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FROM LOCAL TO HYPERLOCAL: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LOCATION-BASED DIGITAL MARKETING RESEARCH AND ITS SCOPE FOR PUNE DISTRICT

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Abstract: Location-based marketing studies are scattered across disciplines, and few have examined how hyperlocal tactics, which target people within a few hundred meters of a business, work in an Indian district. This paper synthesizes research on location-based advertising, proximity marketing, hyperlocal media and local search between 2003 and 2026, and evaluates its relevance to Pune District. The review was conducted using SPAR-4-SLR logic with PRISMA-style reporting. Of the 193 found, 168 were screened, 72 read in full, and 40 retained, coded for theme, theory, method, geography and technology.Five themes were identified. Formal permission is less important than relevance, context and location congruency. Intrusiveness is the main risk to the consumer. Proximity-triggered messages are only slightly more effective than untargeted messages. Execution is driven by firm capability rather than technology. Of the 40 sources, only 12 are Indian, and only one is directly related to location based advertising.

Pune is all set for hyperlocal marketing but research on it is very little. Four themes transfer strongly to Pune, one moderately. The paper suggests four testable propositions and a framework of three sub-markets (IT corridor, old city and peri-urban talukas) for guidance to later primary research.

Keywords: location-based advertising, hyperlocal marketing, geofencing, proximity marketing, local search, privacy calculus, Pune District.

I. INTRODUCTION

There has always been a geographic side to online marketing, but the precision of it has become razor sharp. Today, a platform can identify a device a few hundred meters from a shop entrance, choose the right moment and change the message, using phone GPS, Wi-Fi positioning, Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) beacons, geofences defined inside advertising platforms and the local index that drives map search. Thus, geographic targeting ranges from the local level (a city or district) to the hyperlocal level (a street, a mall or the catchment of a single store) [1], [6]. Early researchers wondered if the association of a message with the consumer's location would affect how the message was perceived [2], [3] but location based services have become a common part of mobile commerce [4], [5]. For three reasons the subject is timely. India had 1,028.61 million internet subscribers in December 2025, of which 594.33 million were urban [51]. Quick commerce is expected to triple between 2024 and 2027 [52]. Pune already has 244 mapped dark stores across 82 neighbourhoods [18]. Map and business-profile listings can help small businesses to be found without big budgets [33], [34]. This question also fits well in Pune. In 2011, its urban share was 60.99 per cent and literacy 86.15 per cent, making it one of the more literate and industrialized districts of India. It has IT jobs in Hinjewadi, Kharadi, Baner, Magarpatta and Hadapsar, traditional retail in the old city and a wide swathe of talukas [17]. It was a pilot city under the smart-city program [19], [20].

The current literature is scattered. Location services have been explored as applications by information systems scholars [4], [5], as a sort of persuasion by marketing researchers [9]–[11], as a trade-off in disclosure by privacy researchers [14], [15], [21], and as a question of capability for adoption by small-business researchers [35]–[41]. "Seldom do these strands connect. Acceptance and privacy studies are rarely related to geofencing and beacon studies [23]–[27]. Evidence is mostly from Europe, North America, South Africa and East Asia, with India being included mostly in studies of mobile payments and general technology adoption [44]–[47]. Most studies focus on a single firm or venue rather than a district with distinct sub-

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markets, and no current review links the field to a particular Indian district. Till date, Pune studies relate to online shopping and general digital practice [48]–[50].

Retailers, malls, quick-commerce platforms and agencies in Pune are already investing in geofencing, profile optimization and neighborhood content, but there is no synthesis to guide these decisions. The review helps practitioners to focus their efforts and provides researchers with a coded base for district level studies. It can be used by administrators to predict where intrusiveness concerns are likely to arise [19]–[21], and by trainers to address the capability gap [35], [36].
The key question is the relevance of literature of location-based and hyperlocal marketing to Pune District. The five objectives are: (RO1) describe the composition of the literature by theory, method, geography and technology; (RO2) establish the conditions under which location improves response; (RO3) identify the principal risks for consumers; (RO4) assess the evidence on execution and the capability of small firms; and (RO5) judge how well the findings transfer to Pune and derive propositions.

