

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

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NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

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CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS SMS MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

The expansion of Global Market, as well as advance and convergence of new technologies has created new advertising opportunities for markets. Together with this technological advance, a shift towards advertising philosophies supporting one to one marketing and interactivity, and the increase of mobile penetration, have facilitated emergence of direct marketing channel. SMS and MMS are widely used marketing tools. This study investigates the effectiveness of these tools we proposed that demographic relevance to advertisement brand familiarity and attributes towards SMS and MMS have significant effects on the consumers response towards these tools.

KEYWORDS

consumer perceptions, SMS marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Innovation creates marketing opportunities and challenges. Mobile advertising, an area of mobile marketing is a form of advertising that targets users of handheld wireless devices such as mobile phones. It can reach the target customers anywhere any time. In order to promote the selling of products or services, all the activities required to communicate with the Customers are transferred through mobile devices. Combining with the customer's user profile and context situation, advertising companies can provide the target customers exactly the information needed by them. The current study attempts to study consumer's responsiveness to mobile marketing, in terms of its impact on purchasing decision. The primary objective is to gain insight into the perception of mobile users, towards mobile marketing/advertisements and their utility value in terms of impact on purchasing decision.

The perception of consumers towards mobile marketing can be broadly categorized into three factors;

- Lack of contextualization and personalization of mobile advertisements.
- Disruptive nature of mobile advertisements.
- Perceived usefulness of advertisements.

Technology developments have created new marketing communication channels or media such as e-mail, SMS (short message Service) and MMS (Multimedia messaging service). These digital media are considered to potentially improve the possibilities to reach customers by allowing personalization there is potential downside to the development of new digital channels. The basic question here is thus whether there are obstacles for the marketer to use mobile media to its potential. Are customers more reluctant to receive marketing information through mobile media than through traditional media?

Mobile marketing, which is an area of mobile Commerce, is a form of advertising that targets users of handled wireless devices such as mobile phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs). In comparison to with traditional advertising, the main advantage of mobile marketing is that it can reach the customers anywhere. In order to promote the selling of products and services, all the activities required to communicate with the customers are transferred through mobile devices.

The devices on which these value added services are pushed onto or downloaded to operate in an environment that imposes constraints such as wireless environments are unreliable and bandwidth is low, and the very mobility of devices increases the risk that a connection will be lost or degraded. More importantly, mobile services must work within the daunting constraints of the devices themselves, which include memory, processing power, input capabilities, and size of display. It is therefore important that mobile marketing take into account the user's context, optimize sources usage and minimize input effort imposed on the user.

Mobile India, for example, transcend traditional communication and support one to one many-to-many and mass communication. Phones and personal digital assistants increase the availability, frequency and speed of communication. Yet the technology associated with these devices which let marketers personally communicate with consumers, continuous to evolve. The most popular mobile application, referred to as text messaging or Short message Service. The high diffusion of SMS facilitates analyzing usage behavior and hints at the commercial potential of future communication services. Multimedia Messaging Services (MMS) will build on the success of SMS but allow for richer content based on similar asynchronous, digital and interactive communication. Interactive mobile services such as SMS and MMS suggest drawing upon theories in marketing, consumer behavior, psychology and adoption to investigate their organizational and personal use. The increased number of media has led to a harder competition for consumer's attention. Attention and time has increasingly become scarce resources for the consumers in the information age. Information age empowers consumers and creates immediate 24 hour access, which changes consumer's behavior. Many consumers have attitudes; aspirations and purchasing patterns that are different compared to what companies have been used to. Today's consumers are claimed to be independent, individualistic, involved and informed which makes it harder than ever to conduct interruption based communication.

In traditional marketing communication planning has focused on the marketer's objectives of reaching relevant consumers. A key issue is the responsiveness of the consumer to marketing communication. Responsiveness depicts the consumer's willingness to receive and respond to marketing communication and can be viewed as a function of the content and the context of the message. Any channel can and should be evaluated to consumer responsiveness in order to understand communication effects and effectiveness.

New media in the digital Economy have created potentially powerful tools for direct and interactive marketing. Traditional marketing communication strategies have been based on the interruption logic where the consumer is forced to momentarily pay attention. Permission marketing was introduced as a managerial approach in marketing communication. Permission from the consumer would resolve the difficulties to get access to consumer. Permission is, however, not necessarily a guarantee that the consumer pays attention. It is only a door opener and gives an indication of the consumer's potential interest areas.

