

Effectiveness of Viral Marketing over the Internet

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Abstract – This study investigates the use of viral marketing on the Internet, and assesses its effectiveness, in terms of generating potential sales, and increasing brand awareness. Many viral marketing techniques are being used to target consumers, however it has been concluded that not all techniques are being utilised in an effective way on the Internet. The general attitude towards viral marketing, from the point of view of consumers, is that the information provided in viral marketing campaigns, is useful for making purchasing decisions. This study has concluded that businesses need to use a variety of viral marketing techniques, in order to market effectively over the Internet.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Viral Marketing, Internet, Investigates Awareness, Techniques, Consumers, Information, Campaigns, Businesses, etc.

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INTRODUCTION

Marketing is used to increase an organisations success, by promoting its products of services to targeted potential consumers. It is essential therefore, that marketing evolves and is redefined, in accordance with consumer behaviour, enabling organisations to remain successful. One recent development is that consumers have become more sophisticated and individually focussed, which is related to the introduction of new technologies such as the Internet. It is estimate that the total size of the global online population is currently over eight hundred million, and this figure continues to rise (O'Connor, Galvin and Evans, 2004). This is resulting in developments in online advertising, with organisations identifying the potential in targeting this new online market. Online advertising formats such as the press, television and outdoor media can be said to help create brand awareness and encourage consumer product preference. However, a new technique being implored by some businesses is the use of viral marketing which can be used to generate brand awareness among a large populous extremely quickly, and uses the consumers themselves to encourage product preference to others (Meerman-Scott, 2008).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

This research paper attempts to understand viral marketing strategy adopted by the marketer and find out drivers of viral marketing. There is evolution of new marketing tactic which is called viral marketing. Why this new marketing tactic has been evolved? The reason behind is that there are dynamics or transitions

in marketing. This transition is because changes in marketing techniques and these changes of marketing techniques are because customer is changing. Why customer is changing? Because of the advancement of communication technology and internet technology made his life very simple. Information of the product is available on internet. Today's customer is well informed. Before going for purchase he likes to know about the product. This knowledge he may get it from the internet or through his social network. There is lot of ease also in purchasing product. At any time, from anywhere he can purchased product online. As information technology has occupied most of the life of human being. At workplace, at home he is using this technology for his day to day activity. At office he is using computer for his official work. At home he is using it for educational purpose, for entertainment, or for his personal use. Today's customer is spending most of the time on virtual world rather than in real world. Marketer has to find out a technique to reach to the customer in his virtual world. This reach is possible with the advancement in communication technology there is evolution of new electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) which is called as a viral marketing.

MARKETING FOR BUSINESS:

Marketing is essential for businesses as it allows them to make their products or services known to the consumer and persuade them to invest in them. It has been noted that the use of marketing will improve a business's performance (Jobber and Fahy, 2006). For instance, in a study carried out use of marketing within a business had a significant effect on how profitable a business was deemed to be, with businesses that did

more marketing having the highest levels of profitability. This therefore suggests that to enable a business to be successful it needs to have a high level of market orientation. There are many ways for businesses to begin marketing themselves, these include television campaigns, national and regional news studys adverts, billboard posters, radio adverts, business and consumer magazine articles, or more traditionally through direct mail campaigns.

DRIVERS OF VIRAL MARKETING:

This study makes three principal contributions; first, the study generates a grounded understanding about the drivers of viral marketing. A sequence of drivers of viral marketing is also found out in previous research on viral marketing but this sequence is modified with an additional factor. Second, a theoretical framework is developed that illustrates the factors which influenced user to receive viral messages. Thus, the proposed framework helps researchers and marketers better understand the important attributes which influences user to receive viral messages. The success of viral marketing is depends upon if the viral messages are propagated. Therefore, efforts have been taken into this study to understand the factors which influenced user to forward messages. Third, this study integrates a specific grounded theory with the more formal insights available from information systems research and marketing literature, developing a more general framework that will allow researchers and practitioners to explain, anticipate, and evaluate viral marketing strategies.

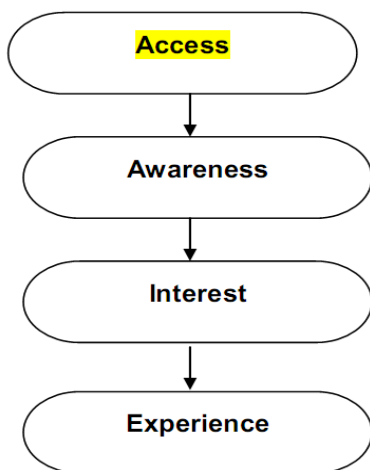


Figure 1 – Sequence of Drivers of Viral Marketing

MODELS ON VIRAL MARKETING:

The number of people online around the world will grow more than 45 percent to 2.2 billion users over the next five years, according to a new report by Forrester Research, Inc titled "Global Online Population Forecast, 2008 To 2013". India will be the third largest Internet user base by 2013 - with China and the US taking the first two spots, respectively. Forrester estimates number of Internet users in India currently to

be 52 million and expects India to have an average growth rate of 10- 20 % respectively.

