

A comparative method of viral and neural marketing, with a modern marketing approach

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Abstract

In today's competitive world, marketing as a dynamic, operational science is constantly evolving in line with developments. The critical role and importance of marketing strategies in the success or failure of organizations have become clear to everyone. Marketing and its strategies have been heavily influenced by technologies throughout their lives. With the advent of print, radio, television, computers, and so on, marketing has also played a specific role. The advent of information technology and the rapid growth of communications in cyberspace have completely revolutionized marketing strategies. In the meantime, in order to make companies successful in marketing, different strategies were introduced. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of Neuro-marketing and Viral-marketing while exploring the different aspects of these two marketing styles. Finally, according to the indices and characteristics obtained through field studies and library research, these two types of marketing will be analyzed. On the other hand, the role of the five senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste) in neural marketing will be examined. And it examines how each of these senses affects the customer's mood and overshadows his purchase. This will help sellers and marketers a lot more sales. The results suggest that the strategic stimulation of the consumer's five senses in the marketing process can be one of the practical ways for companies and sellers to attract customers and increase their loyalty.

Keywords: Viral-marketing; Neuro-marketing; Adaptive Approach; Strategy.

1. Introduction

The right attitude towards the importance of marketing and sales in business is the key to business success in today's world. Intense competition in highly volatile markets with unpredictable economic trends has doubled the importance of marketing attention compared to previous years. The need for regular planning and adherence to marketing principles is a vital factor in maintaining the position of businesses in today's world[1].

Philip Kotler seems to have given the best definition of marketing[2]: *"The process by which companies engage the customer and build strong relationships with the customer and create value for the customer in return for gaining value from the customer."* Fifty years ago, Peter Drucker created the steps for defining modern marketing[3]. *"If we want to know what a business is, we have to start with the goal. There is only one worthwhile goal for a business and that is to create a customer. It is the customer who determines what a business is and who is willing to pay for your goods and services. Goods and services that come from the heart of nature and are the result of the conversion of natural resources into goods and wealth. What a business produces is not important, and the future success of the business is not decisive; rather, what the customer thinks, and sees as "value," is decisive. That's why the business goal is to create a customer. A business has only two important business functions: marketing and innovation."*

Consider the power of the above statements; A business is built for customers by turning natural or human resources into a maximum value proposition. According to this approach, Drucker does not consider marketing to be related only to a specific department or part of an organization, but he believes that marketing should include the whole organization; That is, each individual employee of an organization is considered the marketer of that organization. Drucker says: *"Marketing cannot be considered as a separate function."* Undoubtedly, Peter Drucker's business philosophy was far ahead of its time[3].

So far, many models of the process and its methods have been developed. One of the most important is the 5-step process or the basic steps of marketing. According to this model (Figure 1)[4]:



Figure 1. Five steps of "marketing process"[4]

In the first step, using marketing research, information is collected and analyzed about the issues facing the organization and the answers to each of the selected issues.

In the second step, using the information obtained from marketing research, the process of market segmentation, targeting, and positioning is performed. The sum of these three steps of placing the first letter of the mentioned words is called STP.

In the third step, it prepares and compiles the marketing mix for the desired sectors. The marketing mix is known in its most basic form as 4Ps, which consists of product, price, place, and prom.

In the fourth step, the developed strategies are implemented. At this stage, by forming teams with different tasks and formulating the appropriate structure, the items specified in the previous steps will be implemented.

In the fifth step, the process is controlled from the beginning, and corrective actions are applied in the form of feedback at the heart of the process.

Marketing is the key to successful e-commerce. Without marketing, the best products will be unprofitable and the highest quality services will be without customers. Many believe that new techniques and methods must be developed to exploit this technology. In the following, two new marketing styles, which include neural and viral marketing styles, will be further examined and their different aspects will be clarified.

2. Viral-marketing

Researchers have been interested in viral marketing for more than five decades, and Steve Jurvetson and Scaphandrier introduced viral marketing in 1997, which includes any strategy that encourages people to send a message to others[5]. The name viral marketing was first used by the Netscape newspaper in 1997. Steve Jurvetson introduced viral marketing as any

strategy that encourages people to send a message to others and provides the potential for message growth, presentation, and influence.

