MARKETING TIMES

Business developments, clearly explained.

ISSUE 01 / 22 OCTOBER 2026

BY RAJIVA RANJAN

THE LEAD STORY / HOW PEOPLE SHOP

Customers ask AI what to buy

Does it suggest your brand?
Does it get the facts right?

Someone asks: “Which water purifier suits a family of four?” An AI tool suggests a few brands. Those brands could enter the shopping list before the customer visits a shop.

BCG reports that retailers are preparing for AI tools that can also help people make purchases. [1]

68% of retailers surveyed expect major changes from AI shopping tools within two years. [1]

THE LESSON

Answer real buying questions: who is it for, what does it cost to use, and where is service available? “Excellent quality” tells a buyer very little.

68% describes retailers’ expectations, not the share of sales made by AI.

IN THIS ISSUE

Next: pricing and trust, and Beco’s three ways to sell.
Then: Marketing LOL and a quick test for your business.

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TWO MORE DEVELOPMENTS / PRICING & DISTRIBUTION

01 / PRICING & TRUST

Why did the price just change?

AP reports that US shoppers worry about how retailers use software to set prices. A digital price tag alone does not mean each customer pays a different price. [2]

The lesson: if customers cannot understand a price change, they may suspect unfair treatment. A clear explanation can help protect trust.

Ask: can your staff explain the price simply?

02 / SELLING IN INDIA

One brand. Three ways to sell.

Beco uses its website to test products, fast-delivery apps to get noticed, and local shops to reach more buyers, says an ET Spotlight event report. [3]

The lesson: each place you sell can serve a different purpose. A website may help you learn. A local shop may help customers buy regularly.

Ask: what does each place you sell help your business do?

NEXT: MARKETING LOL AND A QUICK BUSINESS TEST

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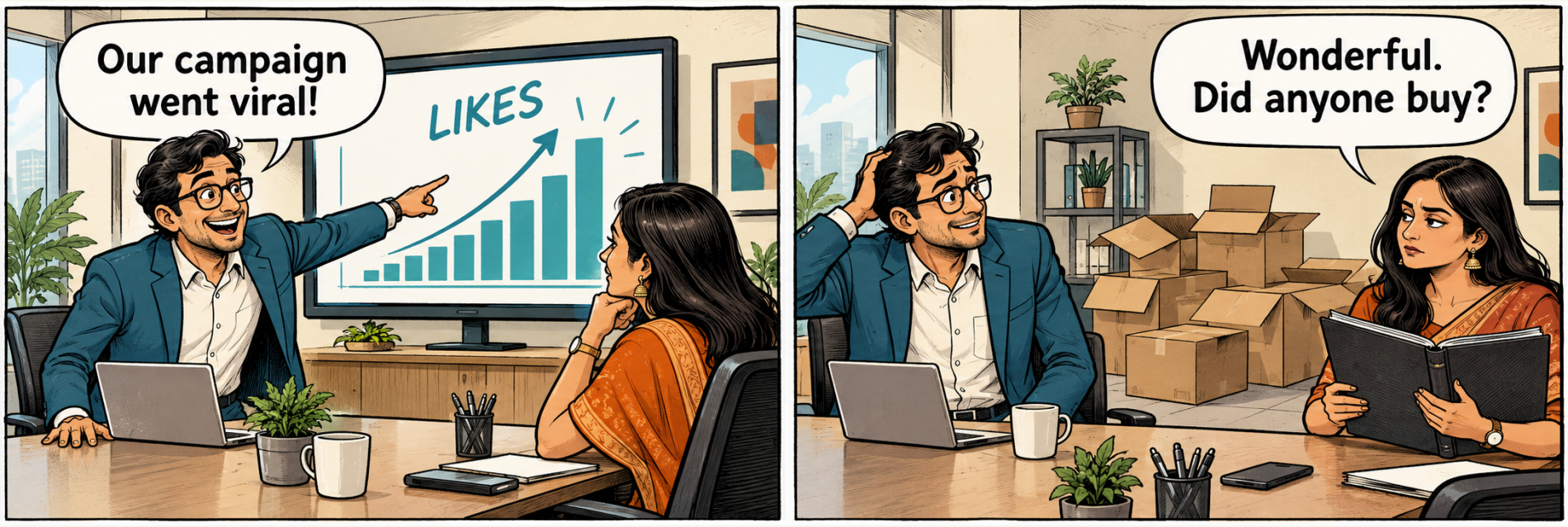
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MARKETING LOL / A LAUGH, A LESSON & A QUICK TEST

Lots of likes. But what happened next?



Likes show that people noticed you. Did anyone then ask about the product, try it or buy it? Sales may take time. Decide what success means before the campaign starts.

TRY THIS IN 15 MINUTES

1. Ask AI like a customer. Ask a buying question about your type of product. Check its suggested brands and facts. Try different wording: answers can change.

2. Check your product page. Can a new reader find the price, who it suits, delivery details and return rules? Fix one unclear answer.

SOURCES / SELECT A TITLE TO READ

1. BCG: How Retailers Can Win With AI Shopping Agents in 2026.
2. AP: Consumer apprehension grows as US retailers adopt AI-assisted pricing tools.
3. ET Spotlight: Bharat D2C Conclave 2026, 16 October 2026.

Sources checked 22 October 2026. Examples and lessons are our explanations. Fictional comic with an AI-assisted illustration. Independent of the brands and sources mentioned.

Explore the Applied Marketing Dictionary by Rajiva Ranjan on Amazon.