The paper offers three things: a codified consolidation of the field, an applied framework that separates the IT-corridor, old-city retail and peri-urban taluka sub-markets, and four propositions that can be tested without proprietary location data. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section II reviews the literature, Section III describes the method, Section IV presents the results, Section V discusses them and Section VI concludes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

And Xu [2] distinguished pull and push location advertising and found that consumers evaluate the two differently, and Peterson, Groot and Luccio [3] described the business commercially. Later reviews describe a split field. Huang et al. established an agenda encompassing positioning, usability and privacy [4]; Oikonomidis and Fouskas drew attention to ongoing divides between disciplines [5]; Kamiya and Branisso connected geolocation with omnichannel behavior [6]; and Ferro-Diez et al. concluded that location data is most valuable when combined with other business data [7]. Similar finding was reported by Hooda and Jain [8]. Aggarwal reviewed 128 articles and found that acceptance and privacy calculus were the most frequent viewpoints [1]. Behavioral targeting is effective depending on whether delivery is in-store or off-site [9]; congruency between the offer and the setting drives engagement [10]; perceived value predicts response better than liking does [11]; location-aware delivery increases real-time social interaction [12]; and response varies from place to place even within one city [13]. Privacy: Personalization conflicts with disclosure [14]. Transparency and control are potential cures [15]. Users worry more about unseen collection than disclosed collection [16]. Intrusiveness is the decisive risk [21]. In a sample of 459 young Indian consumers, relevance and context were more important than permission and trust [22]. Beacon-based tracking on a high street has been demonstrated to be executable [23]. The adoption of geofences is conditional on retailer capability and venue infrastructure [24] and geofences around competitors can lead to store visits [25]. BLE positioning attained 82.4 per cent accuracy with aisle sections of three meters [26]. Numerous pilots only simulate the hardware [27]. Hyperlocal studies indicate that credibility is a function of proximity and local identity [28], [29]. Perceived relevance and local trust influence purchase intention [30]. Hyperlocal tactics are suitable for small firms and increase the awareness of MSMEs [31], [32]. Industry data on business profiles [33] and practitioner advice [34] are background only. Small firms lag, appetite for training is limited and execution is difficult, reported in Indian adoption studies [35]–[40]. One recommends social media introduction before search and email [41]. Others review rural and SWOT perspectives [42], [43]. Studies on mobile payments and commerce show that consumers accept mobile contact if expectancy and facilitating conditions are fulfilled [44]–[47]. Sources on Pune show that 41.7 per cent of regional respondents use digital marketing to boost sales [48] and 86 per cent of city consumers know of online shopping sites and 75.58 per cent use them regularly [49]. Online shopping has affected small traders in Bhopodi and Aundh [50]. The market context is extracted from analyzes of quick commerce and commercial leasing [52]–[54].Studies of consumer response and privacy are the strongest theoretically but the weakest at measuring behavior as they rely on stated intention and scenarios [22]. Conversely, geofencing and beacon studies observe behavior [25] but seldom state a theory [23]–[26] and typically depend on single-site pilots with few controls [27]. The results on congruency and spatial variation are supported by experiments [9], [10], [13], but cannot be supported by practitioner statistics [33] for inference. The Indian finding that permission is less important than relevance [22] does not contradict the finding on intrusiveness [21]; the two suggest that consent is necessary but not sufficient.

Acceptance, privacy and execution have been studied separately . Instead of location marketing, India is represented through adoption studies. No study uses a district with many sub-markets as its unit of analysis. No review relates the field to Pune. This paper brings together the five streams into a single corpus, positions each theme against documented conditions in Pune, and develops propositions that convert the gap into a research agenda.