Viral marketing is an electronic version of word of mouth that spreads in the context of the Internet [6]. Viral marketing is a marketing technique that seeks to take advantage of social media opportunities to increase exponential awareness of a brand through a viral process similar to what happens in the case of an epidemic. Viral marketing operates over the Internet and can reach a large number of people quickly [7].

If marketing can be likened to war, then viral marketing can be called microbial warfare [8]. Because thoughts are spread quickly and easily, and almost nothing can stop them from spreading, and after crossing borders, they spread all over the world. Suddenly it can be seen that all the people around the world are paying attention and talking about a single issue.

Viral marketing is a type of marketing that is based on spreading the marketing message through people in the community, like a virus. Viral marketing is an Internet-based communication strategy that exploits the contagious nature of information dissemination on the Internet. It should be clear why people talk about product ideas with goals and how to get that conversation going. To do this, five principles of transmission must be applied:

- 1- **Social popularity:** A product, service, a goal with an idea becomes popular in the community when talking about it gives people a sense of importance and knowledge. Interesting and fun facts also become common as long as they have an inherent prominence, a quality that encourages consumers to exchange information.
- 2- **Emotion:** People talk about topics that provoke their emotions, and topics become viral when they provoke our emotions, resulting in people discussing them face to face or in the media.
- 3- **General:** This principle deals with visibility, people who are prone to follow the suggestions and tastes of others do more when the preferences of others are visible. To achieve this principle, three things must be done.
 - Make private to public.
 - Self-explanatory design ideas.
 - Use behavioral abnormalities.
- 4- **Practical value:** People enjoy helping their friends give them the news that they can use. For example, simple tips such as cooking tips and tips often include ways to determine the price.
- 5- **Stories:** In order for the consumer to know their purpose and talk about it, you have to include it in the form of a story. For example, if you find a big auction, you will probably define all your consumer experience when you offer it to your friends. This is because people tend to think in terms of stories.

It will be contagious if your brand makes potential consumers feel important, constantly appearing in their environments, evoking emotions, being fully visible, useful, and telling a good story.

2.1. Types of viral marketing

- **Value virus**

In this case, people share their quality experiences with others. Person A chooses the product and finds it good, so he tells Person B to try it too. Hotmail, Amazon, Yahoo, and Harry Potter books are examples of this. In fact, using this topic does not make a product viral, but allows you to talk about good products with others.

- **A cunning virus**

People try to sell a product by encouraging others for many reasons. Person A tries to persuade Person B to try the product because Person A may be rewarded if person B uses it.

- **Shy virus**

People want to share their experiences with people who need specific products. Person A wants to share the experience of one product with person B, and person B needs another product. Acrobat software and the eBay site are examples of this. In this case, the user must feel that the experience and product is valuable so that in addition to making a change in the person himself, he also has a reason to send it to others.

- **Spiral virus**

People want to share happy or interesting experiences with others, and person A wants to share his experience with person B because he thinks that person B finds it as fun and interesting as himself. It should be noted that mandatory products and goods are not suitable for this category.

- **Unpleasant virus**

People warn others about their negative experiences. Person A tests the product and finds that the product is very bad. He then becomes the liquid person B uses this product.

Dobele et al. (2005) introduced two keys to ensuring success in viral marketing

- A. Viral messages must occupy the recipient's mind.
- B. Viral messages must be cleverly targeted[9].

A viral message must meet the following conditions:

- The message should be entertaining
- Powerful technology for spreading messages through websites with the media
- Candidates support the message and the possibility of searching for it on websites-
- The brand should be visible
- Deliver it at the right time to the maximum number of consumers

Viral marketing offers two insights: First, a world where marketers can find customers at almost zero cost. Second, it suggests that communication change from marketer-consumer to consumer-consumer mode. In fact, most products and ideas are not sold through the marketer to the consumer, but through the customer to the customer. Many people think that viral marketing is born of the Internet, but it is not. Bass used these models to describe the sale of televisions, clothes dryers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and other durable consumer goods.