Customers are looking for customization of mobile marketing messages as per the individual requirements, tastes and preferences and parameters of its instructor and operate without intervention of the user at a specific problem definition. Agents can be used by both customers as well as mobile marketing firms. Mobile marketing firms can deploy these agents to customize products as well as advertisements. In the age of mass customization and one-to-one marketing, individualizing the marketing communications is even more strongly in the focus of the strategic conclusions of the firms. Software agents represent a marketing tool par excellence for this individualization. Mobile users can use agents in order to execute complex search and filter functions. A software agent indicates the following features;

By successfully deploying intelligent software agents, the marketing firms can incorporate the following attributes in their mobile marketing communications.

Personalization: Marketers can personalize text messages based on consumer's local time, location, and preferences.

Time: less intrusive than phone calls, recipients can read text messages at their leisure and choose when to respond, if at all. Still, Organizations must consider the best time and message frequency for the target group. Targeting students, messages should not be sent before noon, because at this time students can either not be reached efficiently nor might get into trouble receiving messages during their classes.

Location: Mobile phones amplify two key arguments for electronic commerce, location independence and ubiquity. Consumers increasingly expect tailored and location-based services, thereby underlining the importance of personalized mobile marketing. Properly applied, location based services can create or reinforce virtual communities.

Preferences: personalizing messages increases their impact. Similar media a personalized SMS campaign relies upon databases with enough active and potential clients to reach the target group profitably. Such data bases regularly contain personal information such as leisure activities, holidays, and music and media interests, type of internet access, occupation, marital status, car ownership and income.

Consumer control, permission and privacy: There is a trade off between personalization and consumer control. Gathering data for tailoring messages raises privacy concerns. Corporate policies must consider legalities such as electronic signatures, electronic contracts and conditions for sending SMS messages. According to all the experts, advertisers should have permission and convince consumers to opt in before sending advertisements. A simple registration ensures sending relevant messages to an interested audience. Unsolicited messages, commonly known as spam, stifle user acceptance-particularly as mobile phones cannot distinguish between spam and genuine communication automatically. UN wanted messages are illegal in some countries and annoy consumers regardless of the medium (fax, telephone, electronic mail or mobile devices). Spam may work as the shortest negative influence on consumer attitudes towards SMS advertising.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The mobile advertising is another complementary marketing communications instrument, much of the theorising about why consumers accept or do not accept SMS advertising is speculative. SMS location-based services are likely to become increasingly valued as a marketing tool (Ververidis and Polyzos, 2002). Via the mobile channel, the response can be nearly immediate, interactive and the consumer can be reached everywhere at anytime because the service is typically ubiquitous (Jelassi and Enders, 2004).

Dickinger et al.'s (2005) model of success factors for SMS marketing are divided into two categories: the message and the media. Message factors include: message content, Krishnamurthy (2001) found that the factors affecting consumer willingness to give permission to receive advertisement were: message relevance (e.g. message fit and advertiser attractiveness), and special offers; personalisation according to time (i.e. time of day and frequency of advertisements), location (including real-time location-specific offers) and consumers' preferences; and consumer control, permission and privacy, which has been identified as the strongest negative influence on consumer attitudes toward SMS advertising.

Moreover, Akaah et al. (1995) found that the factors that influence attitude toward direct marketing most are the volume of advertisements and past direct experience. Media factors include issues regarding the device, transmission, product fit (the media appears to better suit low budget items, young people and services rather than goods), and media cost (which suggests that the medium is cheaper and more effective than other alternatives).

Xu et al. (2003) identified three consistent success indicators for SMS messaging: (1) the cost-effectiveness and interoperability of the wireless infrastructure; (2) the high penetration of mobile phones (ubiquitous penetration levels of over 80% in some countries); and (3) the relatively low cost of the SMS messaging service. Also, some research believe meaningfully interprets that cost of SMS does matter to consumptions (Joost Wouters and Martin Wetzels, 2006).

For the case of demographic, some research believe that age, mobile phone users 16 to 45 years old are receptive to experience SMS marketing (Pastore 2002), and gender, females have more likely to respond SMS ads (Trappey, Randolph J.; Woodside, Arch G., 2005), play the critical role of response to SMS ads. In addition, there are 6 external factors; simplicity of input method or input language, economic development which substitute for less developed information structure, cultural difference, marketing competition which substitute for pricier voice service in a noncompetitive market, business model which enhance information richness and benefit from positive feedback in value web, and political censorship (Xu Yan, Min Gong; James Y.L. Thong, 2006). However, most of the people still have the negative attitude toward SMS ads (Fatim Bamba, Stuart J. Barnes 2007).

