



## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

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**WORD OF MOUTH (WOM): THE UNNOTICED TOOL FOR STRENGTHENING THE ADOPTION OF BRAND****MUJAHID MOHIUDDIN BABU****LECTURER****INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION****UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA****BANGLADESH****MUHAMMAD Z MAMUN****PROFESSOR****INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION****UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA****BANGLADESH****ABSTRACT**

*For influencing a customer to choose a brand the traditional communication tools of company can hardly play any significant role as before. Presently a potential customer relies more on what other people opine regarding the brand. Thus the adoption of any brand is greatly influenced by mass people's opinion. The trial and adoption of the brand for a long period is also the unnoticed outcome of the power of referral. Positive WoM gives the potential customer the confidence to finalize the adoption decision. This study has been conducted to explore the hidden strength of WoM in the adoption of a brand.*

**KEYWORDS**

Word of Mouth, Promotional tools, Brand.

**INTRODUCTION**

The brand adoption process of any product or brand by a consumer is a very complicated process. Before adopting any brand the consumer seeks a great deal of sources to know about the brand depending on the nature of the product. Through personal and non-personal sources the potential consumer becomes aware of the brand. But the conviction about the brand is developed on the authenticity and validity of the information collected about the brand. Amongst all the formal and informal sources of company information we rate the spontaneous opinion of the mass people most, officially known as Word of Mouth (WoM). Word of mouth is a pre-existing phenomenon that marketers are only now learning how to harness, amplify, and improve.

Consumers' psychology is immensely influenced by the views, opinions of other people whether user or nonuser. Word of mouth marketing is about direct communication among individuals regarding some product, service, event, brand, etc. Generally, at least one of the individuals will have had some experience with the product or service. Often, but not always, the person who is doing the communicating will have some relationship - or at least something in common - with those with whom she or he is communicating. Word of mouth marketing isn't about creating word of mouth - it's learning how to make it work within a marketing objective. Word of mouth can be encouraged and facilitated. Companies can work hard to make people happier, they can listen to consumers, they can make it easier for them to tell their friends, and they can make certain that influential individuals know about the good qualities of a product or service.

People now cannot trust fully about the information emitting from the professional sources. They want a reliable source which is the word emitting from mass people. Word of mouth marketing empowers people to share their experiences. It's harnessing the voice of the customer for the good of the brand. Thus it is strengthening the position of the brand in the consumers' mind. And it's acknowledging that the unsatisfied customer is equally powerful. Different studies conducted around the world by the professional marketers and scholars like BIG Research (2006) - a research firm and Carl (2005) have showed amazing result on the efficacy of WoM which is presented throughout this study to cement the readers' concept about WoM's strength.

**OBJECTIVE**

The primary objective of this study is to explore the effectiveness of Word of Mouth as a strong marketing communication tool in brand positioning. More specifically the following issues were endeavored to explore in the study.

- Dependency of brand preference by a prospect on Word of Mouth.
- Influence of attitude of others on perceived satisfaction.
- Continued brand loyalty for positive WoM.
- Varied influence of WoM due to the nature of marketing offer.
- Possible recommendation of a positively mass accepted brand to others.

**METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The study has initially focused on qualitative research to conceptualize the issues of WoM and brand building & positioning. The exploration of secondary data and qualitative study has produced a few hypotheses which were later tested through survey method under quantitative research. To conduct the study, primary data were collected through structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was designed to collect information to identify the effectiveness of WoM for positioning a brand.

In this study, to evaluate how the opinion, views, suggestions emitting from mass people affecting the positioning of any brand in Bangladesh, an interval scale using the technique of five point Likert type scale was used anchored at the numeral 1 with the verbal statement 'strongly disagree' and at the numeral 5 with the verbal statement 'strongly agree' (Elbeck, 1987; Steiber, 1989). Multiple items were used to establish appropriate measurement properties (reliability and validity) of the selected constructs. The scale was reliable as the Cronbach's alpha was evidenced as 0.706. The questionnaire was pretested several times to ensure that the wording, format, length, and sequencing of questions were appropriate. Simple Random Sampling technique (Zikmund, 2004) was used to determine the elements of the sample.

