İSTANBUL TİCARET ÜNİVERSİTESİ

T.C.

ISTANBUL TICARET UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE SCHOOL

MASTER OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

THEROLEOFNEWINFORMATIONANDCOMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN RELATIONAL MARKETING

Master'sthesis

AbdessamadAguerni

ISTANBUL.2024

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EthicStatement

I dedicate all the required information in this title The role of new information and communication technologies in relational marketing A study about how new the information and communicationtechnologyimpact the consumer behavior and has been writtenfollowing academic manners and ethical commitment. I would clarify that all the materials, sources, data, and all extra inputs have benefited well throughout the writing procedure of this thesis. All matters contained in this thesis are my opinion and do not reflect the official view of Istanbul Ticaret University

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ABSTRACT

In today's corporate environment, competitive rivals with lower prices and incentives are posing agrowing danger to client loyaltyand reducing profit margins. Theclient isnowatthe core of the supply chain, redefining strategic thinking in light of the changing economic landscape. As a result, companies are now concentrating on customer happiness and loyalty programs, with the idea of value taking center stage. In order to improve long-term relationships, relationship marketing has become an essential tactic. Its goals include recognizing individual needs and fostering consumer loyaltythroughtailored interaction. This change has been greatly impacted by information and communication technologies (ICT),such as the Internet and electronic commerce, which have changed marketing from a general approachto a moretargeted strategy. Businesses mayprovide a varietyofoptions inrealtime, promoting individualized interactions and enhancing client connections byutilizing ICT. This abstract examines how information and communication technology (ICT) can improve relationship marketing, with a focus on how it affects customer behavior, client happines, and the development of marketing strategies.

Keywords:consumerbehaviormarketingstrategy,relationalmarketing,informationand communication technologies

Özet

Günümüz kurumsal ortamında, düşük fiyatlar ve teşvikler sunan rekabetçi rakipler, müşteri sadakatini tehdit etmekte ve kâr marjlarını azaltmaktadır. Müşteri artık tedarik zincirinin merkezinde yer almakta ve değişen ekonomik manzara doğrultusunda stratejik düşünce yeniden şekillenmektedir. Sonuç olarak, şirketler artık müşteri memnuniyeti ve sadakat programlarına odaklanmakta, değer kavramı ön planda tutulmaktadır. Uzun vadeli ilişkileri geliştirmek amacıyla, ilişki pazarlaması temel bir strateji haline gelmiştir. Bu stratejinin hedefleri arasında bireysel ihtiyaçları tanımak ve kişiselleştirilmiş etkileşim yoluyla müşteri sadakatini artırmak bulunmaktadır. Bu değişim, internet ve elektronik ticaret gibi bilgi ve iletişimteknolojilerinden(ICT) büyük ölçüdeetkilenmiştir;bu teknolojiler, pazarlamayıgenel bir yaklaşımdan daha hedefli bir stratejiye dönüştürmüştür. İşletmeler, ICT'yi kullanarak gerçek zamanlı olarak çeşitli seçenekler sunabilir, kişiselleştirilmiş etkileşimleri teşvikedebilir ve müşteri ilişkilerini güçlendirebilirler. Bu özet, bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerinin (ICT) ilişki pazarlamasını nasıl geliştirebileceğini, müşteri davranışını, müşterimemnuniyetini ve pazarlama stratejilerinin gelişimini nasıl etkilediğine odaklanmaktadır.

AnahtarKelimeler:tüketicidavranışı,pazarlamastratejisi, ilişkiselpazarlama,bilgive iletişim teknolojileri.

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Listof Abbreviations

NICT	NewInformationandCommunicationTechnologies
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
WAN	Wide Area Networks
MANs	MetropolitanAreaNetworks
LANs	LocalAreaNetworks

