

THE IMPACT OF BUZZ MARKETING ON CUSTOMER PURCHASE INTENTION

Hind Naeem Hoshi

Department of Business Administration,

Faculty of Administration and Economics, University of Misan

hindn839@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: The objective of this research is to explore the modern marketing technique of buzz marketing and its influence on customers' purchase intention. It also detects whether there is a relationship between the variables under investigation. diverse tourism companies.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A questionnaire was conducted to assess the extent to which managers, administrative staff, and employees in the selected sample companies adopt buzz marketing. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed, and the statistical software SPSS V.21 was utilized for data analysis.

Findings: The research results indicated a significant correlation between buzz marketing and purchase intention. This suggests that the sampled companies are interested in utilizing this modern marketing approach to promote their products and stimulate customers' intention to purchase.

Implications: The results of this research can be utilized in promoting various types of products, thereby enhancing the capabilities of the sampled companies to achieve their objectives and outperform their competitors.

Keywords: Buzz marketing, incentives and rewards, purchase intention, seeding ideas.

Introduction

Buzz marketing is a modern marketing technique that utilizes the internet to effectively communicate with customers and promote products. By encouraging customers to share their opinions about a product or service, a buzz is created. It generates significant marketing impact and increases demand. In today's world, traditional advertising campaigns are no longer as effective in attracting customers. Marketing organizations have had to adapt by embracing more advanced methods that leverage the internet. Buzz marketing leverages the power of social media and online platforms to quickly spread information and reach a larger audience. It can be compared to the rapid spread of contagious diseases, as the information shared online is absorbed and read by a greater number of customers.

Research Problem

The current problem that this research seeks to address is understanding the role of buzz marketing as a modern marketing tool in influencing the purchase intention of Iraqi customers. The Iraqi marketer and marketing environment require the implementation of such marketing tools to improve the quality of marketing efforts, especially in relation to the tourism services

provided by travel and tourism companies in Maysan Governorate. These services require diverse and attractive marketing strategies to capture the attention of customers and influence their purchase intentions. Based on the above, this research aims to answer several questions, including:

1. What is the awareness level of the Iraqi marketers regarding buzz marketing?
2. What is the role of buzz marketing in influencing Iraqi customer purchase intention?

Research Objectives

1. To identify the role of buzz marketing in influencing customer purchase intention.
2. To determine the availability of buzz marketing dimensions in the Iraqi customer.

Research Significance

The importance of the research lies establishing a marketing foundation that enables marketers in various marketing activities to rely on modern and diverse marketing techniques to improve their marketing efforts, gain customer trust and loyalty, and keep up with developments in the world. It also tries to recognizes the extent to which the Iraqi customers rely on buzz marketing in promoting its products and employing it in its marketing operations.

Research hypotheses

1. There is a significant correlation between buzz marketing and its dimensions (marketing hype, seed planting, incentives and rewards) on customer's purchase intention.
2. There is a significant impact of buzz marketing and its three dimensions (marketing hype, seed planting, incentives and rewards) on customer's purchase intention.