A total of 180 people located in Dhaka city were surveyed. To conduct data analysis, one sample t-test has been applied to measure all the dimensions of village phone model. Simultaneously, to make this paper more informative different published text books, related journals, reports, seminar papers, web pages, web blogs, magazines and research works have been consulted. Literatures were generally collected from said sources. As a result, a thorough review of literatures enabled us to make a consistent presentation of the theme of study.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Traditionally, word of mouth buzz has spread organically. The act of consumers' intentional circulation of information to other people is denominated as Word of Mouth (WoM) Marketing. Expert and intelligent marketers cultivate WoM marketing to cut a good score over the competitors giving people a reason to talk about the products and services, and making it easier for that conversation to take place. This practice is defined as Word of mouth marketing (Kappler, 2002). Word of mouth has evolved considerably over the years. Back in the days, our ancestors, after a particularly bad experience with a kitchen item, told all the ladies at their reach not to buy that brand of cookware. Fortunately for the cookware company, there were only a few people with whom those ancient people could share their experience and influence their purchasing, so the economic impact of their rant was probably minimal.

The objective of WoM is to encourage the interest of a group of consumers so that they transmit and contribute to the increased diffusion of the messages of the company and its offerings (Iqbal and Reza, 2006). That is why the companies are endeavoring to conduct WoM marketing. Kotler, the marketing *Guru*, cites reference to a study conducted over 7000 consumers in Europe, in which 60% of those questioned stated that their friends or family had influenced them in the purchase of a new brand (Carlos Mora, 2005). A brand's position in the market is strengthened if the brand can create trust among the customers. For the retention of the customers, brands must create trust (Duncan, 2002). Brand Trust can be referred to as, borrowing Bainbridge's (1997) words, a trustworthy brand places the consumer at the centre of its world and relies more on understanding real consumer needs and fulfilling them than the particular service or product do. Brand trust goes beyond consumer's satisfaction with functional performance of the product and its attributes (Aaker, 1996). Brand trust has been defined as 'a feeling security held by the consumer in his/her interaction with the brand, such that is based on the perceptions that is reliable and responsible for the interests and welfare of the consumer' (Delgado-Ballester, 2001).

Today, with the maturation of the Internet as a communications vehicle, we feel pity for the company producing poor products. In contrast to our ancestors, today's opinion leader has the opportunity to influence tens and even hundreds of thousands of other consumers. They can (and will) take pictures of defective products share them through the Internet blogs, message boards and online communities. Now people can tell the world why they loved (or hated) the latest Tom Hanks movie on any of the online blogs like Yahoo! Movies. The Internet has become a much better communications medium than broadcast. The key is to seek out opinion leaders in areas where the dialog is strong. The trick for the aspiring organization is to discover those communities and build one-to-one relationships with the leaders of those communities. Opinion leaders play an extremely vital role cultivating a successful WoM program. Opinion leaders should be dealt with skillfully and transparently.

Online opinion leaders are in many ways the new journalists. As such, companies need to be very careful in the way they approach them. If opinion leaders are approached by grass roots marketers in a way that they don't feel is appropriate, then there is a chance they will either ignore their product, or trash it. Word of mouth is entirely dependent on customers and their attitude and trust over a particular marketing offer (Vocanic – Asia's leading WoM Agency and WOMMA Charter Member, 2005). More specifically it is the voice of the customer, a natural, genuine, honest process, people seeking advice from each other, consumers talking about products, services, brands that they have experienced. All word of mouth marketing techniques are based on the concepts of customer satisfaction, two-way dialog, and transparent communications. The basic elements are:

- Educating people about the products and services
- Identifying people most likely to share their opinions
- Providing tools that make it easier to share information
- Studying how, here, and when opinions are being shared
- Listening and responding to supporters, detractors, and neutrals

Word of mouth marketing encompasses dozens of marketing techniques that are geared toward encouraging and helping people to talk to each other about products and services. Common types of word of mouth marketing techniques include Buzz Marketing, Viral Marketing, Community Marketing, Evangelist Marketing, Product Seeding, Influencer Marketing, Cause Marketing, Conversation Creation, Brand Blogging, and Referral Programs. These techniques enable the marketer to exercise WoM tool in the best possible way. Analyzing those techniques it is quite evident that they focus on the customers' free opinion about the marketing offer. The essence of WoM is capitalizing the positive views and opinions of the customers to create and expand new market. The adoption process of any brand or product, first identified by Everett M Rogers (1983), is defined as the mental process through which an individual passes from first learning about an innovation to final adoption. According to Kotler (2002) adoption is the decision made by an individual to become a regular user of the product.