INTRODUCTION

Every day, managers throughout the world lament the erosion of their consumers' loyalty as competitors aggressively court them with better pricing and incentives. Customer apathy results in decreased profit margins (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Indeed, cutting costs is the most effective technique for acquiring customers, and it is also most businesses' only protection (Porter, 1985). The current economic climate has created a new framework for strategic thinking and analysis for businesses, in which the consumer has reclaimed control (Prahalad& Ramaswamy, 2004). The supply chain is now entirely focused on the customer (Chopra & Meindl, 2013). The concepts of strategic growth and organization are currently those of satisfaction and loyalty channels, with the concept of value playing a key role (Anderson, Kumar, & Narus,2007). As a result, relationship marketing has become increasingly important in today's market (Grönroos, 1994). In fact, the goal of relationship marketing is to keep customers loyal. Its goal is to establish a dialogue with them, to understand andanticipate their individualneeds, to supplythemwitha customized offer, and to maximize the long-termvalueoftherelationshipdecidedwiththem(Berry,1995).Ingeneral,the importance of information and communication technology has grown (López- Nicolás & Meroño-Cerdán, 2009). It's not surprising, then, that these companies are also very active in relational marketing (Chaffey, 2015). To develop our proposal, we will look at three aspectsin turn: the role of informationand communicationtechnologies in bringing consumers closer together, on the one hand; their role in improving the satisfaction ofbusiness clients, on the other hand; and, finally, we will use the example of professionals in distance selling to show how they use the tools at their disposal to stimulate the market. With the advancement of information and communication technologies (such as telecommunications and, more specifically, the Internet and electronic commerce), consumer behavior and purchasing processes are likelyto change dramatically(Zhang &Li, 2005). Consumers can now view the most diversified offers in real time and on a planar scale while seated in front of their computer screens (Rohm & Swaminathan, 2004). In some ways, electronic commerce allows customers to access a wide range of products and establish a personalized relationship with businesses (Laudon & Traver, 2016). Because of NICT, marketing has evolved from mass marketing to personalized marketing, allowing businesses

to build strong relationships with their customers, provide personalized information, andbetter respond to their needs (Kaplan & Haenlein,2010). The goal of relational marketing is to develop close relationships with customers by providing them with information and solutions that are directly tailored to their needs and interests while allowing for opendialogue (Morgan & Hunt, 1994)

Forourresearch,weaimtoexplorethefollowingcentralresearchquestion: **How do New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) evolve and impact customer behavior?**

Inexaminingthisissue,weidentifyseveralsecondaryquestions,including:

- HowdoNICTsenhancetherelationshipbetweencompaniesandcustomers?
- HowdoNICTsinfluencethesatisfactionofcustomerneeds?

Toaddressthesequestions,wehaveproposedthefollowinghypotheses:

- **Hypothesis 1:** The evolution of NICTs (New Information and Communication Technologies) leads to changes in customer behavior by creating new opportunities for engagement and communication, increasing accessibility, and driving expectations for personalized experiences.
- **Hypothesis 2:** NICTs (New Information and Communication Technologies) enhance the relationship between companies and their customers by providing better communication channels,increasingaccessibility,andfacilitatingpersonalizedexperiences.
- **Hypothesis 3:** NICTs can influence the satisfaction of customer needs by improving the efficiency and convenience of services, providing real-time information and support, and enabling customization and personalization of products and services.

Toexplorethesehypotheses,wehavestructuredour researchintothreechapters:

- **Chapter I: Theoretical and Conceptual Context on New Information and Communication Technologies** will define customer orientation and the evolution of consumer behavior.
- **Chapter II: Relationship Marketing** will focus on the evolution of relational marketing, its techniques, and the factors that contribute to its success, distinguishing between the various strategies and challenges in the field.
- **ChapterIII: The Role ofNew Information and Communication Technologies** will analyze the impact of NICTs through a survey of focus group results, examining how these technologies shape consumer behavior and marketing strategies.

1 CHAPTERI:THEORETICALANDCONCEPTUALCONTEXTON NEWINFORMATIONANDCOMMUNICATIONTECHNOLOGIES

A framework known as the "Theoretical and Conceptual Context on New Information and Communication Technologies" is used to examine the development and effects of new technologies in the communication domain. The emphasis today is on how new information and communication technologies (ICTs) are changing interactions, accessibility, and global connectedness, whereas earlier models concentrated on well-established communication systems and tools. While the conceptualcontext looks at the role of innovation, adoption, and integration across different sectors, the theoretical approach focuses on comprehending how these technologies impact social, economic, and cultural processes. Examining these technologies' long-term effects on society and business will require a convergence of theoretical knowledge and real-world implementation.

