

# The Impact of Digital Media Engagement on Brand Equity and Consumer Purchase Intent in the Indian Automotive Sector: A Mixed-Method Analysis

Pathlavath Karthik<sup>1</sup>, Dr.D. Sunila<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1,2</sup> G Pullareddy Degree and PG College

**Abstract**—In this Digital Economy, Brand Positioning has transformed from a corporate-controlled narrative to a reputation shaped by public verification on social media platforms. These platforms have transformed the promotion of automotive brands by communicating & influencing consumers. This study mainly focuses on the digital media engagement to influence the brand equity and persuade consumer purchase intention through a mixed- method approach. The Data collection for the study was based on a questionnaire through a Google form to the consumers of the Mahindra & Mahindra Brand and to the sales team of Mahindra & Mahindra. The collected data is stipulated and interpreted through various statistical analyses. The observation of the Data provided a significant improvement in the Brand awareness through digital media. Eventually, the study offers Strategic implications in designing consumer-centric digital content to build a robust brand and stimulate the purchase behaviour in the Indian Market.

**Index Terms**—Brand Positioning, Social Media, Social Media Influence, Mahindra & Mahindra, Consumer Experience, Phygital, Trust Anchor, SUV, Twin Peaks Identity, Dealership Service.

Abbreviation:

- i. SUV – Sports Utility Vehicle
- ii. GNCAP – Global New Car Assessment Programme

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's Digital era, social media platforms have changed the mindset of consumers interacting with brands. Applications like Instagram, Twitter, you tube provide space to the customers to share their views on the products/services & share their overall experience with brands. Rather than traditional methods like word of mouth, these digital reviews reach a wider audience, irrespective of language, region, etc.

Traditionally, Brand communication relied totally on Television, Radio channels, and news media, where communication was unidirectional and fully controlled by Industrial CEOs. Companies invested heavily in advertising to build Brand awareness, but these strategies have limited opportunities to interact with the audience and depend on assumption-driven dilemma.

The Digital revolution, ruled by the internet, smartphones, and especially through social media platforms, has changed the scenario in Branding. Present consumer market spends a lot of their time on social media, like online, engaging with content creators, sharing their personal opinions and interacting with brands on social media, which is visible to all internet users. Social media has broken the chains by giving consumers the ability to share personal reviews, where the public has the chance to shape the brand's sales and its revenue (including share prices). In the traditional method, corporates were shaping their Brand image; now the public is shaping the Brands according to the services, facilities and quality of their product. Which is fully transparent. Digital branding aims for

- Interaction
- Transparency
- Personalisation and
- Immediacy.

Unlike traditional Branding, where campaigns run over months or years with a limited population, here social media enables brands to track customer behaviour and their real-time needs. For an Effective branding, we need to maintain the following stated qualities.

1. Consistency: Maintaining the unique voice, colour grading, and creating identity with one frame

2. **Authenticity:** Modern consumers/audience are expecting true value of overly polished communication. Brands that show true reviews, acknowledge Challenges faced, and highlight that the real people are more likely to gain trust and attract an audience towards them.

3. **Storytelling:** Behind the product, the consumer needs to know the real story of the origin of the product, like the struggle (makes customers stick to your brand throughout the life).

80/20 RULE – 80% INFO AND 20% PROMOTION – PARETO PRINCIPLE

At the time of promotion, there should be information of 80% and 20% for promotion of the branding, which makes the audience understand the product value. This is the Pareto principle for Brand promotion.

4. **Executive Visibility:** Leaders who maintain a credible social media presence add a human touch to the corporate companies. Their personnel brand, if aligned with corporate values, can boost the trust and reliability of the branding.

Global firms like Apple, Google and Tesla have been exclusively studied for their digital Branding practices; there is limited information or research on how Indian Origin firms. Indian brands are driven by legacy and their stands against the dominance of large firms in India and abroad.

The study influenced to identify the social media impact on the Mahindra & Mahindra sales consecutively for three years

1. **Premiumization and Visual Identity (The "Twin Peaks" Era)**

Between 2022 and 2025, Mahindra executed a comprehensive rebranding, debuting the "Twin Peaks" logo exclusively for its SUV portfolio. This visual overhaul signalled a clear departure from its agricultural legacy, positioning vehicles like the XUV700 and Scorpio-N as lifestyle products rather than mere transport. This "premiumization" strategy directly targets the modern, digitally-savvy consumer who prioritises aesthetics and trendiness—factors this research identifies as key drivers on platforms like Instagram. By moving upmarket, the brand has successfully captured a younger demographic that demands both performance and status.