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III. METHODOLOGY

It is a qualitative systematic review using secondary data and supported by descriptive counts. This follows SPAR-4-SLR logic with PRISMA-style reporting [1]. The protocol was not registered, no primary data were collected and no meta-analysis was performed because the studies used different instruments to measure different outcomes [9]–[11], [25], [26].
The population consists of scholarly and authoritative secondary sources in the English language published between 2003 and 2026 that treat location-based, proximity, hyperlocal or local-search marketing as a main subject, or that provide authoritative context on Pune. Sources were identified through keyword searching and screening rather than by random sampling. Inclusion criteria: Relevance to topic, period, language (English) and availability of identifiable bibliographic details. Promotional pages, vendor statistics without attribution, and opinion pieces without evidence were excluded.

In September 2026, a scholarly index and a general web search were queried with strings that paired one location term (for example geofencing, proximity marketing, hyperlocal marketing or local SEO) with one marketing term (acceptance, privacy, adoption, retail or SME/MSME) and, where relevant, India, Maharashtra, Pune, smart city or quick commerce. The screening flow is given in Table I. A coding form captured theme (T1–T5), theory, method, geography and location technology. Census, dark-store, telecom, survey and market sources [17], [18], [48]–[54] were compiled into a sheet of contextual indicators for Pune.

TABLE I. SCREENING FLOW

Stage	Action	Records
Identification	Unique records (40 scholarly, 153 web)	193
Identification	Duplicates removed	− 25
Screening	Title and abstract screened; off-topic or promotional excluded	168; − 96
Eligibility	Full text assessed; ineligible, unattributed or opinion excluded	72; − 32
Included	Sources synthesised (50% scholarly)	40

Frequencies and percentages were produced for each coding dimension and reconciled against the 40 sources. The corpus was purposive so inferential statistics were not used. Within each theme findings were compared and synthesized narratively. Evidence was rated as strong, moderate or thin, and each theme was rated high, medium or low for transferability to Pune by asking three questions: are its conditions present in the district, do local features strengthen the effect, and can firms and consumers act on it? No special software was needed.Criteria were set up before screening and were applied consistently. Search terms were based on previous reviews [1], [4], [8] and industry figures are marked as indicative [33]. Inter-coder agreement could not be calculated as all sources were coded by one reviewer; however, a fixed codebook and reconciled totals limited the resulting risk. Ethics approval and consent to participate Not applicable as no human participants or personal data were involved and only published sources were used, all sources are acknowledged through citation. The 54 references include the 40 coded sources and further contextual references.

IV. RESULTS

The 40 sources split into small-firm adoption (10, 25.0 per cent), acceptance and response (9, 22.5), hyperlocal content and local search (8, 20.0), geofencing and beacons (7, 17.5) and privacy (6, 15.0), as shown in Table II. Acceptance and privacy lenses frame most consumer studies, consistent with earlier reviews [1], [8], and stimulus-organism-response is a growing third [22]; operational studies often state no theory [23]–[25]. Geographically, India accounts for 12 (30.0 per cent), Europe and global reviews 9 each, Asia outside India 5, North America 3 and Africa 2. In terms of technology, 13 sources use GPS or geofencing features, 7 use platform local indexes, 6 use beacons and 2 use Wi-Fi, while 12 do not mention the mechanism.

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TABLE II. THEMES, EVIDENCE STRENGTH AND PUNE TRANSFERABILITY

Theme (n)	Principal finding	Evidence	Pune transferability
T1 Acceptance (9)	Relevance and congruency drive response; proximity alone does not	Strong	High: IT corridor fits congruency model
T2 Privacy (6)	Intrusiveness is the binding risk	Strong	High: high penetration raises exposure
T3 Geofence, beacon (7)	Proximity messages modestly outperform untargeted	Moderate	Medium: venues exist; hardware unmeasured
T4 Hyperlocal, search (8)	Local identity and discoverability build trust	Moderate	High: dense neighbourhoods
T5 Firm adoption (10)	Capability, not technology, constrains	Strong (India)	High: large MSME base in talukas

Response and risk (RO2, RO3). Response is moderated by the congruency between the offer and the situation [10], and interacts with the setting of delivery [9] and varies across space [13]; proximity is therefore necessary but not sufficient. The main risk is intrusiveness, which is mitigated by transparency [16] and eased by control mechanisms [15]. Relevance and context were deemed more important than permission by Indian respondents [22].

