

# Consumers’ Attitude towards Viral Marketing- A Study in Erode City

Dr.A.T.Jaganathan<sup>1</sup> Mr. J.Suresh Kumar<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor <sup>2</sup>Research Scholar

<sup>1</sup>Department of Business Administration

<sup>1,2</sup>K.S.R College of arts and science (Autonomous), Tiruchengode, Tamil Nadu, India – 637215

*Abstract*— This study has been carried out vigilantly to analyze the consumers’ attitude towards viral marketing in Erode City. The study has analyzed the Internet usage pattern, factors influencing viral marketing messages, consumers’ preference towards various forms of viral marketing, influence of viral marketing factors on purchase decision and influence of viral messages on attitude towards viral marketing. Various statistical tools, such as One-sample ‘t’ test have been used to analyse the data collected from the respondents. The results of the analysis is given in the form of findings, and based on these findings suitable suggestions and expectations of consumers have been presented in this chapter. It may be suggested to the government that, they must be aware of the misleading information about the product and services available in viral marketing. And, they should concentrate in Cyber laws and it must be enforced in viral marketing campaigns, for reducing malpractices, fraud and misuses.

**Key words:** Viral, Preference, Erode, Consumers, Attitude

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the modern methods for promotion of products and services through the use of interactive technology is called viral marketing. Viral marketing, also known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has become an important marketing trend for communicating products and services. The term viral describes a type of marketing that infects customers with an advertising message which passes from one customer to the next like a rampant flu virus”. In viral marketing people can pass on product information to their social network, which makes it an effective technique for creating brand awareness. Moreover, it is one of the highly

ranked techniques used by consumers not only for gathering information about products but also for making purchase decisions. In viral marketing, interaction with companies and other consumers are conducted via e-mail, instant messaging, homepages, blogs, forums, online communities, newsgroups, chat rooms, hate sites, review sites, and social networking sites. People are normally willing to pass on viral marketing messages to their social networks, which potentially increase message reliability in the eyes of the message recipients. A strong viral promotion can reach thousands of consumers and can inspire them to buy a brand. Viral marketing, the electronic equivalent of word-of-mouth marketing, is one of the most popular and most popular and cost effective marketing technique. It is a term coined to define one of the ways in which a marketing message can be spread in a target market group today, almost all big and small corporate houses are using viral marketing to circulate brand promise that has entered all walks of life. A marketing tactic or advertising strategy that propagates like a virus. The techniques facilitate and encourage people to pass along an advertising message. Also see word-of-mouth advertising.

## II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Factors Influencing Viral Marketing Messages

In this section, consumers’ attitude towards various factors of viral marketing messages such as Informativeness, entertainment and source credibility significantly affect purchase decision. In this regard, One-sample ‘t’ test is applied to identify the consumer attitude and response towards viral marketing messages.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
I find e-mail marketing messages informative.	3.97	.890	.073
Marketing messages displayed on social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Orkut) are informative.	4.23	.734	.060
Fan pages on social networking sites are informative.	4.11	.891	.073
SMS advertisements provide useful information about products and services.	4.15	.831	.068
Internet Blogs are an important source of information.	3.69	1.112	.091

Table 1: One-Sample Statistics for Informativeness

The mean values of five variables of ranges from 3.69 to 4.23 with consistent standard deviation. The standard error mean are also found to be consistent for all the five

variables. Hence, it is concluded that marketing messages displayed on social networking sites possess more informative among the consumers (Table 1).

Variables	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig.	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I find e-mail marketing messages informative.	13.402	149	.000	.973	.83	1.12
Marketing messages displayed on social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Orkut) are informative.	20.466	149	.000	1.227	1.11	1.35
Fan pages on social networking sites are informative.	15.212	149	.000	1.107	.96	1.25
SMS advertisements provide useful information about products and services.	16.910	149	.000	1.147	1.01	1.28
Internet Blogs are an important source of information.	7.562	149	.000	.687	.51	.87

Table 2: One-Sample 't' test for Informativeness

The 't' values of all the variables relating to Informativeness are statistically significant at 5 percent level. It indicates that the consumers are possessed adequate

information through viral marketing. Hence, they believed that e-mail, Internet blogs provides more information about products and services (Table 2).

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
I find marketing messages received via e-mails entertaining.	3.78	1.140	.093
Joining fan pages on social networking sites is entertaining and exciting.	3.74	.930	.076
The element of humor and fun makes SMS advertisements entertaining.	3.97	.983	.080
I find blogs entertaining as people share their views about products and services that makes them interesting and worth reading.	4.20	.769	.063
It makes me feel good to be able spread messages about products/services to my friends on the internet	3.97	.882	.072

Table 3: One-Sample Statistics for Entertainment

The mean values of five variables of consumer attitude towards viral marketing ranges from 3.74 to 4.20 with consistent standard deviation. The standard error mean are also found to be consistent for all the five variables.