Besides advertisings, SMS can be the powerful tool for do a survey because it collects information quickly, as the average speed of response (3.3 days) is better than for other survey modes (Balabanis, George; Mitchell, Vincent-Wayne; Heinonen-Mavrovouniotis, Sarah, 2007). This paper focuses on examining the factors that influence Thai consumers' intentions to accepting SMS advertising.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the study are as per following:

- Understand the mobile marketing sector in India
- Checkout the awareness of the mobile marketing on the youngsters of Chirala town
- Know the preferences of subscribers towards mobile marketing
- Probe the reliability of mobile marketing and its possible impact.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

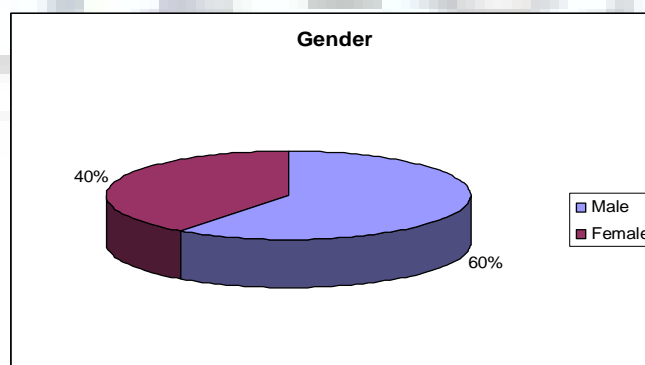
Methodology is the key to finding answers to the question that initiates the research and therefore comprises a very important part of any study. The research methodology that is chosen has to enhance the reliability and generalization of the results. It should furthermore be cost effective, efficient and versatile. This balance can only be obtained by using the appropriate methodology for gathering data.

As previous research on strengthening of CRM practices by the Indian mobile service providers through customer loyalty are limited, the current study can be defined as an early attempt with the aim to develop the body of knowledge regarding the existing phenomenon.

We prepared a structured questionnaire to collect the data. The data collected from students who are studying in engineering colleges at Chirala. We use simple perce.

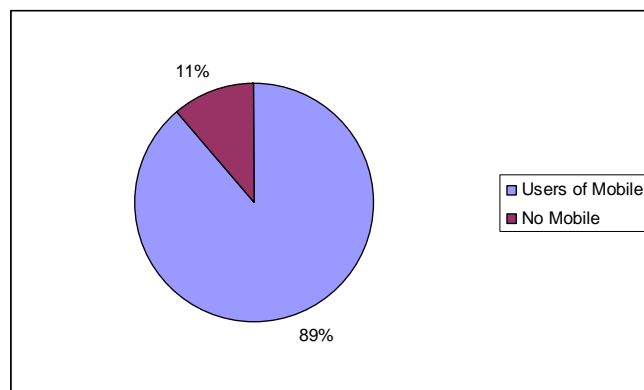
DATA ANALYSIS

1. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE GENDER OF MOBILE USERS



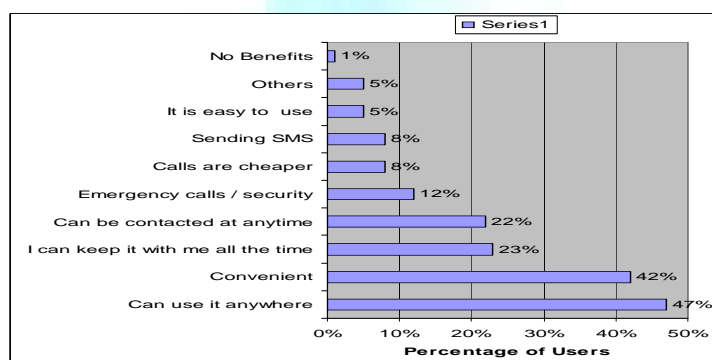
It can be inferred that 60% of the mobile users belongs to male and 40% belongs to female.

2. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE USERS OF MOBILE PHONES



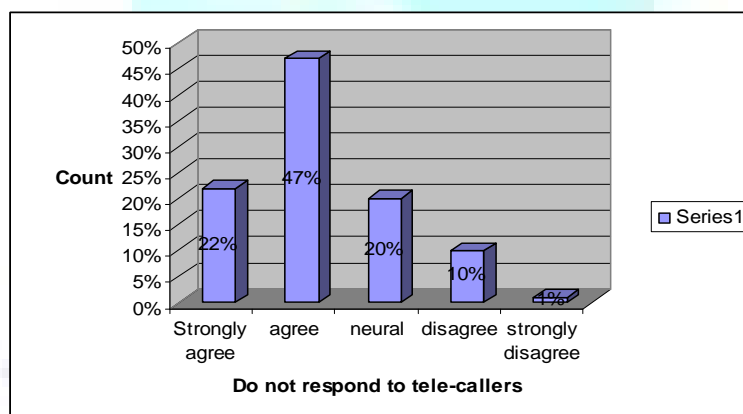
This diagram indicates that 89% of the users have mobile phones and 11% of the users do not use Mobile phones.

3. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE BENEFITS OF MOBILE PHONES



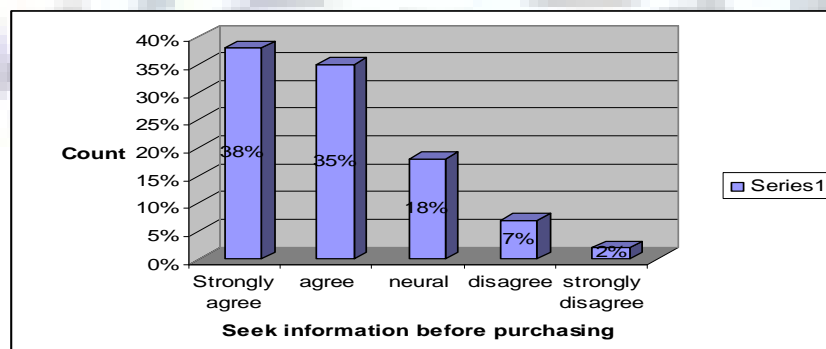
This diagram shows that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that mobile can be used anywhere and different users are using for varied purposes. Very negligible percentage of users says that they are no benefits of Mobile phones.

4. DIAGRAM SHOWING RESPONSE TO TELE-CALLERS



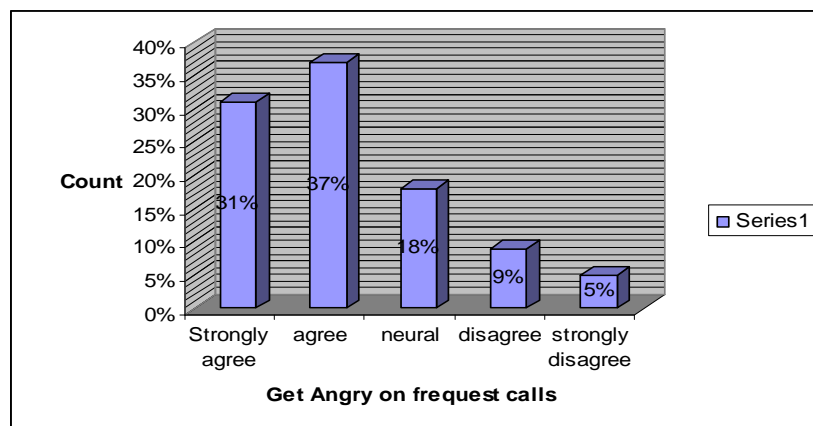
Here it can be analyzed that majority is with the option of agree and majority of people are strongly agree and most of them do not like to respond to tele-callers at all.

5. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PRELIMINARY INFORMATION BEFORE PURCHASING.



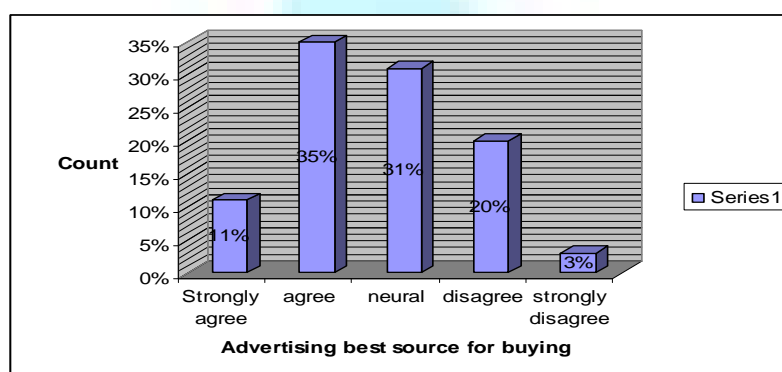
Here it can be analyzed that majority are strongly agree with this statement that they seek full information before purchasing.

