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The Increasing Importance of Mobile Marketing in the Light of the Improvement of Mobile Phones, Confronted Problems Encountered in Practice, Solution Offers and Expectations

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Abstract

Improvements in information and communication technologies introduce important marketing opportunities for companies. One of the last technological improvements affecting the marketing activities of the companies is mobile phones being used as a channel of marketing communication. In the process of the promotion of the goods, services and ideas, this situation has increased the importance of 'Mobile Marketing' which can be identified as establishing the marketing communication with the target clients through mobile phones and sending promotion oriented messages. This study will firstly touch upon the improvements in mobile communication technologies briefly. Thereafter, the increasing use of mobile phone and the growing importance of mobile marketing due to its advancing features will be revealed along with its benefits, and solutions will be offered by means of discussing the problems confronted. Finally, future oriented expectations will also be included.

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1. Introduction

Information society, which influences social, economic, scientific and political thought processes as well as life styles, is considered to be revolutionary due to the fact that it not only modifies the production methods but also all aspects of life (Kumar 2005: 40). Information society is essentially a phenomenon that has been created as a result

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of the utilization of information technologies as a means in the transformation of social structure into a network society (Castells, 2005:3-6). The reflection of this phenomenon on economic life has been the formation of networks covering the entire population of stakeholders of the enterprises involved. Consequently, enterprises, by taking advantage of the data transmission speed and volume of information technologies, have had the opportunity to increase their productivity, market share, market value and profitability (Castells and Himanen, 2002:2-3).

As consumer focused marketing understanding developed, the close observation of customers and keeping communication channels open with customers at all times to ensure customer satisfaction and earn their loyalty have become one of the requirements of utmost importance in ensuring competitive strength as an extension of information society dynamics. As such, the classic marketing paradigms have gone through transformation as they evolved into new paradigms shaped with the understanding of compliance with customer requirements. These paradigms, combined with the developing Internet technologies and electronic (cyber) marketing tools, have had a fast impact on the marketing processes of enterprises giving rise to varied types of marketing approaches and applications (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2003: 631; Solomon & Stuart, 2003: 17-18; Bateman & Snell, 2004: 6-7; Kotler & Keller, 2012: 565-566).

In general one of the most important marketing approaches, which has emerged from this transformation and change, is Internet supported “direct marketing”. The developments witnessed in Internet technologies led the way in developing the means to reach target audiences without being a slave to the restrictions, where time and place are concerned. “mobile marketing” is currently one of such means used most heavily.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Mobile Communication Technologies, Mobile Phone and Its Significance

The developments in mobile communication technologies are considered to be a mobile revolution by some. This revolution has started with the wireless telegram in the 1890s moved onto stationary telephone systems from 1910 to 1980, analog mobile systems in the 1980s and the digital mobile systems starting from the 1990s. In the 2000s on the other hand, multimedia systems that were developed, helped more effective and comprehensive provision of mobile services (Steinbock, 2005: 2).

Mobile phones, which are made available for the use of people as well as enterprises as a fruit of the many studies conducted in the field of communication technologies, are a means of communication that people use when they are on the go and need to communicate with others. In the development process of mobile phones, the objective was to ensure freedom of communication for people independent of the location they are presently at and as such the first mobile phone call was placed on April 3, 1973 in the United States of America in New York by Martin Cooper. The innovation of the mobile phone facilitated communication between people and removed any time and place constraints imposed by stationary phones (Cooper, History of Cell Phone).

Mobile communication technologies offer many services that improve the quality of life for people: to give an example, SMS referred to as texting (Short Message Service) and the transfer of documented information that is MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) gave rise to the age of information exchange supported by audio, visual and imagery means. These developments rendered the mobile phones, means of mobile entertainment, a new channel of marketing for manufacturers and retailers, a means of multimedia shopping as well as Internet connection, reservation handling, ticket purchasing and marketing of goods and services.

On the other hand, one of the subjects that the marketing department personnel most place emphasis on within the scope of promotional activities is to be able to contact the potential customers without any time and place constraints. At this point the fact that the mobile phones are able to meet this requirement much more effectively than other means, though in a limited context, lent even more significance to the emphasis placed on these instruments. Accordingly, it can be said that the technological development that has the highest potential in effecting

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