

Viral Marketing – A Perception Study on the Higher Education Students in West Bengal

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Abstract:

With the rapid transformation in the world of advertising and marketing, Digital Marketing has proved to be one of the most widely used and successful media or channel to spread product or service related information among the target audience. Viral marketing can be said to be a byproduct of the use of digital media for advertising, where the audience and viewers of an advertisement share the ad-content over the digital media and help its' spreading over the web space at an exponential speed at minimal or zero cost. Viral Marketing aims at spreading marketing messages using help of internet and internet based services like social networking sites, e-mails, online video sites, chatrooms etc. Viral marketing is also known by terms like Network enhanced word of mouth marketing, Stealth Marketing, electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), etc. This study, with the help of a questionnaire survey aims at finding out the factors which influence on awareness of the concept of viral marketing and the inclination of the respondents towards viral marketing in the selected study area. Use of Secondary data and collection of Primary data through questionnaires from 230 valid respondents. Analysis has been done with Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) in SPSS 17.0. The research has identified three exploratory factors which have statistical influence on awareness of the concept of Viral marketing and the inclination of the respondents towards Viral Marketing.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In an era of progressive change in all the components of marketing, we are evidencing a sea change taking place in the world of advertising too. A huge amount of advertising is taking place over the digital media. Digital platforms like the Social Networking sites, Mails, Blogs, Chat-rooms etc are being used to advertise the products and services of several organizations. This advertising over the digital platforms using the internet is known as Digital Advertising or Online Advertising.

Viral marketing can be considered to be a more recent event, where people seeing advertisements over the digital platforms tend to share those messages further, creating a multiplier effect on the spreading of the advertisement.

Several studies have been conducted worldwide to understand the reasons behind sharing the messages, platforms through which viral marketing can be conducted, the positives and negatives of viral marketing etc.