2. **The "Phygital" Ownership Experience**

Mahindra has aggressively integrated technology into the ownership cycle, creating a "Phygital" (Physical + Digital) ecosystem. The introduction of Adreno X connected car technology and the Me4U app has shifted the customer relationship from transactional to continuous interaction. Consumers now expect real-time diagnostics and digital transparency. However, this rapid technological elevation has created a significant operational challenge: while the car itself is "smart," the dealership support network is often struggling to match this high-tech promise with equally sophisticated service, a gap this study highlights in the "Preparedness" data of Service Advisors.

3. **Leadership as a "Trust Anchor"**

In an era where social media can amplify scepticism, Mahindra has uniquely leveraged the personal brand of its leadership, specifically Mr Anand Mahindra, to act as a corporate "Trust Anchor." Unlike competitors who rely solely on official handles, Mahindra uses leadership visibility to validate GNCAP Safety Ratings, clarify delivery timelines, and demonstrate corporate integrity. This strategy directly addresses the primary consumer concern identified in this research: the need for "Safety and Reliability." By humanising the corporate entity, the brand provides a layer of reassurance that purely commercial advertising cannot achieve.

**Research Objectives**

This study aims to tackle how social media reviews influence brand image and Positioning in the wider market. Specifically, the objectives are:

1. To analyse the role of brand positioning in the consumer Market.
2. To evaluate the mechanism of trust and loyalty creation within Brands.
3. To measure the effect of online feedback on Brand Identity.
4. To identify strategies brands adopt to manage reputation.

*1.3 Scope and Significance*

This research contributes to the understanding of branding in the digital age. It offers critical insights for Marketing Agents, Business Managers, and Brand Evaluators to actively engage in social media activity to increase brand image. Branding has served as the

foundation of company reputation for centuries, acting as an emotional connection between brands and consumers.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Rekha Dahiya (2017), “Investigating Indian Car Buyers’ Decision to Use Digital Marketing Communication: An Empirical Application of Decomposed TPB”. This study symbolises the application of the Decomposed Theory of Planned Behaviour (DTPB) to the Indian automotive sector, addressing a significant research gap in one of the country's largest digital-spending industries. It tells us that digital marketing usage intentions are driven by three core factors: the consumer's personal attitude, social influences (subjective norms), and their confidence in using digital tools (perceived behavioural control). By explaining 63% of the variation in how car buyers in Delhi use digital channels, the research highlights that online communication is no longer just an accessory but a primary driver of actual purchase behaviour.

Luvy(2018), “Impact of Digital India by 2019”. This research highlights the transformative role of the Digital India program as a catalyst for converting the nation into a digitally enabled society and a knowledge-based economy. This paper demonstrates that by 2019, the initiative successfully bridged the gap between government administration and citizens through the mandated electronic delivery of services, significantly reducing paperwork and enhancing transparency. This study illustrates how core pillars like the Unique ID (Aadhaar) and e-Pramaan created a credible, interoperable framework for public accountability. Ultimately, this investigation outlines the diverse socio-economic possibilities created by the program, from turbocharged internet penetration to the rapid expansion of the IT sector, effectively steering India’s trajectory from a developing to a digitally developed nation.

Dr G. Jeyamani (2020), “Social Media – A Powerful Marketing Tool”. This research highlights the evolution of the promotion mix, positioning social media as an indispensable marketing tool that has redefined how businesses inform and persuade consumers. This paper demonstrates that while traditional advertising remains powerful for mass distribution, social media offers a unique advantage by

enabling real-time, global interaction and the direct sharing of ideas between brands and users. This study illustrates that in the modern internet era, it is nearly impossible to design an effective marketing strategy without integrating social networks, which serve as the most potent engine for promoting both new and existing products. Ultimately, this investigation outlines how the online sharing of knowledge and the building of digital relationships have become the cornerstone of a successful marketing mix in the present scenario.