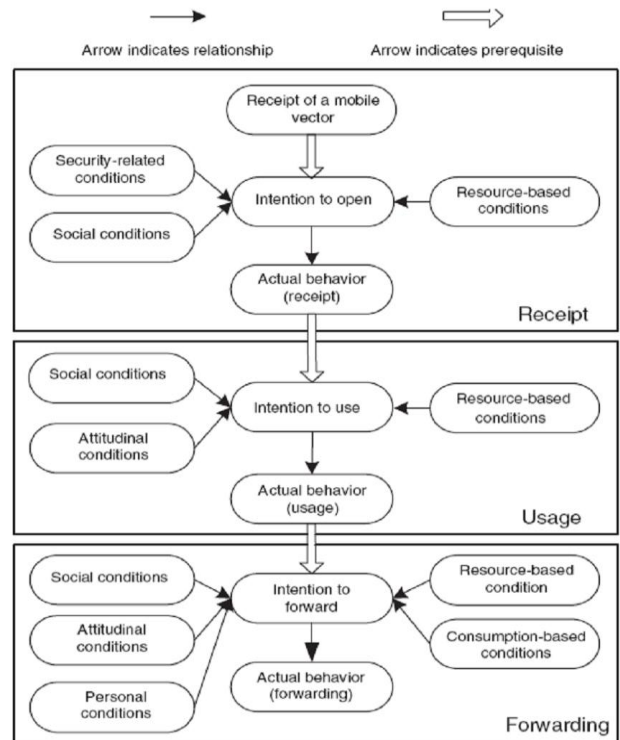


Figure 2: Basic model of a mobile viral marketing process.

The second model was based on the information adoption model which is developed. This research model was built upon the information adoption model. It examines individual relationships between argument quality, source credibility, information usefulness, and information adoption (Christy M.K. Cheung et. al., 2008).

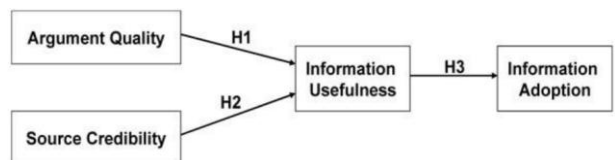


Figure 3- Information Adoption Model

Further analysis of the Information Adoption Model regarding the components of argument quality and source credibility done and a Research Model is developed. This research model explores the motivations behind adoption of online opinions. The research model is built on the theoretical model of information adoption. In this model there is a resulting relationship between Information adoption, Information usefulness, Relevance, Comprehensiveness, Accuracy, Timeliness, Source expertise, and Source trustworthiness. Information adoption is a process in which people purposefully engage in using information. Information adoption behavior is one of the principal activities that users

seek to conduct in virtual communities (Christy M.K. Cheung et. al., 2008).

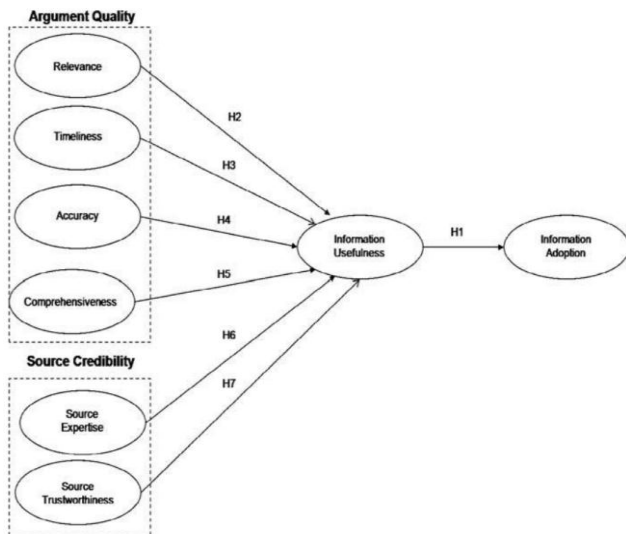


Figure 4 - Research Model for Social Network Site influence on Viral Marketing

Drivers of viral marketing as identified in this study are access to use internet. Awareness of viral marketing strategy adopted by the marketer, Interest in getting online information about the product and experience of viral marketing in which user receive and forward (send) messages within their social network as well as getting information about the products directly from the marketer.

CONCLUSION:

Viral marketing is a marketing technique whereby information about a company's goods or services is passed electronically from one internet use to another. Viral marketing is quite a new concept and it predicts to get a bright future. From this we can draw the decision for companies that Viral messages at social Medias did not have huge positive effects on the consumers buying act, just a little positive effect in the consumers buying act at blogs. But not to forget, viral messages can raise consumer's need for products and services, influence them and also create brand awareness, which might possible lead to a positive buying act for the consumer in the future. Consumer's listens and talks, they forward viral messages to people around them and people tend to listen to the satisfied/-dissatisfied opinion people around them has towards a brand. It is important for companies to understand the power of viral marketing; because this was affect if there was a positive or negative buying act for the consumer. Furthermore, the adoption of permission-based marketing by marketers may lead to increased acceptance of viral marketing and a more favorable consumers' response towards viral marketing in India.

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