Enhancing Mobile Advertising Effectiveness in Turkey through Peer Influence

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to explain how involvement and peer influence may enhance mobile advertising effectiveness by increasing consumers’ intention to participate in SMS-based mobile marketing campaigns. Both individual and joint effects of these variables on marketing campaign participation intentions of Turkish consumers are analyzed. Findings indicate that involvement is not necessarily a strong predictor of campaign participation intentions in the context of mobile marketing. Peer influence, on the other hand, was shown to have a significant effect on intention to participate in an m-marketing campaign, as well as being a moderator of the relationship between involvement and campaign participation intention. A unique contribution of this study is the linking of involvement and peer influence in a unified framework to demonstrate how these two variables can jointly be used to increase m-marketing campaign participation numbers.

Keywords: Involvement, Mobile Advertising, Mobile Marketing, Peer Influence, Referral

INTRODUCTION

High penetration of mobile phones and increased usage of the mobile medium by marketers has led researchers and practitioners to investigate how to enhance the effectiveness of this channel as a means to communicate with consumers. The definition of mobile marketing spans all methods of one-way or two-way communication of marketing messages to and from consumers via mobile devices (Barnes, 2002; Godin, 1999; Scharl et al., 2005; Truong & Simmons, 2010; Tsang, Ho & Liang, 2004; Zoller, House & Matthews, 2001). While many forms of mobile advertisements exist, the oldest and still most widely used form of m-marketing is SMS (Short Message Service) messages (Chen & Hsieh, 2012). Barwise and Strong (2002) describe SMS-based mobile marketing as text-based advertising on consumers’ cellular phones. The popularity of SMS-based mobile advertising stems from the fact that SMS messaging has a high usage penetration among consumers, it is compatible with all mobile phones available in the market, it is simple to send and receive, and it is relatively inexpensive for the advertisers as a marketing tool. In addition, it also allows for personalization and interactivity (Liu et al.,

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While it is possible to use SMS advertisements to merely push marketing messages to targeted consumers, interactive campaigns can also be designed to enable communication among marketers and consumers. Participants of the marketing campaign may be asked to answer survey questions, participate in quizzes or contests, or voice their opinions on specific questions asked by the marketer. SMS based marketing campaigns may also allow consumers to interact with each other through simple games or competitions in which participants ask each other questions or send each other messages.

The term “effectiveness” in the context of mobile marketing stands for the success of a push message in stimulating the desired response from its recipients (Varnali, Yilmaz & Toker, 2012). This desired response depends on the goal of the marketer and could range from responding to the push message, passing the message along to someone else, or visiting a location such as a store to immediately purchasing a product or service. Despite all of its advantages, recent studies suggest that SMS-based mobile advertisements may not always be effective in stimulating the desired response from their recipients (e.g. Varnali & Toker, 2010; Varnali, Yilmaz & Toker, 2012). Some studies have also found that SMS-based m-marketing may be losing its effectiveness in terms of consumers’ response rates to marketing messages (e.g. Gauzente, 2010; Truong & Simmons, 2010). In order to utilize SMS-based mobile marketing at its full potential as a powerful marketing tool, it is important to understand what factors contribute to mobile advertising effectiveness, and how their impact can be maximized in order to ensure the success of the relevant marketing campaign.

Relevance of the advertisement (or the involvement of the recipient with the marketing message) was found to be a major driver of mobile marketing campaign participation in many studies (e.g. Choi et al., 2008; Haghirian & Inoue, 2007; Okazaki, 2004; Varnali, 2010; Wang et al., 2006). Despite this fact, the AdReaction 2012 report stated that Turkish consumers’ attitudes towards m-marketing were more negative than previous years regardless of their degree of involvement with the context of the advertisement. This implied the necessity of identifying variables that could influence the effect of involvement on mobile marketing effectiveness.

When personalization and interactivity are the strengths of a marketing channel, its potential for viral marketing should also be inquired. Viral marketing is the use of existing social networks by marketers who aim to encourage customers to share product information with their friends (Lescovec, Adamic & Huberman, 2007). Although the promising potential of using the mobile medium in viral marketing campaigns was mentioned on several accounts (e.g. Barnes, 2002; de Kerckhove, 2002), our literature review revealed that the effect of peer influence on other determinants of mobile marketing success was a highly overlooked topic in m-marketing research. In fact,
A Scale for Measuring Internet Banking Service Quality: Literature Review and Validation with Indian Public Sector Banks
www.igi-global.com/article/a-scale-for-measuring-internet-banking-service-quality/118111?camid=4v1a