Rizwan Khan, Mohd Taqi (2021), “The Role of Digitisation in the Automotive Industry: The Indian Perspective”. This paper highlights that the Indian automotive industry is at a digital crossroads, where technologies like AI, 3D printing, and virtual connectivity are fundamentally changing how cars are made and sold. The research finds that while digitalisation streamlines the supply chain and boosts sales, foreign companies are currently leading the charge with more advanced tech compared to domestic players. Ultimately, adopting these digital tools improves product quality and after-sales service, which are the key drivers of modern customer and brand loyalty.

Agrawal et al. (2022), “Factors Influencing Consumers' car purchasing decision in the Indian automobile industry”. This study symbolises the shift toward a multidimensional approach in evaluating consumer behaviour within India's highly competitive automotive landscape. It tells us that in a market crowded with both national and foreign players, a consumer's final purchase decision is driven by a composite of perceived value—a variable positively shaped by brand reputation, price, quality, design, utility, and technical specifications. By utilising a Structural Equation Model (SEM) to analyse data from over 500 car owners in Tamil Nadu, the research underscores that meeting both pre- and post-sales expectations is no longer optional but a requirement for brands to compel a customer to commit to a purchase.

Purnendu Basu and Manas Naskar (2023), "The Impact of Digital Marketing on Consumer Behaviour: A Comprehensive Review”. This research highlights the revolutionary shift in the relationship between businesses and consumers, demonstrating how digital marketing has fundamentally altered the interaction between brands and their audience. This paper

demonstrates that digital tools do not merely provide a platform for promotion but serve as a critical lens for understanding complex consumer behaviour. This study illustrates, through a comprehensive literature analysis, that digital strategies exert a significant influence on the entire decision-making journey—specifically impacting brand loyalty, consumer trust, and ultimate purchase intentions. Finally, this investigation outlines the urgent necessity for businesses to move beyond traditional methods and strategically leverage digital power to maintain meaningful engagement with their target audience.

Mohammed T. Nuseir, Ghaleb A El-Refae, Ahmad Ibrahim Aljumah, Muhammad Turki Alshurideh (2023), “Digital Marketing Strategies and the Impact on Customer Experience: A Systematic Review”. This study illustrates the critical role of systematic strategy selection in the modern marketing era, specifically highlighting how different digital tools serve distinct functional areas. This research highlights that through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of contemporary tools—including SEO, e WOM, and affiliate marketing—Social Media Marketing emerges as the most powerful driver for enhancing customer experience. This paper demonstrates that this dominance is attributed to social media's unique ability to provide real-time personalisation, customisation, and direct interaction, which are the cornerstones of building consumer satisfaction and long-term brand relationships today.

Akash Sharma<sup>1</sup>, Dr Nitin Kalla (2024), “Exploring The Role of Digital Marketing in Shaping Consumer Buying Decisions: Evidence from India's Passenger Car Market”. This study highlights that India's rapid digital growth has made online marketing the primary driver for consumer decisions in the passenger car market. While car buyers rely heavily on websites to research and compare models, there is a clear "trust gap" when it comes to the final transaction, as many remain hesitant to make large payments online. Despite this financial friction, digital communication effectively guides consumers through every stage of the journey, from initial interest to post-purchase loyalty. For automotive marketers, these findings emphasise that while digital platforms are essential for building brand equity and engagement, they must still address security concerns to fully close the loop on digital sales.

DR. PALAK GUPTA (2024). “A Study On The Automotive Industry's Marketing Approach In India”. This study explores how the Indian car industry is updating its marketing to keep up with rapid growth and new buyer habits. By looking at digital trends and how brands connect with people, it is found that success now depends on a mix of digital transformation and local outreach. The goal is to provide a roadmap for companies to stay competitive and build long-term customer loyalty in a crowded market.

Dr Anupama Sundar D (2024), “Brand Equity of Indian Automobile Sector”. This study symbolises the evolution of brands from mere products into "cultural accessories and personal beliefs," highlighting their growing significance within both the economy and broader culture. It identifies brand development as a critical value-adding strategy that elevates the image of the product, the firm, and the nation simultaneously. By focusing on the Indian car industry, the research outlines a brand equity measurement technique that underscores how shifting consumer preferences and industry improvements require a unified approach. Ultimately, it tells us that for a company to deliver true value and maintain a consistent public perception, the core components of brand equity—awareness, loyalty, perceived quality, and associations—must function in total harmony.

