

Is WhatsApp a 'new age advertising tool'?

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Among the more popular social media software is the WhatsApp software, which exists under the Meta company umbrella alongside Facebook and Instagram. WhatsApp is generally used on an internet-connected mobile device, such as a smartphone, as a communications tool. WhatsApp's purported 2 billion active users can connect with each

other via video, voice, or text messaging on the system provided they have a data connection on their device and the phone number of their contact.

The app also allows users to share media files and form groups of contacts to communicate privately and share information. The latest statistics suggest that 100 billion end-to-end encrypted messages are sent each day on the application.

There are almost 400 billion WhatsApp users in India and researchers there ask in the *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising* whether WhatsApp represents a next-generation opportunity for advertising.

Mallika Srivastava of SVKM's Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies and Semila Fernandes of the Symbiosis Institute of Business Management, Bengaluru have looked at the demographic born between 1982 and approximately 2002. This large grouping encompasses the so-called [digital natives](#), people who were born after the advent of mainstream digital technologies, such as email, the web, and phones that allow users to do more than make [phone calls](#). Their study looks at how this group, specifically the urban sector, perceives corporate marketing within WhatsApp.

The team's analysis reveals what effect different types of advertisement, user gender, active time on WhatsApp, and various other factors affect [brand awareness](#) and brand trust as well as the way in which a packet of advertising information might go "viral," and critically purchase intention. This kind of insight can feed into [marketing strategies](#) for companies hoping to make the most of their spending on social media and the way in which they engage with their customers and prospective clients.

More information: Mallika Srivastava et al, Is WhatsApp a 'new age advertising tool', *International Journal of Internet Marketing and Advertising* (2022). [DOI: 10.1504/IJIMA.2022.120971](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIMA.2022.120971)

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