6. DIAGRAM SHOWING BEHAVIOR ON FREQUENT CALLS



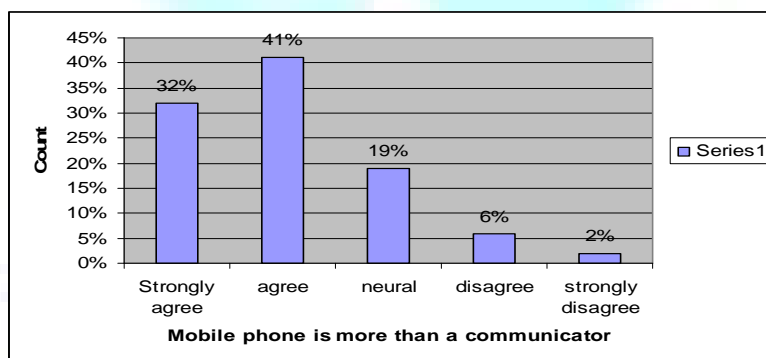
Here it can be analyzed that majority is with the option of agree and majority of people are strongly agree and most of them do not like callers call them on frequent basis and ask them for the feed back or something as reminder for the purchasing.

7. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE BEST SOURCE OF BUYING THROUGH ADVERTISEMENTS



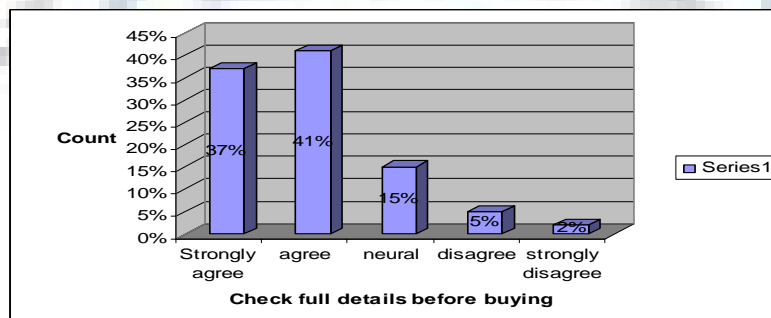
Here it can be analyzed that majority of people are agree and neutral so by cross checking of question 1 and question 5 are almost same respond. So it is clear that are truly aware about the filling questionnaire.

8. DIAGRAM SHOWING MOBILE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF COMMUNICATION



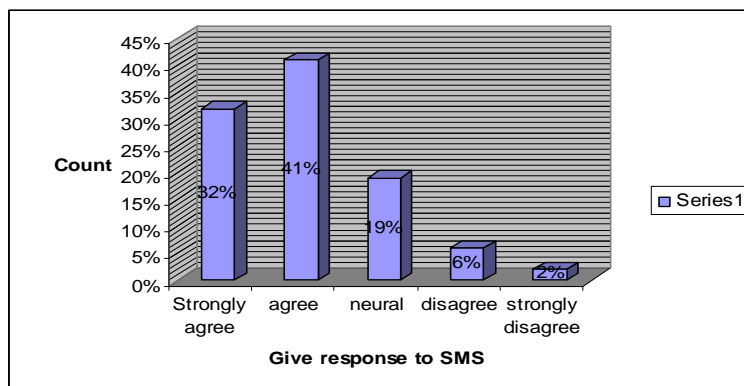
Majority are fully agreed with the statement because they think that mobile phone can be use for entertaining perspective and today most of the teenagers use mobile for that perspective only as camera facilities are also available.

9. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RESPONDENTS AWARENESS BEFORE PURCHASE DECISION



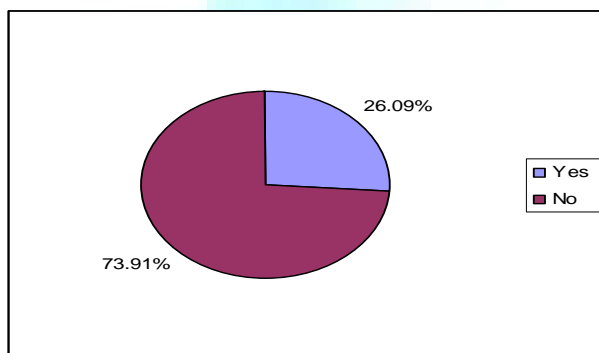
Here this statement is asked for the verification if the people are giving true respond or not. It also crosses checks with the 3 question. So it can be said that majority of people have given true respond. As the ratio is almost same for both the statements.

10. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RESPONSE TO SMS

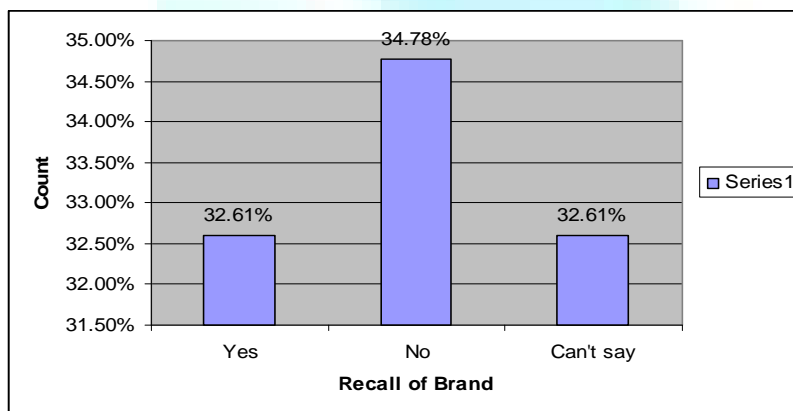


Here it can be analyzed that people like to delete the SMS or rarely read it on the immediate basis. They read the SMS only when they get time, only students give immediate response to SMS.

11. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE USAGE OF 3G ENABLED MOBILE PHONE?



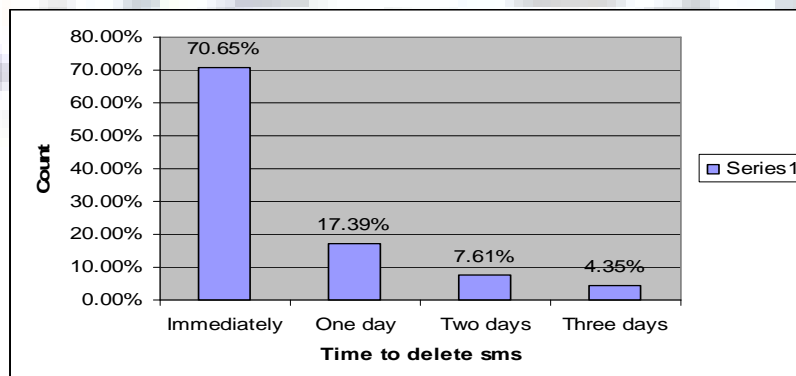
12. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RECALL OF THE BRAND THROUGH SMS



	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Recall increase	92	1	3	2	0.812
Valid N (list wise)	92				

Here it can be analyzed that consumers are not that much aware whether recall of brand is there or not, here the mean is 2.0000 that suggests brand recall may not increase mobile marketing.

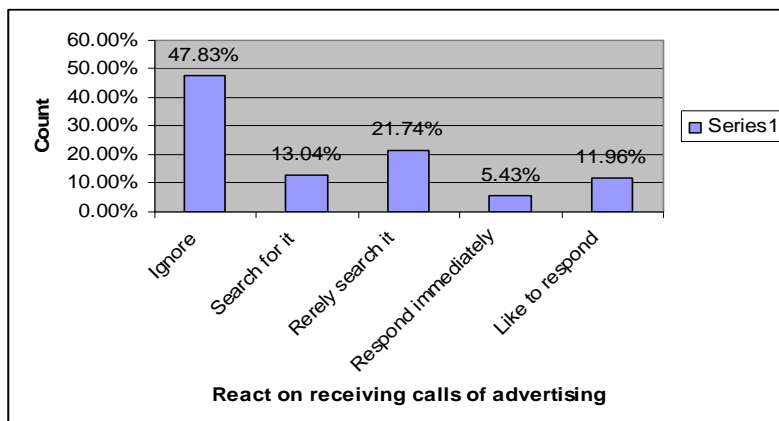
13. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE TIME TO DELETE THE SMS?