Gokul B, Dr A. Vini Infanta (2025), “A Study On Influencer Marketing For Electric Vehicles In India - Growth, Impact & Strategic Approach”. This study states the growing authority of social media influencers in dismantling traditional barriers to technology adoption, specifically within the Indian electric vehicle (EV) sector. It tells us that influencers serve as a vital bridge for consumer trust, effectively addressing niche concerns such as range anxiety and charging infrastructure that traditional ads often fail to clarify. By analysing the interplay between influencer credibility and audience demographics, the research concludes that authentic digital storytelling is a primary driver for enhancing consumer confidence and accelerating purchase intent in emerging automotive segments.

Ravi Sanskar Sambangi (2025), “AI-based Marketing In The Automotive Industry: Leveraging Propensity, In Market, Near-Market, And Affinity Modelling”. This study symbolises the transformative integration of Artificial Intelligence within automotive

marketing, moving beyond general digital communication to high-precision predictive modelling. It tells us that by leveraging propensity, in-market, and affinity modelling, automotive firms are now able to predict purchase intentions and optimise sales with unprecedented accuracy. While these AI-driven solutions significantly improve customer acquisition and operational efficiency, the research also highlights critical hurdles in data privacy and the complexity of integrating these advanced systems.

Prasenjit Chakrabarty(2025), Dr. K.N.Modi University. “Digital Marketing Evolution and Its Societal Impact on India’s Software and Allied Industries”. This study examines how India’s massive internet growth and 5G rollout have transformed digital marketing, particularly within the software and OTT sectors. By surveying both industry professionals and consumers, the research highlights that a "one-size-fits-all" Western approach fails in India; instead, success depends on hyper-localisation, including local languages, customs, and regional festivities. Key findings show that consumers prioritise high-quality content and flexible payment options. Furthermore, the study identifies a strong link between marketing channels (like social media and influencers) and specific demographics such as age, location, and income.

Ashok Uikey, RaturajBaber, Zericho R Marak (2025) “Transforming Green Transparency into Green Brand Loyalty and Repurchase Intentions: The Role of Brand Image and Credibility among Electric Vehicle Users”. This study uses the SOBC framework to show that when electric vehicle brands are transparent about their "green" practices, it significantly boosts their brand image and credibility. These factors act as a bridge, leading directly to higher customer loyalty and a greater likelihood that consumers will buy from the brand again. Ultimately, it provides a roadmap for marketers to use transparency as a tool to build trust and encourage sustainable buying habits.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This study employs a Mixed-Method Research Design. It integrates quantitative data from consumers to measure digital influence and qualitative data from dealership staff to map operational responses. This

approach allows the study to contrast the "Demand" side (consumer behaviour) with the "Supplier" side (dealership operations) to strengthen the credibility and validity of the findings.

#### Sample Profile

- Consumer Sample (N=60)

Gender: The sample is predominantly male (86.5%), with 50 male and 10 female respondents.

Age: The 25–34 age group forms the largest segment (40.4%), representing the core young adult customer base.

- B. Dealership Sample (N=28)

The operational sample included 28 respondents representing diverse roles, from General Managers to Service Advisors and Pre-Delivery Agents.

#### Data Collection Instruments

- Consumer Survey: A questionnaire was distributed to Measure social media (SM) influence on a scale of 1 (Lowest) to 5 (Highest).

- Operational Interviews: Assessed internal team perceptions of User-Generated Content (UGC) and preparedness for negative reviews.

