



A study on college students attitude towards e-marketing strategies

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Abstract

Promotion is no longer an activity confined to enhance the exchange of goods and services in the conventional sense, but it is a philosophy of service and mutual gain and hence the road to greater promotional consistency and better results should not be a terribly longer one. However it does require visibility and coordination between manufacturers, retailers and end users. The key to greater promotional impact for today's business is information availability, knowledge and insight. In order to maximize promotional effectiveness, organizations need to know about what categories and what brands are being promoted, by whom, at what price points and how often they are changing. Since the exchange of business information using electronic formats are replacing traditional methods, e marketing and e promotion will continue to grow and will provide access to mass market irrespective of nationality and size of the business. The advent of digital technologies have encouraged organizations to redefine their promotional strategies, so that they can concentrate their resources on the optimal opportunities with goals of increasing sales and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. This redefined promotional strategy mainly includes E promotional techniques, which can target company's market more precisely and ensure better reach. Hence the focus of the study is to determine perception towards E Promotional strategies, whether the perception is influenced by independent variable like gender and income and also to determine the response of customers towards E Promotional offerings.

Keywords: e promotional strategies, online couponing, price off, consumer approach

Introduction

There have been dramatic change in information technology over the past ten or fifteen years and the advances in this field are revolutionising the modus operandi of marketing and the business system. The business horizon is humming with buzzwords like internet, world wide web, cyberspace, information superhighways etc, which are changing the way of contacting customers, order receiving and processing; and networking and integrating business system. These modes are considered to be the driving forces of internationalization. In traditional marketing the marketing team could not get immediate results on the customer reaction. They conducted marketing surveys, processed the data and prepared the reports. On the basis of those reports the management took decisions, formulated the policies, prepared the [plans and implemented them. These activities consume a lot of time whereas the internet allows companies to react to individual customer demands immediately without any loss of time. It does not matter where the customer is located. Internet provides a pathway for buying and selling of goods and services via the communication capabilities of private and public networks. The network helps to link dealers, retailers and distributors and there by obtaining better control on delivery of finished goods. It also describes the company's efforts to inform, communicate, promote and sells its product and services over the internet. In the present competitive era, selling is a complicated task and nothing happens until somebody tells something. Online promotional tools act as a door for telling and selling and it is a component of company's total marketing mix which helps to coordinate all seller initiated efforts to set up channels of information and persuasion to facilitate the sale of goods or service or the acceptance of an idea. Online promotional tools include Online Advertising,

Online Personal Selling, Online Sales Promotion, Online Public relation and online direct marketing with newer developments in e-Marketing technology, marketers today have a plethora of options in which to use e-Marketing as a method of customer engagement and tracking the same. Some of them are purely information based like transaction based communication (order confirmation, delivery confirmation) and periodic communications (newsletters) while others are revenue generation methods (event promotion, alerts, behavioral triggers, etc.)

AIM

Globalization and privatization has increased the acceptance of e marketing and e promotional measures and hence Consumer attitude towards E promotional activities is of great significance in today's era. The main objective of the study is to analyze consumer's approach towards E promotional measure and also to determine whether this approach is influenced by their urban or rural dwelling.

Importance of The Study

The important purpose of promotion is to change the location and shape of the demand curve. Due to the increase in the physical distance between producers and consumers, the need of online marketing and online promotion has increased. Today consumers give more importance to want satisfaction rather than to their needs. They are selective in their choice of alternative expenditure. Besides this fact, the continuous growth of technology and competition force the business firms to become strategic and informed in their approach. Though wide range of techniques are used by online marketers for promoting their product, the study is limited with two promotional schemes- online price off and buy one get free option with online shopping. In this

context, the following objectives are laid for studying the role of e-promotional strategies in successful e-marketing strategy

Objectives of The Study

1. to analyze consumer’s satisfaction level with respect to E Promotional strategies(online price off and buy one get free offer associated with online shopping)
2. Determine whether the selected independent demographic and economic variables influence the perception towards E Promotional schemes
3. Analyze the results of online promotion and to rank them using Likert Scale technique

Methodology

The independent variables chosen include gender and income and the study aims in analyzing whether these variables were instrumental in determining the perception towards E Promotion. Though E Promotion can be instrumental in creating varied behavior among customers, the paper was limited to analyse the following consumer behaviors

- Whether it resulted in accelerated purchase of same commodity
- Whether it accelerated the purchase of different commodity from same site or
- Whether it created a negative image among the minds of customers. The study was limited to Changanacherry Kerala and was conducted among 130 respondents, giving representation to various demographic and economic factors like gender, age, income, area of habitation etc. Out of the selected subjects 124 of them were familiar with online shopping and availability of E Promotion. Hence the sample was limited to 124, and questionnaire was the medium used for data collection

Review of Literature

1. *Evans and Wurster (2015)* discussed the advantages in relation to the richness of information they can provide consumers. The Internet provides a low cost way for the manufacturer to build a direct link with the consumer. Incumbents can use their traditional sources of consumer information (e.g. product testing, focus groups) in addition to the information that is easily collected from ecommerce sites (e.g. sales information, customer demographics). Using data mining they can buy customer profiles that allow them to offer distinct promotions that are tailored to their customers.
2. *Eric Allen and Jerry Fjermestad (2016)* in their study on” E-commerce marketing strategies: an integrated framework and case analysis” demonstrates the usefulness of the traditional marketing model in developing e-commerce marketing strategies and discusses four ecommerce frameworks and integrates

them with the traditional marketing model (product, price promotion, and distribution) to develop a complete framework. Discusses how the ecommerce strategies could be applied to a real company using the integrated model.