Hence, it is concluded that the messages received from e-mails, social networking sites and blogs have been entertained the consumers (Table 3).

Variables	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig.	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I find marketing messages received via e-mails entertaining.	8.378	149	.000	.780	.60	.96
Joining fan pages on social networking sites is entertaining and exciting.	9.746	149	.000	.740	.59	.89
The element of humor and fun makes SMS advertisements entertaining.	12.131	149	.000	.973	.81	1.13
I find blogs entertaining as people share their views about products and services that makes them interesting and worth reading.	19.124	149	.000	1.200	1.08	1.32
It makes me feel good to be able spread messages about products/services to my friends on the internet	13.517	149	.000	.973	.83	1.12

Table 4: One-Sample 't' test for Entertainment

The 't' values of all the variables relating to consumer attitude are statistically significant at 5 percent level. It indicates that the consumers are significantly

influenced by the viral marketing messages. Hence, it is concluded that humorous and fun SMS advertisements are entertaining the consumers (Table 4).

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
I am more inclined to purchase products/services when the messages were passed by people I know	3.84	.990	.081
I have actually purchased a product/service after hearing about it from the internet	3.75	1.291	.105
Through internet word-of-mouth, I learnt more about brands of products/services	4.07	1.176	.096
The internet word-of-mouth helps to strengthen my belief and commitment towards a brand of product/service	3.98	1.178	.096

Table 5: One-Sample Statistics for Purchase Decision

The mean values of four variables of purchase decision ranges from 3.75 to 4.07 with consistent standard deviation. The standard error mean are also found to be

consistent for all the four variables. Hence, it is concluded that the viral marketing message helps to take purchase decision (Table 5).

Variables	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig.	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I am more inclined to purchase products/services when the messages were passed by people I know	10.387	149	.000	.840	.68	1.00
I have actually purchased a product/service after hearing about it from the internet	7.083	149	.000	.747	.54	.95
Through internet word-of-mouth, I learnt more about brands of products/services	11.175	149	.000	1.073	.88	1.26
The internet word-of-mouth helps to strengthen my belief and commitment towards a brand of product/service	10.185	149	.000	.980	.79	1.17

Table 6: One-Sample 't' test for Purchase Decision

The 't' values of all the variables relating to purchase decision are statistically significant at 5 percent level. It indicates that the viral marketing messages help to take purchase decision among the consumers. Hence, they

believed that viral marketing strengthen the belief and commitment towards a brand of product or service among the consumers (Table 6).

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
I trust the information provided by marketers through e-mails.	4.07	1.030	.084
Fan pages on social media sites are trustworthy.	4.04	1.048	.086
It is important for me to hear about the experiences of others before buying a product/service	3.72	.935	.076
I trust more in what people are saying about services than products	3.94	1.082	.088
I trust word-of-mouth communication on the internet	3.97	.999	.082

Table 7: One-Sample Statistics for Source Credibility

The mean values of five variables of source credibility of viral marketing messages range from 3.72 to 4.04 with consistent standard deviation. The standard error mean are also found to be consistent for all the five

variables. Hence, it is concluded that information provided in social media sites are trusted by the consumers (Table - 7).

Variables	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig.	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I trust the information provided by marketers through e-mails.	12.758	149	.000	1.073	.91	1.24
Fan pages on social media sites are trustworthy.	12.150	149	.000	1.040	.87	1.21
Fan pages on social media sites are trustworthy.	12.150	149	.000	1.040	.87	1.21
It is important for me to hear about the experiences of others before buying a product/service	9.432	149	.000	.720	.57	.87
I trust more in what people are saying about services than products	10.639	149	.000	.940	.77	1.11
I trust word-of-mouth communication on the internet	11.846	149	.000	.967	.81	1.13

Table 8: One-Sample 't' test for Source Credibility

The 't' values of all the variables relating to source credibility are statistically significant at 5 percent level. It indicates that the consumers believe the information

provided about product or services in the viral messages (Table 8).

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
I will become part of viral campaigns if they	3.97	1.039	.085

involve incentives.			
I consider viral marketing as a useful marketing tool for creating brand awareness.	4.11	.931	.076
I find viral marketing messages more effective as compared to traditional media marketing messages, like T.V. and print advertisements.	3.85	1.013	.083

Table 9: One-Sample Statistics for Attitude towards Viral Marketing

The mean values of three variables of attitude towards viral marketing ranges from 3.85 to 4.11 with consistent standard deviation. The standard error mean are also found to be consistent for all the three variables. Hence,

it is concluded viral marketing as a useful marketing tool for creating brand awareness and it has vital tool compared with other advertisement medias (Table 8).