DefinitionofNewInformation

The term"New Information"describesthe comprehensionand analysis ofmaterialthat is new or developing in a particular context (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). With the speed at which technology is developing, new information is constantly being created, frequently in real-time, while in the past, information was frequently static and taken from established sources (Shannon& Weaver, 1949). Making sure that this new knowledge is not onlycorrect but also pertinent and available to those who require it is crucial in the modern world (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). The value and efficacy of new information in decision-making processes are largely determined by the intersection of its development, validation, and application(Polanyi, 1966; Kogut & Zander, 1992).

SourcesofNewInformation

Information is a social production; an event such as a traffic accident, for example, only becomes information ifit isbrought totheattentionofa wider public thanthe simple actorsof this news item. For this, it will therefore be necessary to have means of information (media), for example newspapers, and producers of information, for example reporters. There are generally three stages in this circuit:

- informationresearch

- the formatting of information (at the origin of the word "information" there is theLatin former which means "to put in shape")
- disseminationof information.

The concrete implementation of this circuit presupposes information techniques. Since mankind invented other modes of transmission than word of mouth, more and more efficient means have been used, and dissemination has become planetary (McLuhan, 1964; Castells, 2000). The big news agencies, radio, and television were already worldwide systems of distribution (communication) (Schiller, 2000). The convergent development of electronics, computing, and telecommunications has given rise to the theme of the "information society" (Webster, 2006; Toffler, 1980). Digitization makes it possible to translate all information materials (images, sounds, etc.) into binary, universal language (Bauwens, 2005). A new step has been taken with the advent of a communication medium such as the Internet (Castells, 2009).

CharacteristicsofNewInformation

New information, especially in the context of modern technological advancements, is distinct in several key ways that set it apart from traditional forms of data and knowledge. Below are the key characteristics:

1. **Dynamic and Real-time**: New information is often created and updated in real time, driven by advancements in technology, particularly the internet, social media, and digital communication systems. Unlike static information, which may remain unchanged over time, new information is continuously evolving, often in response to current events and emerging trends (Shannon & Weaver, 1949; Castells, 2000).
2. **Fragmented and Dispersed**: Information today is often fragmented across multiple sources and platforms. In the digital age, data is generated and shared across diverse media, including websites, social networks, sensors, and mobile apps. This decentralizationrequires users to seekout and piecetogether information fromvarious sources (Benkler, 2006).
3. **Interconnected and Networked**: With the growth of digital technologies, new information is increasingly interrelated. The internet and digital networks haveallowedforunprecedentedlevelsofconnectivity,enablinginformationtospread

quickly across global networks. As a result, new information can be rapidly disseminated and easily accessed (Castells, 2009).

4. **Multimedia and Multi-format**: New information is not limited to text; it often includes a mix of images, video, audio, and interactive elements. This multimedia nature makes it moreengaging and accessibleto awiderangeofusers, enhancing both the comprehension and retention of information (Manovich, 2001).
5. **Personalized and Contextual**: Advances in information technology, particularly artificialintelligence(AI)andbigdataanalytics, have made it possible forinformation to be tailored to individual preferences, behaviors, and needs. This personalized information is increasingly being used by businesses to target customers with relevant content and advertisements (Davenport & Beck, 2001).
6. **Global and Instantaneous**: The reach of new information is global, facilitated by digital platforms and the internet. Information can be disseminated instantaneously toa globalaudience, enabling real-time communication and collaboration across borders (McLuhan, 1964).
7. **Virtual and Simulated**: In some contexts, new information exists in virtual environments or is generated through simulations. For example, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and simulations used in various fields such as medicine, education, and entertainment represent new forms of information that provide immersive experiences (Slater & Wilbur, 1997).
8. **Ephemeral and Transient**: Many forms of new information, especially on social media platforms, are short-lived. The rapid pace of content creation and consumption leads to a culture of information that is quicklyoutdated, disappearing as new content constantly replaces it (Boyd, 2010).

.DefinitionofCommunicationTechnologies

"Corporate communication can be defined as the process of listening and transmitting messages and signals to specific audiences aimed at improving image, promoting products, and defending its interests" (Argenti, 2009). The study of communication science aims to conceptualize and rationalize the transmission processes between people, machines, groups, and entities (Schramm, 1954). Next, we'll talk about communication, or more accurately, just "the communication.""Communication in organizations has many functions: searching for andexchanginginformationthatistherawmaterialfordecisions,framingindividualand

group behavior, maintaining motivation, expressing positive or negative ideas and feelings" (Daft & Lengel, 1986).