Hypothetical framework

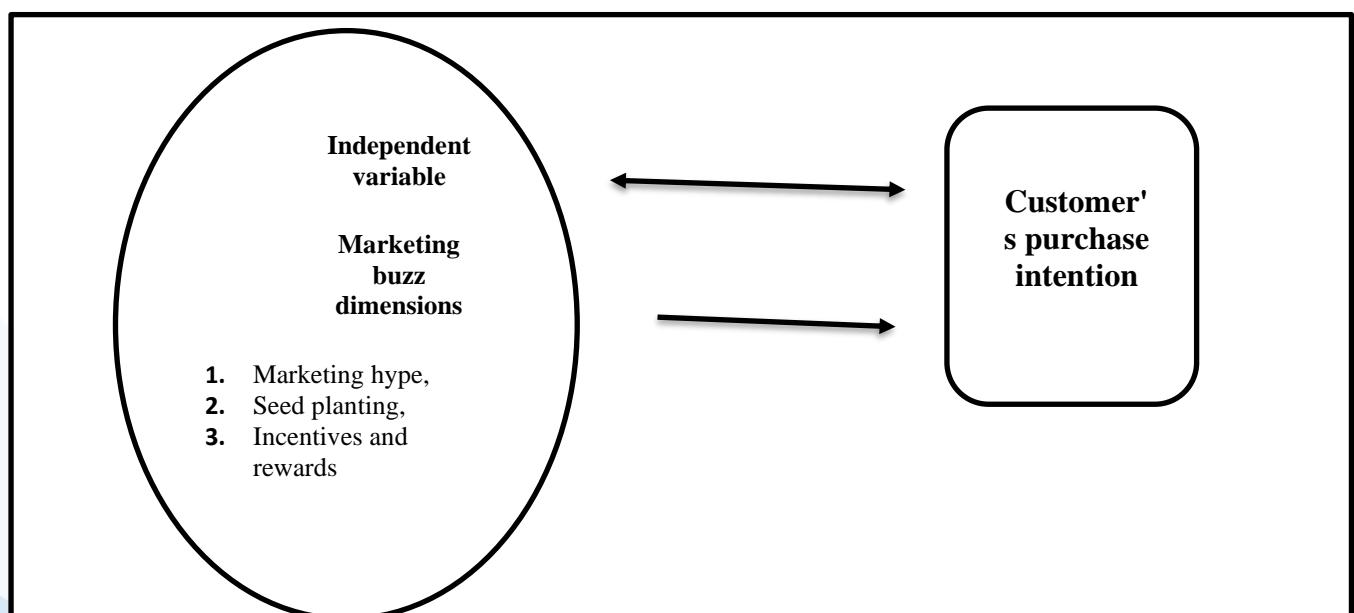


Figure 1. Hypothetical framework

Literature Review

Theoretical roots of buzz marketing

Buzz marketing, also known as word-of-mouth marketing, refers to the amplification of initial marketing efforts by external parties through their positive or negative influence (Carl, 2006). It involves using technology and media to encourage customers to talk, engage, and share information about a specific product or brand. The goal is to make the product or brand appear entertaining, enjoyable, and of informational importance, ultimately creating an attractive marketing experience for participation (Mohr, 2007). However, for this to happen, there needs to be something interesting, clever, fun, or attention-grabbing about the marketing message and its content, which serves as the key to success in generating buzz (Sirma, 2009).

Buzz marketing refers to the promotion of a company or its products and services through marketing initiatives designed to make customers, people, media, and social media platforms talk positively about the company, product, or service (Soundararaj et al., 2015). Buzz marketing involves consumer and user interaction that amplifies the original marketing message. Some describe buzz as a form of noise among consumers, a positive but mysterious connection, excitement, or anticipation about a product or service.

Dimensions of buzz marketing

After reviewing various sources and marketing literature, most researchers and authors agree on three key dimensions of buzz marketing, which have been adopted by many production and marketing organizations (Alwan, 2020):

1. Creating Buzz (Marketing hype)

Marketing advertisements are spread among individual users through various forms of social networks, creating buzz and word-of-mouth transmission about products and services. This strategy is highly impactful on the lives of customers who use them, making it an effective and influential way to promote products and services primarily on the internet.

2. Seed planting

The marketing strategy known as "Product Seed" focuses on identifying influential individuals within social networks and leveraging their influence to promote a product. By spreading the product among users and encouraging adoption and preference over competitors, this strategy aims to connect with customers who are already familiar with the desired product in the market. Through social networks, ideas about the product are planted, allowing for gauging interest and generating buzz. Incentives are often provided to individuals participating in these promotional campaigns, as it motivates them to spread the word among friends, relatives, and other influential customers. This highlights the crucial role of the internet in rapidly disseminating advertising content on social networks, resulting in widespread exposure within minutes.

3. Incentives and rewards

Organizations often use buzz marketing as a strategy due to the various incentives it offers individuals. By promoting products and services through social networks like email

campaigns, Facebook, Twitter, and others, it reaches friends, family members, and influential customers. Those who execute these promotional campaigns are motivated by personal incentives, such as rewards, and helping others identify and prefer the favored brand over competitors. This highlights the internet's significant role in spreading advertising content on social networks, resulting in rapid and widespread dissemination within minutes.

Many marketing organizations focus on utilizing buzz marketing because it provides numerous incentives to individuals. This is achieved through word-of-mouth promotion and leveraging social networks for product endorsements, including user-generated content such as images and videos that influence influential customers. Promotional campaigns are conducted through email and Facebook to inform friends, relatives, and influential customers. Individuals executing these campaigns are motivated by personal incentives and rewards, as well as assisting other customers in identifying, adopting, and favoring the brand over competitors.