	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Time to delete sms	92	1	4	1.4565	0.81757
Valid N (list wise)	92				

Here it can be analyzed that consumers like to ignore such sms and do not prefer to store it in mobile.

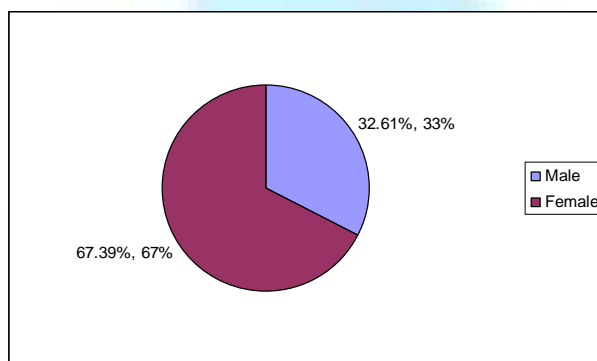
14. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE REACTION OF RESPONDENTS FOR MOBILE ADVERTISING THROUGH CALLS



	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mobile advertising through calls	92	1	5	2.2065	1.40281
Valid N (list wise)	92				

It has been observed that consumers ignore tele-callers for the reason, that the mean is 2.2065 and many people do not like to respond to tele-callers.

15. DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RESPONSE OF RESPONDENTS REGARDING CUSTOMER CARE EXECUTIVE CALLS?



It can be inferred that customers prefer to attend the calls given by the female executives when compared to male executives.

OVER ALL FINDINGS

- Those customers who like to respond mobile advertising are mainly for reaching schemes and other value added services. Many of them do not like to get calls/sms from various commercial establishments.
- Many people like to respond to advertisements and also like to purchase by analyzing the features and schemes that are provided so when the service is customized it becomes more useful to customers.
- Customers not merely depend on Sms because they think that there is always some conditions apply and it may not be disclosed properly.
- Many respondents are not using 3G enabled mobile phone because the service is not fully operational in Andhra Pradesh. So it takes time to utilize this service by the customers.
- Customers like to read SMS but they rarely go through it for mobile marketing because generally they feel it is more costly and Indian consumers get satisfaction when they personally visit the shop and decide to take purchase decision.
- Recall of brand does not increase but some times it creates negative impression if mobile marketing is done frequently.
- Customer's awareness is growing and they wish to purchase only when they make comparative analysis about product, service, price and value added services.
- Finally Indian per capita income is increasing and consequently purchasing power is also equally increasing.
- Even though Number portability is allowed some service provides are creating hurdles to customers.
- Degree of education has more chance to respond to SMS advertisements.
- Teenagers are likely to respond SMS because this age is in the period of liking to learn new thing so they are interested in new technology
- Since, mobile phones are personal objects marketers can specifically address the person targeted, as well as recognizing their social context, individual preferences, time and location.
- In a country like India women are having more time and at homes. In case of being at home, most of them are not in hurry and also have much time to open and read sms advertisements than males most work at offices establishments etc., Hence it can be construed that women are more likely to respond to sms than males.
- Some one has a mobile phone but they have never known how to open the sent message. Then it will be wasted.
- Mobile is actually an interesting marketing tool which can reach target customers.
- On the other hand, it may disturb the customers which results in more negative perception about the products and the business.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Gender

Male Female

2. Are you using Mobile phones

Yes No

3. Benefits of Mobile phones

Can use it anywhere Convenient I can keep it with me all the time Can be contacted anytime Emergency calls/ security Sending SMS
Calls are cheaper Easy to use others No benefits

4. Usage of phones in rural areas

Mobile Landline

No.	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	Decide to purchase on the bases of Advertisements					
6	I do not respond to tele-callers					
7	I always seek detailed information before purchasing any product					
8	I get angry if caller calls frequently					
9	Advertisement is the best source to purchase any product					
10	Mobile is more than just a means of communication					
11	I check full details before buying any new product					
12	I always give response to SMS					

13. Do you have 3G enabled Mobile phone

Yes No

14. How do you currently react on receiving Mobile advertisements through SMS

Delete it with out even looking at content Read but rarely click or buy any follow-ups Read and follow most of the times

15. How do you Recall of the brand in case of getting SMS on Mobile

Yes No Can't Say

16. In how much time you delete the SMS

Immediately 1day 2days 3days

17. How do you currently react to receive calls on Mobile for advertising?

Ignore it immediately Search for it rarely search for it respond immediately Likely to respond

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