Ithasseveralaspects:

- **External communication**: which includes, on the one hand, commercial communication primarily oriented towards the promotion of the brand and products, and ontheother hand, institutionalcommunication aimed at the generalpublic and the partners of the organization (Hutton, 1999).
- **Internal communication**: geared towards employees, it is the responsibility of the HRD and has several functions to promote the circulation of information (Kalla,2005).
- **Interpersonal communication**: these are all the written, verbal, or non-verbal means allowing members of the organization to adjust to each other, to construct meaning in their action and to transmit it to others (Keyton, 2017).
- **Horizontal communication and vertical communication**: Internal communication can be vertical, thatis to say along the hierarchical, two-way or only downward path.It canalso be horizontalor transversal, that is to sayconsist ofreciprocalexchanges of information between various units and positions, located at the same hierarchicallevel (Robinson & Judge, 2017).
- **Formal and informal communication**: Formal communication is organized by the company to allow the proper functioning of its services and is compulsory. They include hierarchical communications (ascending and descending) and functional communications (related to the activity of advising functional services in relation to operational ones) (Daft & Lengel, 1986).

However, the companycannot foresee everything and formalcommunications are insufficient to make it function efficiently. They must be supplemented by informal communications. Informal communications occur spontaneously between the company's departments and employees bothto enable the companyto function and to satisfya social need. Theyallow for the mutual adjustment that is essential to the functioning of any organization. Companies that facilitate informal communication and mutual adjustment will therefore gain inresponsiveness and flexibility (Tannenbaum, 1997).

Communication is the result of the meeting and pooling of knowledge fromseveral sciences: notably linguistics, telegraphy, telephony, psychology, sociology, and politics (Miller, 2014).

TypesofCommunicationTechnologies

People may now communicate with one other and share information with big audiences in a number of ways thanks to technology. Early inventions like radio and the telephonedevelopedintoextensive,worldwidenetworksofsatellitesandunderwatercables. We may now connect more quickly and in a wider varietythanks to technology; we can even send pictures and movies from a pocket-sized device all across the world.

- **Telegraph**

Through the use of a series of electrical current pulses, frequently in the form of Morse code, data is transmitted via a wire in a telegraph (Hawkins, 2004). The basic elements are a source of direct current, a wire or cable, and a current-indicating device such a lightbulb, buzzer, or relay(Williams,2008).ThewordisacombinationoftheGreekwords"tele,"whichmeans"far away," and "graphein," which means "to write" (Merriam-Webster, 2023). The telegraph has been around for more than 150 years (Hawkins, 2004).

In 1830, Joseph Henry demonstrated the first working telegraph. This idea was expanded and refined by Samuel F. B. Morse, who used a solenoid and marker to record multiple pulses of varyinglengthon amovingstrip ofpaper(Pound,1998). Dots and dashes stood in for these pulses. Patternsofthese dotsand dasheswere assigned to punctuationsigns, single-digit integers, and alphabet letters. On May 1, 1844, the first official Telegraph transmission was sent (Morse, 1844).

- **Radio**

Radio systems use wireless signals to send video, data, and speech (Hanna, 1995). Shortly after Bell created the telephone, other innovators like Guglielmo Marconi and Nikola Tesla experimented with sending signals over the air using high-frequency electrical circuits and antennas (Berkowitz, 2017; Seifer, 2001).

The concept of broadcasting, where a single transmitter transmits music and voice to thousandsoflisteners,wasinventedby radiosystems(Miller,2011).Cell phones,wireless

data networks, and conventional broadcast stations are all now included in the definition of radio (Lasswell, 2014).

- **Telephone**

Another way to reach a lot of people is through television, but it also has the advantage of visualcommunication (Perrone, 2009). The telephone was created inthe late 1800s as aresult of additional electrical research (Bain, 2002).

Like the telegraph, the telephone sends electrical signals to a receiver at a distance via wires; telephone lines carry real speech sounds rather than staccato clicks that require expertise to decipher (Fischer, 1992).

Despite decades of coexistence, telegraphs are now mostly museum artifacts, whereas telephones continue to be the most common means of private correspondence in 2012 (Chesney, 2010).