Buzz marketing strategies

Some of the most important buzz marketing strategies to Sharma (2021) are:

1. Targeted Audience: Knowing the target audience is crucial for any marketing process when trying to reach potential customers.
2. Pre-promote the Company's Campaign: Teaser advertising helps build anticipation and attract attention by ensuring the customer's perspective, whether they are excited about the company's new product or not.
3. Create a Brand Hashtag: A brand hashtag is necessary for creating engagement, allowing the company to keep track of customer feedback. It also makes it easy to reach customers and talk about a specific brand for the company.
4. Engage Customers as Businessmen: The primary goal of buzz marketing is to provide value to customers to generate successful echo marketing.
5. Video Marketing Campaigns: Visual content has a profound impact on customers, making it easy to share a promotional video clip to maintain customer interaction with brands and the company.
6. Finding the Right Influencer: Targeting a larger audience through the right and attractive influencer is crucial for succeeding in buzz marketing.
7. Conduct Contests: Conducting a contest is a fun experience and the best way to create a buzz before launching the product, helping people remember brands.
8. Use Scarcity Principle: This strategy introduces scarcity among customers to create a mismatch between supply and demand for the product, which can help create excitement and increase demand for it.

Customer's purchase intention

The concept of customer purchase intention refers to the motivating factors behind behaviors that contribute to achieving goals, and it is the step that combines purchasing motives with the characteristics or features of the products being offered (Djojo & Arief, 2015; Mirabi et.al, 2015). It is considered a type of decision-making process that examines the reasons why a customer chooses to purchase a specific brand over others, and it is an effective tool for

predicting the buying process. Customer purchase intention can be influenced by factors such as price, quality, and perceived value, and it is described as a state in which the customer is inclined to purchase a specific product under certain circumstances. The customer's purchase decision is considered a complex process (Mirabi et.al, 2015).

Customer purchase intention is one of the key variables in marketing because it serves as an alternative to actual purchasing behavior. Therefore, the concept of purchase intention helps marketers understand the reasons why customers choose to buy certain brands. Building value for customers increases their purchase intention because the perceived value of products and services enhances their willingness to purchase (Esmaeilpour & Mohseni, 2019). Customer purchase intention is influenced by various factors, including the reputation of the company producing the goods or services, quality, and the presentation of product details. Therefore, marketing companies should differentiate themselves to attract customers (García-Salirrosas et.al, 2022).

Methods

A questionnaire was built which consistent of 21 items. It was conducted to assess the extent to which managers, administrative staff, and employees apply buzz marketing. The population of this research is the travel and tourism companies operating in Maysan Governorate, which are among the main providers of tourism services to various total of 100 customers. These companies require the use of modern marketing tools in their operations, particularly since services make up a significant and crucial part of their offerings. The companies aim to enhance customer purchase intention and satisfaction by diversifying and improving the quality of their services in the face of a wide range of available tourism services. Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages of the participants illustrating its characteristics in terms of gender, age, and educational attainment.

Table 1. characteristics of the research sample

No	Sex	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	61	61%
	Female	39	39%
	Total	100	100%
2	Age	Frequency	Percentage
	30 years and less	38	%36
	31-35 years old	30	%30
	36-40 years old	17	%17
	41 years and over	15	%17
3	Total	100	%100
	Educational attainment	Frequency	Percentage
	Preparatory school and below	26	%26
	Diploma	44	%44
	Bachelor's	24	%24
	Postgraduate	6	6%
	Total	100	%100

Data analysis

This paragraph seeks to explain the results of the research and its items, analyze and interpret them statistically, relying on arithmetic mean, standard deviation for each item, as shown in Tables below.

Results and Discussion

Statistical description of buzz marketing: The aim of this section is to display and interpret the results of the statistical description of buzz marketing, its three dimensions, and the extent of its availability in the sample studied, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Participants' response on the marketing hype dimension

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
1. Social networks of all kinds can be relied upon and used to influence the customer.	4.81	0.56
2. Verbal means are important tools for conveying the advertising message between customers, which includes in its content information about the company's products of all kinds, whether goods or services.	3.82	0.55
3. The company creates attractive marketing and advertising value to attract customers' attention and stimulate their purchasing motives.	3.93	0.83
4. Arousing marketing value is important to stimulate discussions among customers about the company's brand and products.	3.57	0.83
5. The company has the ability to participate with various types of social media to disseminate information about the nature and quality of its products.	3.50	0.77
Total	3.92	0.31

1. Marketing hype

Table 2 presents the arithmetic mean and standard deviation for the first dimension of marketing buzz, which is related to marketing hype. The arithmetic mean for this dimension was 3.92, surpassing the assumed mean of 3. This suggests that the participants are particularly interested in focusing on this dimension to generate marketing buzz for their products, specifically their tourism services. Their goal is to attract a larger number of customers. The standard deviation, which was 0.31, indicates a minimal dispersion in respondents' answers regarding the arithmetic mean, implying consistency in their responses.