Small scientific and professional associations that communicate only a few times a year through physical contact at conferences are weak candidates for viral marketing. In contrast, very large consumer groups, including adolescents in school, are strong candidates.

Leskovec et al. Presented a simple stochastic model that, with a fairly complete description of a few products, showed that small but highly correlated groups were far more useful in viral marketing[10].

2.2. Marketing system performance

You share your information and develop your personal and professional connections and benefit from sharing the information that leads to the promotion and sale of the product. Unlike older companies, where one person has a CEO, in viral marketing, each person is their own manager. Viral marketing seeks to innovate by using new tools and methods. The most important factor in the success of this marketing is identifying and meeting customer demand[11].

2.3. Viral marketing transmission methods

Viral marketing can be done in both traditional and modern modes and online space, the virtual mode of which has more effects along with its own benefits due to the easier branching of ads due to the likes and followers sharing[12]. The types of viral, virtual marketing are as follows:

- **Word to web:** Writing information in a web format that returns information to email and sends it to recipients.
- **Word to email:** Sending messages via email such as jokes and pictures, etc.
- **Word of mouth:** word of mouth like rumors and news
- **Word of IM (Instant message):** messages that spread rapidly among Internet users
- **Marketing Using Returns:** Sometimes sites set a reward for their customers' referrals
- **Social bookmarking:** Maintaining a website address in the bookmarks, favorites list of bookmarking sites .Like Reddit. COM and Stumbleupon. COM, people put the links in the websites, then the websites collect these links for people who are interested in each of these links.

- **Social Networks:** Types of content such as images, text, videos, and audio are shared between people on various networks such as chatrooms and other social software.

2.4. Challenges and Benefits of Viral Marketing

There are several factors involved in the use of viral marketing; Which is presented below:

Advantage factors include Financial Resources and Propagation Speed. Viral marketing is an environment and tool in which organizations and companies can grow their business with minimal or no cost. In this type of marketing, in fact, the marketer-consumer relationship becomes the consumer-consumer relationship. The impact of social media plays an important role in business development. Viral marketing cannot be a complete and unique alternative to the entire comprehensive marketing strategy of an organization but can be one of the marketing methods in the work plan of the organization. A general rule of thumb in these methods is that content should encourage people to introduce your company, products, and services to other people. Adequate targeting of the audience must be planned and monitored. The initial release of the viral marketing message and content is crucial. In fact, the initial release of the main message is one of the key indicators of the viral marketing process. There are various methods for the initial dissemination of this content and message, including email, SMS, online forms, social networks, and other available communication tools [13].

Critical factors include a lack of oversight in the dissemination of messages and a lack of ethical standards. Lack of control of viral marketing programs is also considered the biggest technical threat of marketing because organizations do not have the tools to control the spread of messages and concepts, and even the recipients of messages may receive them as spam. There are ethical standards. In this regard, consumers may feel that they have been abused, scammed, and deceived and that their viral messages may be affected. Therefore, we consider that the application and success of viral marketing depend on several factors. Among the above are ethical, humanitarian, security, technical, and technical factors that have been addressed in each of the previous studies.

3. Neurological marketing

The father of Neuromarketing is Professor Al Smiths, who won the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics. This new science is a combination of marketing and neuroscience. Neural marketing is a better understanding of brain function to be used to improve marketing operations and improve sales. In fact, the goal is to better convey marketing messages to others and increase purchases by the audience. Neural marketing is where the sciences of management, neuroscience, psychology, and perhaps some form of art come together to enable companies to sell more product boxes in today's highly competitive market. We are doing a complex mental activity when shopping, an activity that is heavily involved in psychological issues. Many times, people say something they think others expect to hear [14].

