the customers as it was difficult to move out for basic necessities due to the restrictions imposed during lockdown.

(Illustrations used by Swiggy for its new services: Swiggy Genie and Instamart)

2. Growing as per market requirements

Swiggy sees a vast opportunity in the market as there are many potential customers. They have many people and are likely to increase so that it would benefit the brand. When customers increase, the brand also increases.

3. Increase in Market Share

Swiggy can increase its position in the market by showing its place more in the market. It can improve its market share by focusing more on its branding. Swiggy should invest more in branding so that it can be reachable to many.

4. More Service

Swiggy has found ways to incorporate more service into its operations. Adding groceries and providing options

Threats -

1. Limited Online Presence

Currently, Swiggy has lesser online presence and content on social media platforms, and this is a significant threat to the brand. Which would ultimately impact its brand visibility

2. Increasing Competitors

Swiggy sees many competitors from a small scale. When new competitors arise, they will give new offers, and at times people might tend to switch to the new brand. So, this way, it is a significant threat to the brand.

· **Objectives of Swiggy**

1. The driving principle behind Swiggy is to revolutionise the restaurant-takeaway delivery business in India. Food delivery in India is fraught with problems both on the consumer as well as the restaurant end.

2. Swiggy intends to work with the best restaurants in creating delivery-first restaurants or cloud kitchens.

3. To integrate with restaurant partners and provide an optimal experience to our customers.

4. To optimise customer experience to enable checkouts within a minute.

5. Their goal is to revolutionise the way India eats and in covering all major cities.

· **Measures taken by Swiggy**

The following measures were taken by Swiggy to establish themselves as a strong brand.

Sharp focus on logistics:

Swiggy aims to control the entire value chain of the customer's experience and this strategy has helped it triumph in the marketplace. Swiggy has done many things right and one of its excellent focuses is on the logistics of the operation. Swiggy from the beginning knew that to crack the delivery market was to build an extensive network for logistics due to which Swiggy has built a sound and sustainable business model.

Business strategy:

Swiggy was a late entrant in the online food delivery and ordering space in 2014 but it has now become a billion-dollar company and now Zomato is playing catch up. Swiggy has a growing fleet of delivery partners, and the fleet is growing with currently 1.25 lakh active partners.

Technology focus:

Swiggy is a food-tech company and has a core-logistics platform Swiggy heavily leverages technology to help customers and restaurants get the best of services. All the conditions are analysed with the help of data analytics like the traffic conditions, predict the preparation time for the restaurants depending on the number of orders, location of the delivery executives to smartly provide them with the delivery time and promise to the end customers.

The partner restaurants get a snapshot of all the key operational metrics and all the financials. In the back end, Swiggy has analytics engines that mine customer data to determine the preferences and help Swiggy partner with the right restaurants.

· Promotions & Advertisements

Swiggy is now a very reputed brand and it's not just because of its quality services but due to its excellent social media strategy. On Facebook itself, Swiggy has about 174K followers which are highest among the competitors. Every campaign of Swiggy is remarkable as they are extremely engaging and very interactive.

The posts are light, appealing, have good quality and are humour based. Campaigns like #EatYourVeggies, #SuperSwiggy, and #EarnYourCheatMeal conveyed the notion of eating healthy by using witty one-liners and puns. Swiggy has also used influencers to market its services. Swiggy also proves several discounts, rewards, and recognition to create brand loyalty among the customers. Speaking of the brand's creative success, here are a few Swiggy campaigns we love:

• #WhatsInAName

In a heart-warming video that struck a chord with millions of Indians, Swiggy's #WhatsInAName campaign urged its users to acknowledge the unique identity of their delivery partners and to address them by their names.

• Voice Of Hunger

Swiggy's innovative campaigns have proved to be a gamechanger in the brand's onward success and boosted its following on the digital platforms. Through an indigenous Voice Of Hunger campaign using Instagram's audio note feature, they challenged the users to create sound waveforms in the shape of different food items and send them via direct messenger to the brand's Instagram.

• Swiggy Karo, Phir Jo Chahe Karo!

Some of Swiggy's best work came during IPL 2018. The platform's witty campaigns with simple storylines and minimum dialogues became a rage. A 20-second spot highlighting the brand's 'Swiggy Karo, Phir Jo Chahe Karo' campaign was one of the best in the series.

• Swiggy ONE

Swiggy has launched a multi-film digital campaign showcasing its new membership program–Swiggy ONE. It highlights various scenarios in the protagonists' life from their pet's point of view showcasing a shift before and after availing of the Swiggy ONE membership.

·   Achievements

Swiggy became a part of the much-vaunted league of 'unicorn' startups. It has also forced an about-turn from Zomato, which is now investing hundreds of crores of rupees to catch up with Swiggy, which sits pretty at the top of the online food ordering business. The delivery giant reported its revenue as Rs 2,145 crore in the financial year 2020-21 (FY21).