#### The Quantifiable Influence of Social Media

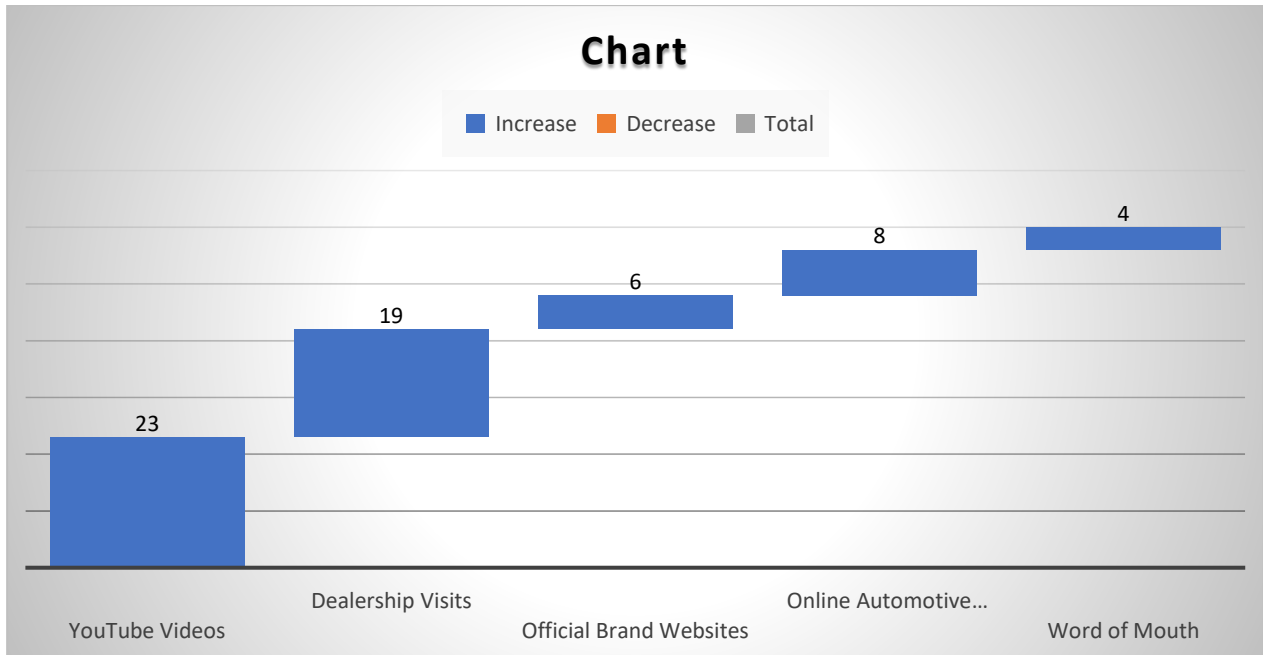
The study sought to quantify the weight of digital influence on purchase decisions.

- Average Influence Score: The mean influence score across all consumer responses was 3.3/5.

- High-Impact Segment: Critically, 15 respondents rated the influence as 5 (Highest).

Table 1: Frequency of Primary Information Sources

Primary Information Source	Frequency (n)	Percentage
YouTube Videos	23	37.80%
Dealership Visits	19	30.90%
Official Brand Websites	6	10.50%
Online Automotive Reviews	8	13.50%
Word of Mouth	4	7.30%



Interpretation: The analysis conclusively identifies YouTube as the dominant source in the final decision-making process, effectively tying with and occasionally surpassing the traditional dealership visit.

An analysis of 60 Mahindra owners.

1. The “Safety” Migration (The Primary Pull Factor)

The most significant trend observed is the migration of customers from competitors (specifically, Hyundai and Kia) due to Safety Concerns. Approximately 35% of new buyers explicitly cited “5-Star GNCAP Rating” or “Build Quality” as their primary reason for switching. This confirms the study’s hypothesis that Mahindra’s leadership-driven communication regarding safety GNCAP ratings has successfully created a competitive moat against feature-rich but lower-rated competitors.

2. The Impact of “YouTube Validation”

The qualitative data highlights a shift in the “Zero Moment of Truth.” Respondents frequently mentioned specific YouTube creators and “Long-Term Ownership Reviews” rather than showroom visits.

Observation: Younger buyers (Age 22-30) often referenced specific review terms like “Road Presence”, indicating that social media narratives are shaping the vocabulary of the consumer.

Validation: Buyers did not just watch official advertisements; they sought “negative validation”

(e.g., checking for suspension noise or software lag) through influencer channels before purchasing.

Loyalty vs. Tech-Adoption: The sample shows a clear divide in customer profiles:

3. The Legacy Owner (Age 40+):

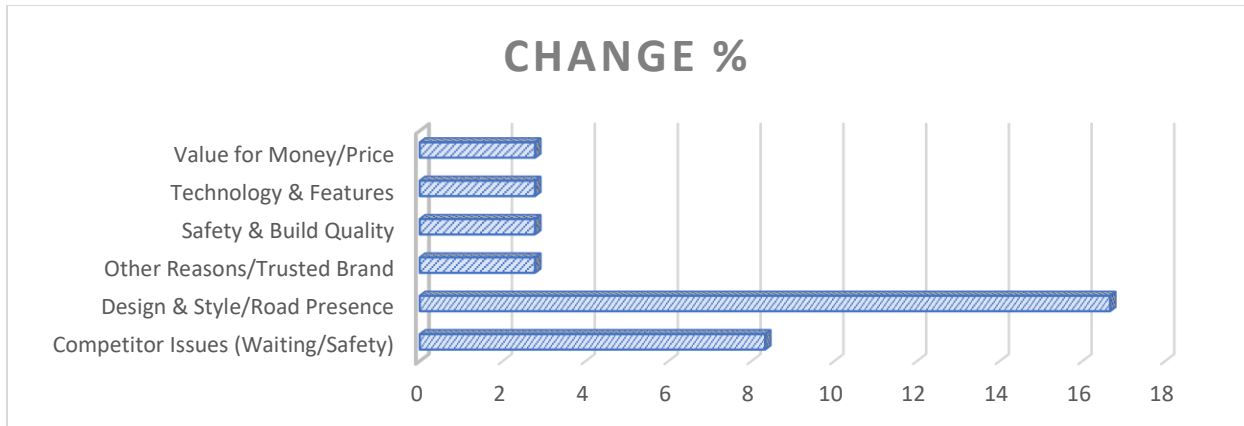
The values that probably influence the consumer interest in buying are Ruggedness, Torque, and Low Maintenance. Consumers are repeat buyers (upgrading from Bolero/Scorpio Classic). The Tech-Migrant (Age 25-35): Values “Adreno X”, “Sunroofs”, and “Aesthetics.” These are largely first-time Mahindra buyers who previously considered the brand too “rural” but were converted by the new “Twin Peaks” premium branding.

4. The “Waiting Period”

A notable segment of buyers switched to Mahindra simply because of the availability compared to competitors. Several respondents cited “8-month waiting period for Creta” as a trigger to check out the Scorpio-N, suggesting that supply chain efficiency is currently acting as a marketing tool.

Analysis of Switch Behaviour

The data in the figure below shows the main reasons why customers left other brands (like Hyundai or Tata) to buy Mahindra products. There are two main findings:



1. Looks Matter Most (16.6%): The biggest reason people switched is "Design & Road Presence." This proves that Mahindra's new "Twin Peaks" logo and modern SUV designs are successfully attracting customers who want a stylish car, not just a practical one.

2. Competitors' problems help Mahindra (8.3%): Many customers switched specifically, due to long waiting periods or Safety Concerns with competitor vehicles. This shows Mahindra is gaining sales simply by being available and having a reputation for safer cars.

3. Safety is Expected: While only a small group listed "Safety" as their main reason to switch, it is still a basic requirement for most buyers. However, the data suggests that while safety brings them to the brand, the design is what actually convinces them to buy.

**Industry Context: Mahindra's Strategic Evolution (2022-2025)**

The Indian automotive sector has undergone a paradigm shift in the last three years, with Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) leading a strategic transition from a "utility-first" manufacturer to a "Global Premium SUV" brand. This period, defined by the corporate "SUV Pro" strategy, is critical to understanding the current consumer behaviour observed in this study.

**Mahindra Brand Positioning (2022-2025)**

Over the last three fiscal years, Mahindra & Mahindra has executed a calculated strategic pivot, moving from a "Rural/Utility-First" manufacturer to a "Global Tech-Led SUV Brand." This transition was driven by the "SUV Pro" strategy, aiming to dominate the

premium SUV segment while maintaining its legacy of rugged reliability.

**FY 2022-23: The "Unmissable Presence" & Twin Peaks Era**

**Strategic Shift:** This year marked the visual definition of the "New Mahindra." The company rolled out the "Twin Peaks" logo exclusively for its SUV portfolio, signalling a clear separation between its "Lifestyle SUVs" (Thar, Scorpio-N, XUV700) and its "Commercial/Farm" vehicles.

**Key Launch:** The launch of the Scorpio-N was positioned not just as an upgrade, but as the "Big Daddy of SUVs." This was a direct move to capture the urban lifestyle market that previously preferred sedans or compact SUVs like the Hyundai Creta.

**Customer Experience:** Dealerships began the "Charcoal & Grey" premium renovation to match this new identity, aiming to offer a "World-Class" showroom experience.

**FY 2023-24: The "SUV Pro" & Capacity Expansion**

**Strategic Shift:** With demand outstripping supply (creating the "Waiting Period" rumours we identified in our survey), Mahindra focused on the "SUV Pro" strategy. The goal was to scale production and prove financial stability to the market.