As we perceive, positive WoM is created amongst the satisfied the customer group. But that is only the tip of the huge iceberg. The initiation whether planned or unplanned starts in the operational unit or service center of the marketer which later spreads through the communicatory organs of the customers in the form of their views, thoughts speeches or mere experience. However, the effectiveness of WoM follows some premises that are generic in nature (Kappler, 2002).

- The marketing offer has to be developed in an acceptable way as Word-of-mouth marketing is always based on an excellent product or service.
- Word-of-mouth marketing depends hugely on the quality of marketer's after-sales support and customer service.
- In order to involve the mass people in spreading the brand message there has to be the initiative to exceed the level of expectation of the customer.
- Effective use of internal and integrated marketing. Word-of-mouth marketing begins with company employees by integrating the marketing ingredients of the organization.

Now a days promotional campaigns all around the globe are very flashy, eye-catching and comprising incredible promises. Thus they are losing their authenticity and credibility. Advertising now-a-days can, at best, fulfill the objective of informing the target audience. People now seek for some other source to rely on about any offer made by the organization. Thus WoM possesses the potential to be a reliable marketing communication tool for the organization. The top media for influencing electronic purchases, regardless of race, is word of mouth. More than TV, magazines or articles, word of mouth is number one across the board. In the USA, a marketing research firm called BIG research conducted a survey over three ethnic groups of people to estimate the effectiveness of the different traditional and nontraditional tools of marketing promotion (Table 1).

**TABLE 1: ESTIMATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIFFERENT MARKETING PROMOTIONAL TOOLS IN 2006 AMONG THREE ETHNIC GROUPS OF THE USA**

Marketing promotion tool	African American	Hispanic	White
Word of mouth	49%	51%	55%
TV/Broadcast	45%	50%	40%
Magazines	38%	44%	40%
Articles	36%	40%	43%
Internet Ad	34%	42%	37%

[Source: BIG Research, a research firm of the USA, 2006]

The abovementioned statistical information is basically based on the research conducted mainly in the developed country. Here in Bangladesh people rate the experiencers' view top of everything before making any purchase decision. Iqbal and Reza (2006) conducted a survey which showed that Word of Mouth has the highest mean score of 4.67 as the most accepted marketing channel in purchasing decision. Moreover, in case of adopting a service and continuation of that service WoM is the most influential with mean score 4.54 followed by product (4.23) and place (3.77).

According to Interbrand, brand leaders capture what is special about their offering, convey it to the desired audience and allow customers to experience it. Four factors combine in the mind of the consumer to determine the perceived value of the brand: brand awareness; the level of perceived quality compared to competitors; the level of confidence, of significance, of empathy, of liking; and the richness and attractiveness of the images conjured up by the brand (Kapferer, 1997). The way to build an adoptable brand, according to the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, prescribed by Keller, is by following four sequential steps, each one representing a fundamental question that customers ask about brands: 1) Ensuring the identification of the brand with a specific product category or need in the customer's mind -who are you?, 2) Establishing the meaning of the brand in the customer's mind by strategically linking tangible and intangible brand associations with certain properties -what are you? 3) Eliciting customer responses to the brand identification and meaning -what about you? 4) Converting the response into an active, intense and loyal relationship between the customers and the brand -what about you and me? The CBBE model is built by "sequentially establishing six 'brand building blocks' with customers" (Keller 2003a: p. 75).

Brand community is another concept found in literature that can strengthen brand equity, while also reinforcing the social nature of brands (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). "Brand communities carry out important functions on behalf of the brand, such as sharing information, perpetuating the history and culture of the brand, and providing assistance. They provide social structure to the relationship between marketer and consumer (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Muniz and O'Guinn (1991) define a brand community as a "specialized, nongeographically bound community, based on a structured set of relationships among admirers of a brand" (p. 412). According to their research, brand communities share three core characteristics: the existence of a consciousness of a kind, the presence of shared rituals, and a sense of moral responsibility between members. The WoM aids the recipient to have an image—either positive or negative about the brand. Brand image is built not only on brand attitude but also on brand association. Hsieh's (2002) empirical study noted that brand associations lead to the formulation of a distinct image in the minds of consumers. Pitta and Katsanis (1995) reported that creating a set of positive brand associations is the essence of creating a positive brand image. This brand image, originate from WoM, indicates ultimately whether the person will adopt the brand or not. Many organizations are taking initiatives to create atmosphere so that satisfied consumers can share their experiences. The situational aspects drive us to believe that WoM can be done in a planned way. There are some philosophies that erect the successful implication and application of planned WoM (WOMMA report, 2005).