3. *Dr. Mahalaxmi Krishnan and Usha Bhandare (2014)* in their research paper on ”Retail Advertising and Promotional Strategies in Growing Consumer Market 2010” explains the advertisement and promotional strategies adopted by retailers and their effectiveness. Field surveys using structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data from retailers and customers in the city of Mumbai. Retailers adopt a mix of marketing and promotional strategies to withstand competition. Customers have informed purchase decisions by sifting through various advertisements and promotional offers.. Indian consumers are maturing and therefore the retailers find it increasingly difficult to influence the purchase decisions of customers merely with promotional offers. Innovations in sales promotion techniques are required to acquire new customers and to retain existing customers, especially the youth, who have no qualms switching brands and/or shops
4. *Stanley George (2016)* in his study on “Occasion Based Promotional Strategies of Consumer Durable Segment in Kerala” explains Occasion Based Marketing is an approach to connect when and why consumers use the product with how they shop for the product. Kerala is highly developed market for consumer products. National as well as International brands have been trying to have a fair share of this market. The study is focused mainly on the promotional strategies of consumer durable companies and retailers during festival season. The results of this study would mean that the consumer durable companies and retailers are adapting various promotional strategies to attract deal prone, promotion liking customers

Analysis and Discussion

Table 1: Percentage representation of the subjects selected for study

Consumer Response towards E Promotional Strategy	Responses (in %)
Satisfied Subjects	94%
Dissatisfied group	6%

The behavior of respondents towards E Promotion availability is done using likert scale technique where by the overall score represents the respondent’s position on the continuum of favourable-unfavourableness towards E promotion offered by the online sites

Table 2: Ranking of E consumer behavior directed by E Promotional Strategies

Response from Online Shoppers	Favorability	% Representation	Rank
Accelerated purchase for same product	211	85%	II
Buy another product from same site as a benefit is obtained from the site in terms of price off/ offer	237	96	I
Dissatisfied with Promotional schemes and hence move to another site	15	6	III

Table 3: ANOVA calculation to analyze the influence of gender on perception towards E Promotional schemes

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square
Between Samples	SSC= 450	K-1= 1	MSC= 450
Within Samples	SSE= 1150	N-K= 6	MSE= 191.667
	SST= 1600	N-1= 7	
Calculated Value= 2.347		Table Value= 4.49	

There is no difference in attitude of male and female towards perception towards E Promotional schemes. Irrespective of gender, both group are attracted by online price off or buy one & get free offers available in online shopping. A further analysis reveals that such an offer is

capable of encouraging them to buy other product (accelerating purchase behavior) from same site. Thus the selected E Promotional tools are successful online marketing strategies which are capable of attracting more traffic and also more sales for the online sites

Table 4: ANOVA to analyze relationship between income and positive perception towards E Promotional strategies

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square
Between Samples	SSC= 264.5	K-1= 1	MSC= 264.5
Within Samples	SSE= 316.13	N-K= 6	MSE= 52.69
	SST= 580.63	N-1= 7	
Calculated Value= 5.02		Table Value= 4.49	

As calculated value is greater than table value, H_0 is rejected and the survey proves that consumer’s preference is influenced by the income factor. The questionnaire representing four major class of monthly household income, the middle of middle class (Monthly income of 35- 75,000 Rs) and the upper middle class were keen about availability of online promotions and these techniques have accelerated their purchase from same site. Their ability to use internet, attraction towards wide range of products, time constraints and also their intention to save are the major reasons for positive perception towards E Promotional strategies.

Conclusion

The research conducted among selected online shoppers in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala reveals that the E-Promotional strategy ‘Price Off’ and also ‘Buy & Get Free Offers/ Premiums’ has resulted in creating an elevated mood state which in turn results in a positive purchase behaviour like accelerating purchase of other product from same web site. As the purchasers receive a saved amount by their online shopping, they try to spend the saved amount by purchasing from same website itself and there by adhere to the marketing strategy of ‘increase in consumption rate by promotional offer. The study also reveals that the consumer perception towards E Promotional offers were influenced by the economic factor, Income where as the demographic factor, gender didn’t have any influence on the same.

Implication for Research and Practice

The whole research was carried in the district of Kottayam, which is one among the 14 districts of Kerala, and hence there is wide scope for the same research in other parts of the sate as well as in other parts of the country. The study was limited with analysis of the influence of ‘price off’ and ‘premium’ strategies, which represent only two elements among the various E Promotional tools like. The consumer response would also have been influenced by other demographic and economic variables (irrespective of gender and income) and also by psychographic variables, socio cultural factors, geographic factors etc, which doesn’t fall under the scope of this research. This study reveals that E Promotional strategies are capable of accelerating purchase and stock piling and hence can be effectively taken care by the online marketers as it will be detrimental in increasing the purchase quantity and their by adding on to their profit and the research also agrees with the influence of external environmental variable especially economic factor, Income on the perception of online shoppers towards availability of E Promotional strategies

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