**Trust Building:** To counter doubts about delivery timelines and service quality, the brand leveraged Anand Mahindra's social media to transparently communicate production ramp-ups and celebrate milestones (e.g., 1 Lakh units of XUV700). This aligns with your finding that "Executive Visibility" builds trust.

**Market Result:** This premium positioning resulted in Mahindra growing 9x faster than Hyundai in the SUV

segment during this period, directly validating the shift towards “Aspirational” branding.

FY 2024-25: “Heart core” Design & The Global/Electric Push

Strategic Shift: The positioning evolved to “Tech-Led & Planet Positive.” The brand began aggressively marketing its “Born Electric” (BE) vision and “Heart-core” design philosophy, which focuses on an emotional connection with the user rather than just utility.

The Phygital Gap: While HQ launched apps like Me4U and “Adreno X” connectivity to create a “Phygital” (Physical + Digital) ownership experience, your research highlights a critical disconnect: the Service Advisors on the ground feel “Not Prepared” to support these high-tech promises when they fail.

Global Ambition: The brand anthem “Lee Chalaang” and partnerships with global icons (like A.R. Rahman) were used to position Mahindra as a modern, global innovator, distancing it further from its “local jeep” origins.

While Mahindra’s corporate strategy (2022–2025) successfully repositioned the brand as a premium, tech-led ‘SUV Pro’ player, this rapid elevation has created a ‘Preparedness Gap’ at the dealership level. As the brand promises ‘Global Quality’ and ‘Tech Innovation’ through high-gloss campaigns, the Service Advisors are left ill-equipped to manage the heightened customer expectations when these complex systems require maintenance.

Internal Organisational Preparedness: The Service Gap

A critical finding of this study is the polarisation in preparedness for handling negative social media reviews across dealership roles.

Table 2: Preparedness for Negative Digital Reviews by Role

Role	Preparedness Level	Self-Reported Capability
Showroom GM	High (Very Prepared)	Uses a 4-step crisis protocol.
Marketing Manager	High (Very Prepared)	Proactive training on response scripts.

Service Advisor	Low (Not Very Prepared)	"Trained to fix the vehicle, not the relationship".
Workshop Manager	Low (Not Very Prepared)	

Interpretation: There is a significant disconnect. While the Digital Marketing teams are equipped to respond, the Workshop/Service teams—who handle the actual technical issues—are not able to handle the public relations aspect of a viral complaint.

Competitor Monitoring Strategy

Dealerships utilise social media to monitor competitors across three distinct vectors:

Product Strategy: Monitoring Jeep for “aspirational off-road” content.

Digital Excellence: Monitoring Hyundai/Kia for “premium digital experience”.

Service Transparency: Monitoring Maruti Suzuki for “maintenance videos”.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The “validation gate” phenomenon

The data presents a clear picture of an automotive market where the vehicle purchase decision is validated, if not driven, by digital content, primarily video reviews on YouTube. YouTube acts as a “validation gate”; if a vehicle fails the scrutiny of “hidden flaw” videos, the consumer may never reach the physical dealership. This challenges the traditional funnel model where the dealership is the primary source of information.

Strategic Misalignment

A discrepancy exists in platform prioritisation. Consumers heavily favour YouTube for the final decision. However, dealership management often prioritises Facebook / Instagram for lead generation and Google reviews for local footfall. This suggests dealerships are optimising for the start of the funnel (getting a phone number), while consumers are making their actual decisions based on content (YouTube) that dealerships may not be actively managing.

The Role of Leadership Equity

The study confirms that leveraging the social media presence of company leadership (e.g., Anand

Mahindra) is effective for both internal motivation and external reassurance. External: posts regarding “safety & standards (GN CAP)” reassure consumers about build integrity.

Internal: posts are circulated to boost morale and confirm the corporate vision among technicians.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data presents a clear picture of an automotive market where the vehicle purchase decision is validated, if not driven, by digital content, primarily video reviews on YouTube. Consumers prioritise safety, reliability, and brand, and they use social platforms. To actively search for “hidden flaws” and validate build quality.