 Swiggy raised $210 million at a valuation of $1.3 billion, marking an important milestone for what has been a remarkable journey of the three entrepreneurs from different backgrounds, who built one of India's most sought-after consumer internet firms. Swiggy's success is part of a bigger trend in the startup ecosystem: companies that have controlled the entire value chain of customer experience have triumphed over pure marketplaces. Swiggy got a lot of things right, but the driving force behind its success is its excellent logistics operations. Zomato's speciality is marketing and offers, concocting these insane ideas, online competitions, promo ads, and games for their users to be involved in and win amazing cashback prices (Khola, 2020).

SWOT Analysis: Zomato

Some controversies came as tough challenges for a relatively new company, but they also gave ample opportunities for the company to gain attention in the public sphere. Zomato did suffer staggering losses and employees were also laid-off, but they continued to evolve despite the challenges. Overall Zomato has come out stronger with adverse situations. It

utilises in vogue subjects and posts direct pictures in order to work together with watchers on the web. Here, using a SWOT analysis different aspects of the brand are discussed.

Strengths- Zomato possesses a strong global presence with services in almost twenty-four nations. The online presence of Zomato sets an example of creating interesting online content which gets user attention, and they respond and share it further. Quick and quirky content of the user-friendly app attracts the target group through innovative visuals, graphics, texts, and short videos/ Reels.

**Aamir Kha
Shah Rukh Kha
Salman Kha**

blockbuster deals on food

order food online on **zomato**

If coffee-drinking were an Olympic sport,
we'd take the gold.

zomato

It started contactless dining, encouraged cashless payment and food takeout services to prevent spreading of COVID-19 and provide confidence in restaurant partners, customers, and delivery personals (Kiran Raj and Nandha Kumar, 2021). As a brand, Zomato has established a recall value, recognition, and reputation. With their strong presence on digital platforms, they have a wider reach. The company has made best use of its presence on social media, giving timely responses and updates whenever needed. They make best use of social media platforms in sharing innovative content using trending topics, which instantly strikes a chord with the netizens. The brand fathoms the group's disposition and creates content which makes customers share it, comment on it and view it repeatedly (Panigrahi, Saha, Shrinet, Nauityal& Gaur, 2020).

Weaknesses - Strong competition from other food delivery apps and search engines could pose a challenge. The upcoming online food delivery apps also follow the same model and are beginning to succeed. It has also been observed that competitors like Swiggy have introduced new options like instamart and delivery of homemade food for people who wanted to support their loved ones during the lockdown but could not move out due to restrictions.

Opportunities- Rapid development in technology and increasing internet penetration in India, gives scope of growth to the company; the recent challenges that surfaced due to Covid-19 were utilised best by Zomato when they took strict measures to ensure safe delivery of food and safety of its employees as well. As a startup, Zomato has not only set an example in digital marketing but also paved the way for

similar startups in India. It has made online food delivery convenient and accessible for people. It has also helped upcoming restaurants with the concept of cloud kitchens, which saved them from the procedures required to open an actual restaurant. Zomato is only built for food/restaurant discovery - Therefore, it has a very targeted audience. Most Zomato users buy a meal within an hour of visiting Zomato (Harshleen K. Sethi, 2021). In addition to this, Zomato also started supporting the daily wage workers who could no longer move out due to restrictions during lockdown.

Threats- There is intense competition in the online food delivery services sector which could affect their business as customers have a variety of food aggregator apps options to order from. The business model is easily replicated by the competitors and that adds to more competition. This also leads to a saturation point in the growth of their business.

Conclusion

As a brand, Zomato stands strong due to its robust communication strategies which include innovative content that is most liked and shared among social media users in comparison with other online food delivery apps. Swiggy overshadows Zomato in terms of use of strategies for user convenience. Applying suitable segmentation and positioning, both have been able to excel and stand apart from the other competitors. They worked on the segmentation of target customers and positioned themselves as the most convenient options for the ordering food or reviews of restaurants. Zomato being among the first few online food delivery businesses changed the dynamics for customers who wanted to dine-out or order-in as people started looking for reviews. Zomato has always tried understanding the public sentiment and became the flag bearer for clear and transparent communication. It has built a reputation where it doesn't shy away from taking a stand during any crisis. This has gone well with netizens and inturn increased their engagement and customer base. Zomato's straightforward, transparent and direct communication are the USPs of its communication strategies. Swiggy works well in terms of strategy and a convenient user interface. It emerged as a leader among online delivery services during Covid-19 and could connect with the customers as a dependable companion to deliver food to their loved ones or order necessary items. Both the services have been able to carve a niche among the customer base as popular food delivery services that expanded beyond their roles during challenging times.

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