1. Recognizing that a happy customer is the greatest endorsement
2. Providing customers with something worth talking about
3. Providing tools that make it easier for them to share their opinions
4. Listening to consumers
5. Engaging the community

## HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

After a through literature review and keeping the objectives in mind the following eight hypotheses and corresponding sub-hypotheses were developed.

- Dependency of brand preference by a prospect on Word of Mouth. 1, 2, 5, 6
- Influence of attitude of others on perceived satisfaction. 3
- Continued brand loyalty for positive WoM. 4
- Varied influence of WoM due to the nature of marketing offer. 7
- Possible recommendation of a positively mass accepted brand to others. 8

**H 1:** Potential buyers find the opinion, view of other people as the most reliable sources to procure information about any brand.

**H 1.1:** I prefer to seek information from others about any issue of the brand before purchasing.

**H 1.2:** Ordinary people give honest opinion about the brand most of the time.

**H 1.3:** The communications channels of company do not provide actual information all the time.

**H 1.4:** WoM is a more reliable source than any other traditional channels.

**H 1.5:** I value information coming from known people about any brand.

**H 1.6:** I value information coming from unknown people about any brand.

**H 2:** Brand preference by a potential customer depends on positive Word of Mouth

**H 2.1:** I adopt a new brand if people say positive about that brand

**H 2.2:** I prefer that brand which has reputation in the market

**H 3:** Perceived satisfaction of any brand depends on the views of other regarding that particular brand.

**H 3.1:** I will feel dissatisfied about the brand after the consumption if people say negatively about the brand.

**H 3.2:** My level of satisfaction will be affected by the opinion of mass people.

**H 4:** Brand loyalty is continued for positive WoM

**H 4.1:** If people do not say any negative thing about the brand I continue purchasing

**H 4.2:** I will be loyal to a brand as long as it has positive image amongst the mass people

**H 4.3:** I shall continue to buy my preferred brand irrespective of people's view

**H 5:** How strongly a brand is adopted by the customer depends substantially on the Word of Mouth emitted from mass people.

**H 6:** While choosing any brand, the functional capability of the brand is overshadowed by the opinions, views and suggestions of mass people (WoM).

**H 7:** The influence of WoM will vary due to the nature of marketing offer.

**H 7.1:** For choosing a brand of service I will rely more on WoM

**H 7.2:** I will prefer to know from others before selecting a brand of product

**H 8:** I will strongly recommend a brand to other if it is actually talked about positively by mass people.

## RESULTS OF HYPOTHESIS ANALYSIS

**Hypothesis 1:** Potential buyers find the opinion, view of other people as the most reliable sources to procure information about any brand.

The hypothesis is tested on the basis of six sub-hypotheses developed focusing the main hypothesis. The test results (Table 2) shows that all the six sub-hypotheses are not rejected at a 5% level of significance. The analysis signifies that the potential buyers seek opinion from other sources about an issue before purchasing. They also rely on the opinion of mass people to collect information about any brand. To them the Word of Mouth of ordinary people is much more reliable compared to the information coming through the communication channels of the company. They also value information about a brand coming from both known and unknown sources. The study validates the fact that ordinary people do not express any information regarding a brand in a biased way. The respondents' believe that the company always does not provide actual information.



TABLE 2: RESULTS ("t" SIGNIFICANCE) OF 6 SUB-HYPOTHESES AGAINST HYPOTHESIS 1

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H1.1: Seeking info about any issue before purchasing	9.504	179	.000	.73889	.5855	.8923
H1.2: Ordinary people give honest opinion	5.136	179	.000	.37778	.2326	.5229
H1.3: Company Communication channel do not give right info all the time	9.295	179	.000	.67778	.5339	.8217
H1.4: WoM is more reliable	4.509	179	.000	.31667	.1781	.4553
H1.5: Value of info coming from known people	10.038	179	.000	.69444	.5579	.8310
H1.6: Value of info coming from unknown people	-4.465	179	.000	-.32778	-.4726	-.1829

**Hypothesis 2:** Brand preference by a potential customer depends on Word of Mouth.

The study shows that the preference about a brand by a potential buyer depends a great deal on the information emitting from other people, i.e., WoM. It is noted that a potential buyer will prefer that brand if it said positively by the mass people. Brand reputation also instigates the potential buyer to adopt a new brand. Here both the sub-hypotheses were not rejected at a level of significance of 5% (Table 3).