Table 3 Participants' response on seed planting dimension

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
6. The company adopts a specific strategy and mechanism to cultivate initial ideas in order to introduce the customer to its products and establish them in his mind.	4.19	0.77
7. The company targets specific categories of customers and communicates with them in order to proactively learn about its products and what they want and desire.	3.54	0.92
8. The company launches its products at an early stage in the marketing process through the customer's ideas and knowing what he wants.	3.86	0.91
9. The company is trying to cultivate and implant its products in the market in order to be able to control customer trends and reach the largest possible segment.	3.49	0.77
10. The company adopts product cultivation that is integrated with advertising and the end customer.	3.78	0.77
Total	3.77	0.43

2. Seed planning (idea implantation)

Table 3 presents the mean score and standard deviation for the second dimension of marketing buzz, which focuses on seed planning (idea implantation or product seeding). This dimension consists of five items. The overall mean for seed planning was 3.77, surpassing the assumed mean of 3. This indicates a strong interest from the Iraqi companies in utilizing this dimension to implant their products (specifically tourism services) in the target market and attract a larger customer base for achieving marketing success and staying competitive against other companies. The standard deviation, with a value of 0.43, suggests a very minimal dispersion and close-to-zero variability in respondents' answers regarding the mean, indicating consistency in their responses.

Table 4 Participants' response on incentives and rewards dimension

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
11. The company motivates and rewards its customers in order to motivate them to spread its products in the places where they are located.	4.31	0.67
12. The company cares and takes into account the nature of the product, the market and the customer when building the incentive system.	3.78	0.82
13. One of the motivational tools that the company uses to spread its products in the market is social networks.	3.70	0.74
14. The company enhances and supports every response received from customers, even if it is weak.	3.67	0.93
15. The company allocates a specific financial budget to the media to target the electronic customer.	3.68	0.90
Total	3.82	0.40

3. incentives and rewards

Table 4 shows the third dimension's mean and standard deviation for marketing buzz, which pertains to incentives and rewards. This dimension comprises five items, resulting in varying arithmetic means and standard deviations within the researched sample. The overall mean for this incentives and rewards was 3.82, exceeding the assumed mean of 3. This indicates a strong interest from the Iraqi companies in offering incentives and rewards to their customers, viewing them as motivational tools to attract both new and loyal customers and promote their products to a wider audience. The standard deviation, with a value of 0.40, suggests minimal dispersion in respondents' answers concerning the arithmetic mean, indicating consistency in their responses.

Table 5 Participants' responses on customer purchase intention

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation
1. The customer buys the service that carries a distinctive and reliable brand instead of any other available brands.	4.30	0.73
2. The customer is willing to recommend this brand to others in order to purchase it and benefit from its advantages.	3.61	0.89
3. The customer has the intention to purchase this service or brand in the future.	3.73	0.82

4.	Regardless of what similar services are offered in the market, the customer will buy this brand that carries this service and not any other.	3.65	0.86
5.	This brand quickly attracts customer's attention.	3.50	0.90
6.	The customer quickly comes to mind with this service brand when he or she is forced to make a purchase.	3.45	0.92
Total		3.70	0.35

Table 5 indicates the statistical results for, customer purchase intention (dependent variable). This variable comprises six items used for measurement. The overall mean for customer purchase intention was 3.70, surpassing the assumed mean of 3. This suggests that the researched sample has a strong interest in focusing on purchasing a specific brand and seeking out the unique characteristics and features that the offered product or service possesses in the market. As for the standard deviation, its value was 0.35, indicating a very slight dispersion in respondents' answers regarding the mean scores and indicating consistency in their responses.

Testing hypotheses of correlation and impact

Correlation hypothesis

Table 6 shows the correlation between buzz marketing (the independent variable) and the customer's purchase intention (the dependent variable).

Table 6 The correlation between buzz marketing and customer purchase intention

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Customer's purchase intention
Buzz marketing	Correlation	.389**
	Sig	.000
	Sample size	100

The results in Table 6 indicate a strong and positive correlation between marketing buzz and its three dimensions (the independent variable) and customer purchase intention (the dependent variable), with a value of (.389**) and a significance level of .000. This result suggests a strong and positive correlation between the two variables, meaning that an increase in the marketing buzz leads to an increase in the customer purchase intention. This indicates that the Iraqi companies are interested in this modern marketing tool to promote their marketing activities. Therefore, we can conclude that the first main hypothesis, which states "there is a significant impact of buzz marketing and its three dimensions on customer's purchase intention." is accepted.