Execution and capability (RO4) The effects were modest [23]–[27] and adoption depends on retailer capability and venue infrastructure [24], but proximity-triggered messages performed better than untargeted messages among pilots. Although it is not peer reviewed, industry figures suggest that a verified business profile receives about one thousand searches and two hundred interactions per month [33]. Indian studies agree that small firms are hindered by capability rather than by tools [35]–[43].

RO5 Evidence and Transferability. Of the 12 Indian sources, only one refers to location-based advertising [22]. Pune had 9,429,408 residents in 2011, literacy of 86.15 percent, urban share of 60.99 percent and sex ratio of 915 [17]. There are 244 dark stores (84 Blinkit, 54 Zepto, 46 Instamart, 38 Flipkart Minutes, 22 BigBasket) [18]. India had 594.33 million urban and 434.27 million rural Internet subscribers [51]. Pune retail leasing grew 38.4 per cent quarter on quarter in Q2 2026 [53], [54]. Four themes are ranked high and one medium in transferability (Table II). To summarize, the district has the conditions necessary but little supporting evidence.

V. DISCUSSION

The research has moved from whether location matters to when it matters, and the recurring answer is congruency between offer, place and moment [9], [10], [13]. This explains the modest gains from proximity [25], [26] and the fact that intrusiveness is the dominant risk [21]: a message not adapted to the moment is experienced as an interruption. The constraint that capability puts on small firms [35], [38], [43] also explains the continued underuse of mature tools. Pune's IT corridor is thick with app-reliant commuters, favoring location-congruent messaging. The old-city core is better suited to proximity-to-store messages. And in the talukas, discoverability via local search is the better way. The success of a campaign depends on frequency capping and discipline over the radius for a single commuter passing through multiple dark-store and mall geofences [18].

The results are in line with previous reviews that acceptance and privacy are dominant and that fragmentation is persistent [1], [4], [5], [8]. This is consistent with findings on intrusiveness [21], relevance trumping permission [22], and evidence that location data has added value when combined with other data [7]. They also show that research on execution is theory deficient and India's contribution is in adoption rather than location marketing. There are four statements below. P1: congruent hyperlocal messages will increase engagement above district-wide messages, especially along the IT corridor. P2: Intrusiveness will mediate the relationship between contact frequency and response more strongly than privacy concern. P3: Local search and profile optimization will provide more bang for their buck to small firms than beacons. P4: A firm's digital capability will best predict whether it sustains a hyperlocal campaign beyond a quarter. For practitioners, the recommended approach is discoverability, followed by geofencing where footfall is dense, with frequency caps in place before scaling up

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[21], [25], [33], [41]. Policymakers should consider intrusiveness and transparency [15], [16], [19], [20] and trainers should educate campaign management and measurement [35], [36].

VI. CONCLUSION

This review categorized the field into five coded themes using 40 sources from 193. The answer depends on the congruency between offer, place and moment. Intrusiveness is the main consumer risk and the execution is constrained by firm capability rather than by technology. Four themes transfer strongly to Pune and one moderately well, but Indian and Pune evidence remains thin relative to the district's preparedness. There are two restrictions. The review is qualitative and may be incomplete as it is narrative and coded by one person, with one index and a web search. The Pune data are secondary context that does not test any proposition. Future work should test P1–P4 using a sub-market-stratified survey combined with platform data, run controlled field experiments on frequency and radius [23–27], examine whether staged training helps small firms sustain campaigns [35, 41], and update this review with double-coding and a broader range of regional sources.

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