Nowadays, there are thousands of television stations that provide information on almost any topic, such as science fiction, sports, history, and news (Brown, 2015; O'Neill, 2017).Whether they are looking for serious data or entertainment, people are constantly turning to television for information (Smith & Thomas, 2018).

- **Satellite**

In the context of spaceflight, a satellite is an object that has been intentionally launched into orbit. These objects are called artificial satellites to differentiate them from natural satellites like the Moon of Earth (Barton, 2006).

Even while radio waves are effective at sending signals, the ionosphere—a thin layer of energetic plasma that sits above the breathing atmosphere—makes long-distance communications difficult (Houghton, 2004).

By receiving radio signals in orbit, boosting them, and then retransmitting them to ground-based receivers hundreds of kilometers away, satellites solve the distance problem. In the 1960s, the first instantaneous worldwide communications were made possible by satellite networks (Wilkes, 2011; Hughes, 2014).

- **Internet**

The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network, a military research project, was the forerunner of the Internet in the 1960s. It was an early data network that made data sharing possible for computer users across different locations (Abbate, 1999).

Communicators no longer need to own a gadget for everytype of communication technology because of the internet. You can do everything in one place with the Internet. Thetechnologies available on the internet facilitate communication of any kind (Castells, 2001; Rheingold, 2002).

Software for video conferences enables both spoken and unspoken conversation (Schroeder, 2013). Written correspondence can be sent via email (Kraut et al., 2002). Any internet device may send and receive electronic pictures (Boulton, 2015).

Software for customer communication is another illustration of one of these technologies. While other devices help businesses communicate with their clients, some technologies are commonly referred to as hybrid since theycombine multiple forms of communication (Liu & Huang, 2010).

We have made great strides in communicationtechnology. Fromtelephone boothsto personal cell phones, we have seen the evolution of technology (Chesney, 2010). We now depend on communication technology so much that without it, our life would come to a complete stop (Castells, 2001).

And long-distance relationships only work because of video calls. If Skype didn't exist, long-distance relationships wouldn't be possible (Rheingold, 2002; Markman, 2017).

Thecommunicationprocess

Defined theoretically, communication refers to the interpersonal process by which signs containing messages are sent and received.

In the first instance, the sender (the transmitter) is responsible for encoding a message prepared in the form of understandable signs, of a verbal or verbal noun nature.

The message is sent through a communication channel to a recipient (a receiver), who is then responsible for decoding or interpreting its meaning.

The communication process can also be defined as a series of questions: who? (Sender), says what? (The message), in what way? (Communication channel), to whom? (Recipient) with what result? (Interpretation).

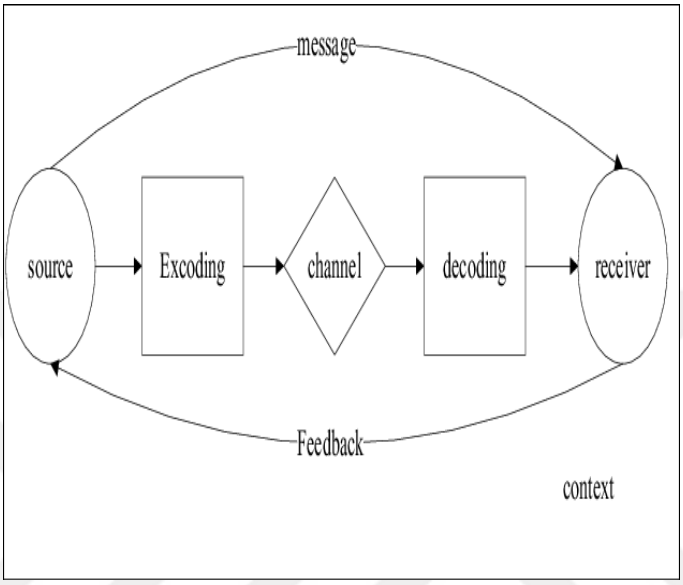

Figure1communicationprocess

The electronic mail, voicemails, video conferences, in-person meetings on computerterminals, and much more are all part ofthe new era of communication. Additionally, the use of intranet resources favors better communication and more effective teamwork within organizations, while internet websites enable staff members to readily exchange ideas and opinions.
The goal is to empower staff members to freely communicate, share information, and work together to find solutions to problems.