In fact, the main problem is that many decision-making processes take place at the subconscious level of the mind, not at the conscious level. It can be said that what customers say about their tastes is not consistent with their purchases. The main purpose of Neuromarketing is to extract invisible information from people's brains. Therefore, in Neuromarketing, people do not ask any questions, but the information is extracted directly. Winning in today's competitive world is very difficult. One of the most important challenges is to pay attention to various aspects of attracting, communicating, and retaining customers. Paying attention to fundamental changes in consumer behavior patterns and shopping preferences, changing the nature of the product, raising customer awareness, and many other factors give us the understanding that competition requires a mindset based on scientific fact.

3.1. A Critique of Neural Marketing

Nervous marketing has raised concerns among consumer advocates who have called this type of marketing brand washing, a combination of branding and brainwashing. Jeff Chester, director of the Center for Digital Democracy in the United States, which aims to protect digital privacy, says neural marketing has effects on people they are unaware of. According to Chester, adults have a defense mechanism that can be used to distinguish real from unreal issues. But if the type of advertisement is designed to bypass this defense mechanism, the old legal methods for controlling the issues mentioned in the advertisements will be questioned [15]. Proponents of the technique, however, say it is a more accurate measure of consumer reaction. Neuroscientists and psychologists say Neuromarketing is not sophisticated enough to arouse critics' concerns. Because the EEG can only determine if a person's brain is involved in a commercial, it cannot determine the

details of his or her involvement. However, foundations are formed for research into companies that use this method to set standards for it.

4. Adaptive approach

After studying viral and neural marketing, we came to the differences and similarities between the two. The message conveyed in viral marketing is consumer-to-consumer. That is, the product itself sells and markets itself. In this case, the seller has no involvement, the ads act like a virus and are spread by word of mouth, but the message in neural marketing is marketing-consumer. That is, the marketer directly tries to understand, decide, and find the customer. In such a way that it first considers people's tastes and then starts advertising and production.

In viral marketing, the most important role is played by human resources, because if people do not publish ads like a virus, there will be no advertising. But in neural marketing, marketers have used devices such as MRI and EEG to understand how the consumer behaves. Due to the high cost of neural marketing tools and the lack of access to all audiences, it is not possible to test the minds of all consumers.

In viral marketing, the company has no control over the spread of the message (whether good or bad), so the company's sales growth is not predictable and there is a possibility of distortion in the content of the message. Because some people feel personal abuse in the transmission of the message and refuse to convey it, or poor quality causes the transmission of negative messages. This will reduce the growth of the chart and even weaken the company's brand. The similarity between the two marketing is trying to sell more and make more profit. Table 1 shows the adaptive approach of these two new marketing methods.

Table 1. An adaptive approach to viral and neural marketing

Viral-marketing	Index	Neural Marketing
Consumer- Consumer	Transferring message	Marketer-Consumer
It starts after the production of goods	Process	It starts before the production of goods and continues until the production of goods.
Manpower	Tools	FMRI, EEG, MRI
Extensive	Reaching the audience	Limited
Cheap	Financial	Cheap but with expensive tools
No charts and unpredictable	Growth	Predictable and planned
Lack of control overreaching the audience, and distortion of content	Control	Controlled, due to the limited number of contacts
Intrusion into the privacy of the customer is considered abuse of the audience	Invasion of privacy	Intrusion into the privacy of the audience is considered a factor to divert the customer's actual purchase
Loss-profit	Brand name	Brandwashing
Reaching the audience in a short time - fast and upward spread	Spread speed	It will take a long time

5. Conclusion

Concerning viral marketing, it can be concluded that its power is manifested in practice, and by using free services, motivating people by using the interests of the community, experiences, providing simple communication, the ideal result can be achieved as soon as possible. But the most important thing is that if the consumer sees something different when he visits a site; The company has not been successful in this and the growing trend through the consumer will be interrupted.

Managers need to recognize what is important to customers in their target market and understand the criteria for comparing their product to a competitor in the selection process. The type of marketing can be examined according to the type of product and the effect it has on the human brain, which advertisement, sales method, which slogan or even the social activity of the manufacturing company are most affected. According to the information obtained, to achieve more growth and sales of the company. Making more profit depends on the art of marketing management, which takes into account all the factors and knows what kind of marketing should be used for its products.

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