Impact hypothesis

The results in Table 7 provide an analysis of the influence of marketing buzz on customer purchase intention, in order to determine the acceptance or rejection of the second main hypothesis, which states "there is a significant effect of marketing buzz and its three dimensions on customer purchase intention." As illustrated in the table below:

Table 7 The impact of marketing buzz on customer purchase intention

Dependent variable	a	β	Computed F	R ²	Sig	Dependent variable
(Marketing Buzz)	.389	.485	17.254	.151	.000	(Customer's purchase intention)

Table 7 shows the results of the influence of marketing buzz on the customer purchase intention. Table 7 indicates a significant effect of marketing buzz on customer purchase intention, as evidenced by the computed F-value of 17.254 at a significance level of .000. The value of a .389 suggests the presence of customer purchase intention even when the dimensions of marketing buzz are zero. The value of β is .485, indicating that a one-unit change in marketing buzz leads to a 48% change in customer purchase intention. The coefficient of determination, R², is .151, which means that 15% of the variance in customer purchase intention is explained by marketing buzz included in the regression model, while 85% is explained by other factors not included in the regression model. Based on these results, we accept the second main hypothesis that there is a significant impact of marketing buzz and its three dimensions on customer purchase intention.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This section presents the main conclusions and recommendations, which serve as the foundation for scientific research and can enhance organizational performance.

Conclusion

- There is a strong and significant relationship between marketing buzz and its dimensions with customer purchase intention in the research sample. Marketing buzz is considered a modern marketing tool used to promote products and achieve success and excellence in the rapidly evolving aspects of life.
- The statistical results indicate that the research sample has a high interest in marketing buzz and its three dimensions, especially the first dimension (creating marketing hype), which plays a fundamental role in spreading awareness and popularity of the product. It achieved the highest mean compared to the other two dimensions.
- The statistical results demonstrate a strong correlation between marketing buzz and its dimensions and the customer purchase intention. This is an important and clear statistical evidence that focusing on this modern marketing approach has a positive impact on customer purchase intention.
- The results confirm the hypothesis of the influence of marketing buzz, indicating a statistically significant impact on purchase intention in the tourism companies in Maysan Governorate.

Recommendations

- There should be an effective focus on using and implementing new marketing strategies, especially marketing buzz, to keep up with the advancements in all aspects of life.

This is particularly important in the marketing field, which directly interacts with customers who have diverse and varied needs and desires.

2. Tourism companies should pay attention to creating marketing hype around the products/services offered in order to stimulate customer purchase intention and encourage them to make a purchase.
3. Tourism companies should work towards achieving a strong correlation between marketing buzz and its dimensions with customer purchase intention to enhance marketing efforts in the research sample companies.
4. The tourism companies should rely on staying updated with new marketing trends and techniques, as customers nowadays are well-informed about the services available worldwide. This requires the Iraqi tourism companies to focus on this aspect to effectively influence customer purchase intention.

References

1. Alwana, H. J. (2020). Buzz Marketing and its Role in Achieving Market Share. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 12(7), 262- 282.
2. Djojo, B. W., & Arief, M. (2015). Exploring the factors affecting consumer purchase intention towards children multivitamin products based on purchase store. *Advanced Science Letters*, 21(4), 622-625.
3. Esmaeilpour, M., & Mohseni, Z. (2019). Effect of customer experiences on consumer purchase intention. *Romanian Economic Journal*, 73, 19-38.
4. García-Salirrosas, E. E., Acevedo-Duque, Á., Marin Chaves, V., Mejía Henao, P. A., & Olaya Molano, J. C. (2022). Purchase intention and satisfaction of online shop users in developing countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sustainability*, 14(10), 6302. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14106302>
5. ICarl, W. J. (2006). What's all the buzz about? Everyday communication and the relational basis of word-of-mouth and buzz marketing practices. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19(4), 601-634.
6. Mirabi, V., Akbariyeh, H., & Tahmasebifard, H. (2015). A study of factors affecting on customers purchase intention. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Engineering Science and Technology (JMEST)*, 2(1), 267-273.
7. Mohr, I. (2007). Buzz marketing for movies. *Business horizons*, 50(5), 395-403.
8. Sharma, U. (2021). Strategies of buzz marketing in social media platform, its effectiveness and impact on customer. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology (IJARSCT)*, 8(1), 188-190. <http://doi.org/10.48175/IJARSCT-1834>
9. Sırma, E. (2009). Word-of-mouth marketing from a global perspective (Unpolished PhD Dissertation). Portugal: ISCTE-Instituto Universitario de Lisboa.
10. Soundararaj, J.J., Arockia Baskaran, S., & Sivaprakash, S. (2015). The Power of Buzz Marketing. *Journal of Exclusive Management Science*, 4(3), 44-53.