TABLE 3: RESULTS ("t" SIGNIFICANCE) OF 2 SUB-HYPOTHESES AGAINST HYPOTHESIS 2

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H2.1: A brand is adopted if people say positive about it.	2.353	179	.020	.15000	.0242	.2758
H2.2: Buyers prefer that brand which has reputation in the market.	16.814	179	.000	1.06111	.9366	1.1856

**Hypothesis 3:** Perceived satisfaction of any brand depends on the views of other people regarding that particular brand.

The analysis states that a person's level of satisfaction about any brand depends on the opinions of mass people. In this case of the two sub-hypotheses one is not rejected and one is rejected at a level of significance of 5% (Table 4). The accepted hypothesis infers that a customer of any brand may be dissatisfied to hear negative things about that particular brand. Interestingly the study found that the customers' level of satisfaction will not be significantly affected by the opinion of mass people.

TABLE 4: RESULTS ("t" SIGNIFICANCE) OF 2 SUB-HYPOTHESES AGAINST HYPOTHESIS 3

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H3.1: Feeling dissatisfied hearing any negative about the brand	-2.248	179	.026	-.18889	-.3547	-.0230
H3.2: Opinion of mass people affect my level of satisfaction	-.293	179	.770	-.02222	-.1721	.1277

**Hypothesis 4:** Brand loyalty is carried on for positive WoM

How long a purchaser will be loyal to the brand is also affected by positive word of mouth. From this analysis it has become evident that an ordinary buyer will continue his/her level of loyalty about a brand if it is endowed with positive Word of Mouth (WoM). The results of the three sub-hypotheses in this regard are shown in table 5. As noted the consumers will continue purchasing as long as they do not hear any negative thing about the brand ( $\alpha = 0.079$ ). Hence the positive image of a brand amongst the mass people has influence over the brand loyalty of a person ( $\alpha = 0.000$ ). It is also noted that people's choice of any brand patronization does not depend on other's opinion. So brand patronization of any preferred one is continued irrespective of people's view.

TABLE 5: RESULTS ("t" SIGNIFICANCE) OF 3 SUB-HYPOTHESES AGAINST HYPOTHESIS 4

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H4.1: A brand will be continued to be patronized if people do not say any negative.	1.765	179	.079	.13889	-.0164	.2942
H4.2: As long as it has positive image I shall remain loyal to the brand.	6.033	179	.000	.46667	.3140	.6193
H4.3: People continue to buy a brand irrespective of people's opinion.	3.840	179	.000	.29444	.1432	.4457

**Hypothesis 5:** How strongly a brand is adopted by the customer depends substantially on the Word of Mouth emitted from mass people.

The test result shows that (Table 5) the positioning of the brand in consumers' mind depends greatly on the Word of Mouth of mass people.

TABLE 6: RESULTS ("t" SIGNIFICANCE) OF HYPOTHESIS 5

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H5: A brand's position depends on WoM	7.225	179	.000	.47778	.3473	.6083

**Hypothesis 6:** While choosing any brand, the functional capability of the brand is overshadowed by the opinion, view and suggestions of mass people (WoM).

The above analysis authenticates the fact that potential customers will prefer the vibe of the brand prevailing among the mass people over the functional capability of the product. Mass peoples' opinion, coming as the WoM, overshadows the functional capability of any brand ( $\alpha = 0.002$ ).

TABLE 7: RESULTS ("t" SIGNIFICANCE) OF HYPOTHESIS 6

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H6: Functional capability is overshadowed by WoM	3.089	179	.002	.52778	.1906	.8650

**Hypothesis 7:** The influence of WoM will vary due to the nature of marketing offer.

**H 7.1:** For choosing a brand of non product item (e.g. service) I will rely more on WoM compared to a product item.

Here we can assert that people rely more on WoM before choosing a brand of service compared to a brand of product.

