

VIRAL MARKETING AND ITS EFFECTS ON CONSUMERS' BUYING PROCESS

Mamica Nene¹, Ledina Alloli²

¹University "Fan S. Noli" Korca Albania

²University "Fan S. Noli" Korca Albania

Abstract

The Internet and mobile telecommunications are fast wide spread all over the world. Given such conditions, the online advertising methods are increasingly used by all companies in promoting their products and services. Viral marketing is a much diffused method where the promotional message goes from one customer to another, like a virus. What this paper aims to show is the tendency of using Internet and the social networks and how does the information provided from these networks affect people. It is important to understand what is the attitude of customers towards these networks and especially the viral marketing. Initially we will give a general overview of the viral marketing concept and then continue with the implications of the viral marketing theory and the elements of the viral marketing strategy. We continue with the literature review in the second part of the paper, - referring the works of several authors from the field – to explain further the term “viral” and its use today, as being a very popular promoting means. The practical stage of the study takes an important place. Arranging a questionnaire with 4 sections and the interviews with 100 individuals were an opportunity for collecting primary data, and understand what was their perception of viral marketing. The individuals in general face different messages on social media, which not only inform, but entertain as well, considering as well the fact when the messages are irritating. The practical study identifies the respondents' opinions, how much viral marketing is affecting their buying decisions in raising their brand awareness and positive purchase actions. Statistical data processing and formulation of some hypotheses were performed through SPSS 21 program. There will be introduced some conclusions and recommendations in the last part of the paper, by showing what viral marketing can do in order to influence the customers in increasing their positive attitude towards the company' products and services and how can companies take advantage of advertising on social media as compared to the traditional advertising forms.

Keywords: *viral effect, process.*