Key strategic implications:

Prioritise YouTube & content authenticity: the high consumer reliance on YouTube. For final decisions, the greatest digital marketing investment should be in working with credible long-form content creators and ensuring official channels. Provide the detailed, long-term ownership reviews that consumers are seeking. Service & technical PR training is essential: the major internal vulnerability lies within the service advisor and workshop manager roles, who are “not very Prepared” to handle public relations crises. Given that service cost Surprises and warranty claim denials are top social media concerns, a dedicated public relations/social media crisis module must be developed for all service staff, empowering them to rapidly communicate with the digital team to close the Resolution loop. Local reputation is non-negotiable: the general manager and service advisor’s focus on Google reviews / local listings is critical. As the final touchpoint, the local online star rating is a major factor in “walk-in trust”. Resources must be allocated to managing local search reputation as fiercely as national ad campaigns. Harness leadership for trust: the effective use of Anand Mahindra’s social media to reinforce corporate vision, safety standards, and financial stability provides a crucial Layer of trust and authority, directly countering consumer concerns about long-term Investment and vehicle integrity.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aaker, D. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets. *California Management Review*, 38(3), 102–119.
- [2] Aaker, D.A. 1991. *Managing Brand Equity: Capitalising on the Value of a Brand Name*. New York, New York, USA: The Free Press.
- [3] Aaker, D.A., and K.L. Keller. 1990. Consumer Evaluations of Brand Extensions. *Journal of Marketing* 54, no. 1: 27–41.
- [4] Adams, D. A., Nelson, R. R., & Todd, P.A. (1992). Perceived usefulness, ease of use and usage of information technology: a replication, *Management of Information Quarterly*, 16 (2), 227-247
- [5] Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behaviour, *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179-211
- [6] Ajzen, I., and M. Fishbein. 1980. *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behaviour*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- [7] Ajzen, Icek, and M. Fishbein. 1975. *Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behaviour: An Introduction to Theory and Research*. MA: Addison-Wesley.
- [8] Akrimi, Y., & Khemakhem, R. (2012). What drives consumers to Spread the Word in social media? *Journal of Marketing Research & Case Studies*, 2012, 1-14.
- [9] Andzulis, J., Panagopoulos, N., & Rapp, A. (2012). A Review of Social Media and Implications for the Sales Process. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 32(3), 305-316. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2753/PSS0885-3134320302>
- [10] Anindya G, Ipeirotis, P, and Bribie Li (2012), Designing Ranking Systems for Hotels on Travel Search Engines by Mining User-Generated and Crowdsourced Content, *Marketing Science* 31.3, 493-520,544-546.
- [11] Ariely D (2000), “Controlling the Information Flow: Effects on Consumers’ Decision Making and Preferences”, *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 27, September, pp. 233-248.
- [12] Ashil N J and Sinha A (2004), “An Exploratory Study into the Impact of Components of Brand Equity and Country of Origin Effects on Purchase

- Intention”, *Journal of Asia-Pacific Business*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 27-43.
- [13] Baker, R. E., Simon, J. R., & Bazeli, F. P. 1987. Selecting instructional design for introductory accounting based on the experiential learning model. *Journal of Accounting Education*, 5, 207–226.
- [14] Baldwin, B. A., & Reckers, P. 1984. Exploring the role of learning style research in accounting education policy. *Journal of Accounting Education*, 2(2), 63–76.
- [15] Balog, C. Pribeanu, V. Lamanauskas, V. Slekiene, 2013. A multidimensional model for the exploration of the negative effects of social networking websites as perceived by students, *Journal of Baltic Science Education*, 12(3), 2013, pp. 378-388
- [16] Bambauer-Sachse, S., and S. Mangold. 2011. Brand Equity Dilution through Negative Online Word-of-Mouth Communication. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 18, no. 1 (January): 38–45.
- [17] Beales, H., M. Mazis, S. Salop, and R. Staelin. 1981. Consumer Search and Public Policy. *Journal of Consumer Research* 8, no. June: 11–22.
- [18] Bechina. A and Hustad. E. 2012. The Role of Social Networking Tools on Purchasing Decision-Making Process. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Intellectual Capital, Knowledge Management & Organisational Learning*.
- [19] Bentler, P. M. & Speckart, G. (1981). Attitudes cause behaviours: a structural equation analysis, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 40. 226-238.
- [20] Berthon, P.R., L. Pitt, and C. Campbell. 2008. Ad Lib: When Customers Create the Ad. *California Management Review* 50, no. 4: 6–31.