**TABLE 8: RESULTS (“t” SIGNIFICANCE) OF HYPOTHESIS 7**

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
H7.1: While choosing a non product (service) brand I will rely more on WoM compared to a product brand	3.002	179	.003	.52222	.1790	.8655

**Hypothesis 8:** I will strongly recommend a brand to other if it is actually talked about positively by mass people.

A talked about brand has immense influence over the customer while making a brand decision as the popularity creates the atmosphere of believability for the brand. The above analysis ( $\alpha = 0.000$ ) concretes the concept that a person will recommend that brand to other people which have wide popularity.

**TABLE 9: RESULTS (“t” SIGNIFICANCE) OF HYPOTHESIS 8**

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
A brand will be recommended if it is talked about positively	9.717	179	0.000	0.65556	0.5224	0.7887

**CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

WoM is the only marketing strategy that is based on genuinely passionate people. The marketers must be listening to these people for the sake of their own business success. The customers, through their word of mouth, build credible communication message. This study has endeavored to explore the positive relation between the honest opinion of mass people and adoption of a brand. This study has a limitation of not developing and authenticating any model regarding Word of Mouth (WoM). This study paves the path to conduct different studies related to planned WoM, reliability on referrals while making a brand choice, model development of WoM in future.

The study signifies that the potential buyers seek opinion from both known and unknown sources and rely on the opinion of mass people to collect information about any brand compared to the information coming through the communication channels of the company. The study validates the fact that ordinary people do not express any information regarding a brand in a biased way. The respondents’ believe that the company always does not provide actual information. The study shows that the preference about a brand by a potential buyer depends a great deal on the positive information emitting from WoM. Brand reputation also instigates the potential buyer to adopt a new brand. The analysis infers that a customer of any brand may be dissatisfied to hear negative things about that particular brand. Interestingly the study found that the customers’ level of satisfaction will not be significantly affected by the opinion of mass people.

From this analysis it has become evident that an ordinary buyer will continue his/her level of loyalty about a brand if it is endowed with positive Word of Mouth. It is also noted that people’s choice of any brand patronization does not depend on other’s opinion. So brand patronization of any preferred one is continued irrespective of people’s view. The study reveals that the positioning of the brand in consumers’ mind depends greatly on the Word of Mouth of mass people. The study authenticates the fact that mass peoples’ opinion, coming as the WoM, overshadows the functional capability of any brand. A talked about brand has immense influence over the customer while making a brand decision as the popularity creates the atmosphere of believability for the brand. The analysis concretes the concept that a person will recommend that brand to other people which have wide popularity. The study noted that people rely more on WoM before choosing a brand of service compared to a brand of product.

From the output of the study we can present the following recommendations for the organizations.

- On the outset company has to create something different which will create positive buzz. The consumers will talk about those factors or facts which are new, unique, worthwhile and outstanding. So the WoM marketing initializes not from the consumers rather from the company. Positive WoM will emit only when company can devise satisfactory, ethical and legal marketing offer for its customers.
- For marketing any service, WoM plays the most significant role as service is an intangible item which can only be perceived. In case of service, referrals produce much more sales than any other marketing communication tool of the company.
- The key element in effective Word of Mouth marketing lays in seeking out opinion leaders. The image of the information provider has effect about the acceptability over the information passed on. Moreover medium is also a significant factor in WoM marketing. Due to the technological advancement, the inhabitants of the western world can share their views very easily. The marketers have to arrange such a real or virtual place from where the satisfied customers can provide referrals.
- Sometimes it is found that the brand’s functional status is not considered aptly. But in the long run mass people will talk about those brands which are successful as core, actual and augmented product level. In the short run some kind of vibe can overshadow the quality issue but no one can ignore the conformance and performance quality.
- Now-a-days people hardly believe the traditional communication tools of the company that provide the brand message. They know the underlying stories of every successful promotion and commercial. And it is proved that on an average mass people give honest opinion regarding any brand s/he consumed. This referral contributes immensely to the ultimate decision making. The marketers’ duty is to utilize this honest opinion to cut a good score in the market.
- A trial by a potential customer can be reinforced if the person is satisfied and if the brand has a positive talked-about image. These reinforcements can eventually turn into adoption of the brand. So appropriate cultivation of WoM cements the adoption of the brand.
- WoM is an unsung tool of the company’s marketing communication mix that works silently to cut score successfully. It is the honest opinion of consumer which has much more influence over the potential customer. But such a tool cannot be created through any conventional promotional tool. To harness the power of WoM the company has to ensure everlasting quality in its strategic marketing initiatives.

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