Variables	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig.	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I will become part of viral campaigns if they involve incentives.	11.395	149	.000	.967	.80	1.13
I consider viral marketing as a useful marketing tool for creating brand awareness.	14.650	149	.000	1.113	.96	1.26
I find viral marketing messages more effective as compared to traditional media marketing messages, like T.V. and print advertisements.	10.321	149	.000	.853	.69	1.02

Table 10: One-Sample 't' test for Attitude towards Viral Marketing

The 't' values of all the variables relating to purchase intention are statistically significant at 5 percent level. It indicates that the consumers are possessed adequate knowledge on viral marketing. Hence, they conclude that viral marketing messages more effective as compared to traditional media marketing messages, like T.V. and print advertisements (Table 9).

### III. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings arrived at from the foregoing chapters of the study would be summarized hereunder:

#### A. Factors Influencing Viral Marketing Messages

The mean values of five variables of Informativeness reveals that marketing messages displayed on social networking sites possess more informative among the consumers.

The results of 't'-test values indicates that the consumers are possessed adequate information through viral

marketing. Hence, they believed that e-mail, Internet blogs provides more information about products and services.

The mean values of five variables of consumer attitude towards viral marketing divulges that the messages received from e-mails, social networking sites and blogs have been entertained the consumers.

The results of 't'-test values relating to consumer attitude are indicates that the consumers are significantly influenced by the viral marketing messages. Hence, it is concluded that humorous and fun SMS advertisements are entertaining the consumers.

The mean values of four variables of purchase decision reveals that the viral marketing message helps to take purchase decision.

The results of 't' test values indicates that the viral marketing messages helps to take purchase decision among the consumers. Hence, they believed that viral marketing strengthen the belief and commitment towards a brand of product or service among the consumers.

The mean values of five variables of source credibility of viral marketing messages shows that information provided in social media sites are trusted by the consumers.

The results of t' test values relating to source credibility indicates that the consumers believe the information provided about product or services in the viral messages.

The mean values of three variables of attitude towards viral marketing divulges that viral marketing as a useful marketing tool for creating brand awareness and it has vital tool compared with other advertisement medias.

The results of t' test values indicates that the consumers are possessed adequate knowledge on viral marketing. Hence, they conclude that viral marketing messages more effective as compared to traditional media marketing messages, like T.V. and print advertisements.

#### IV. SUGGESTIONS

Viral marketing is an attractive solution because it utilizes the free endorsement of the individual rather than purchase of mass media to spread the word. Internet induced viral marketing can be more effective if the marketer understand the factors that affect the decision and attitude to people. Marketers should utilize viral marketing when the messaging can coincide and support a measurable business goal. The proliferation of marketing and advertising, coupled with the blitz of millions of media channels in today's world, has given cause for consumers to tune out and effectively avoid a great deal of traditional supplier driven messaging Television ads, radio spots, online ads and even emails are facing increasing competition for effectively capturing the viewer's attention and provide positive responses for the marketer.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Present market scenario demands that companies should use the social media techniques to influence the consumer perception for the organization and its offers. This includes the fusion of viral marketing strategies with the ways to get the best interaction and develop an effective relationship with the organization. Social media communications and marketing strategies can change and develop the consumer behavior expectations of the potential consumer base. Consumers now like to share their opinions on corporate brands and products with or without company interaction so it is considered one of the best mean for the companies to communicate and share the message which may result positive influence on consumers and facilitate action and brand awareness by integrated viral marketing strategies. Viral marketing has become an incredible source of marketing and delivering of good returns on strategic plan. Viral marketing would be powerful tool if it is integrated with other marketing communication approaches because it can spread the message faster than any other existing medium.

#### REFERENCE

[1] Angelis, M. Bonezzi, A. Peluso, S Rucker, D. & Costabile M. (2012), on braggarts and Gossips: A self-enhancement account of word of mouth generation and

transmission, *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 49(4), pp.551-563.

- [2] Anshu Grewal and Vikas Chahar (2013), *Viral Marketing Revolutionary Tools for Successful Marketing Campaigns*, *International Journal of Engineering, Management*, Vol. 01(1), pp.21-16.
- [3] Antoine Lamarre1, Simon Galarneau1 and Harold Boeck (2011), *Mobile Marketing and Consumer Behavior Current Research Trend*, *International Journal of Latest Trends*, Vol. 3(1), pp.32-41.
- [4] Ashutosh Nigam (2012), *Influence of Viral Marketing in Websites*, *Journal of Scientific Research*, Vol. 12(1), pp.2231-5268.
- [5] Beneke, J.H. (2010) "The Application of Social Networking as a Marketing Platform to Young Adults: An Emerging Market Perspective" *Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, Vol.4 (4), p.36.
- [6] Bettina Lis, Johannes Gutenberg (2014), *Determinants of Passing on Viral Messages Empirical Analysis of a Viral Marketing Campaign on Facebook* Bettina Lis, *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, Vol.4 (4), p.36.
- [7] Buttle, F.A., (1998), *Word of Mouth: Understanding and Managing Referral Marketing*, *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, Vol. 6(1), pp. 241-254.
- [8] Chaarlas L.J and Rajkumar (2012), *Perception on Viral Marketing among Consumers*, *Journal of Scientific Research*, Vol. 4(3), pp.11-17.