GeneralitiesonNewInformationandCommunicationTechnologies

In the various management literatures, we note that there is no consensus on the definition of ICT given their heterogeneityand their complexities. According to *Larousse*, ICT are "all the techniques and computer equipment allowing remote communication by electronic means" (Larousse, n.d.). This definition is narrower and considers ICT as a means that facilitates remote communication. Other definitions that only take the information part cancel the communication,such as that of**HerbertSimon** (NobelPrizeforEconomic Sciences 1978):

"any information accessible to humans in verbal or symbolic form will also exist in a form readable by computer; books and memories will be stored in electronic memories" (Simon, 1978).

ICTs allow the processing, modification, and exchange of information, more specifically digital data. They offer new methods of communication and cover the notion of increased user-friendliness ofits productsand services to awide audience ofnon-specialists. Theybring a "communication" dimension to the processing of information, while freeing themselvesfrom geographical and temporal boundaries.

Thus, new information and communication technologies can be defined as the set of information and telecommunication technologies. They are the results of a convergence betweentechnologies(computer science, telecommunications, audiovisual). Thisconvergence generates a multitude of new possibilities. ICTs abolish boundaries because our relationshipto information, time, and distance is changed. ICTs are a set of tools that are interconnected, combined, and allow for maximum interactivity.

It is clear that Internet technology is a leader in the integration of ICTs, to the point where ICTs and the Internet are becoming increasingly inseparable. We are witnessing a certain democratization of ICTs since they are now accessible to anyone who has a personalcomputer and a modem. The number of people with access to them has therefore increased significantly in recent years. This is not without impact on society as a whole (economy, culture, education, etc.). Their rapid development is reflected in the multiplication of new applications (office automation, multimedia, telematics) which contribute to the transformation of work, the organization of companies, internal relations, and relations with the various stakeholders in the environment (suppliers, customers, partners, social organizations, administration, etc.).

TheICT Approach

Faced with these demands (market opening, alliance partnerships, and globalization), the business must adjust and modify itsstructureusingtheappropriatetools(Porter,1985).Inthis regard, information and communication technologies often abbreviated as "ICT" offer businesses a better opportunity to interact and communicate, strengthen client relationships through relationship marketing (Berry, 1983), enter new markets (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990), ensure more efficient business processes (Davenport, 1993), cut costs, increase the attraction

of investments and partnerships in front of or behind the value chain (Porter & Heppelmann, 2014), and, lastly, preparetheir workforce for thenew challenges ofthis emerging knowledge era (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). These are some of the aspects that the company can benefit fromto prepare itselfto face the competition, and which will make it more competitive in its market.

NatureofICT

The information and communication technologies have a social dimension, and as their influence has grown, they are generally associated with the information society (Castells, 1996). The advent of ICT represents a significant shift for any society in that it eliminates all notions of distance and borders while enabling people to communicate, learn, amuse themselves, and engage in other activities in better settings (Negroponte, 1995). As a result, it provides a new paradigm for society's operation that shifts from the industrial society to the information society (Bell, 1973). However, this also helps simultaneously to drive a radical change in human behavior in environments such as the family, education, work, and general social relations (Giddens, 2000).

CharacteristicsofNICT

Efficiency, mobility, and internationalizationorglobalizationarethree fundamentalaspectsof information and communication technologies in general.

Efficiency: Those who use these technologies are self-employed and self-employed at the same time; partners in a communication operation can swap roles, resulting in a efficiency genre among individuals, businesses, and other communities.

In the absence of time: That is to say, just like with e-mail, one can get zero or more messages at any time.

Decentralization is a termthat refers to the process of Because the Internet is a network that connects people and businesses, it has the ability to continue working in any situation. No portion of the world can stop the Internet because it is a network that connects people and businesses.

Connectivity: Even if the devices are manufactured in different countries or cities, they can all be linked together.

Mobility: This means that the user can benefit from the services while on the move, for example: such as a laptop or a cell phone.

Convertibility: Theycantransmit information fromone mediumto another example transmit a letter heard to a letter written or spoken like electronic reading.

Distribution: That is to say, this network can expand as it encompasses a larger number of people, a larger area with great flexibility.

Globalization: This is the environment where these ICT are activated because they use a larger space in any region of the world and they allow flows of information capital, its decentralization has made it possible to flourish in the international environment, particularly in business transactions, which has made it possible to overcome the problem of time and space.

The computer and communication revolution have led to the explosion of financial markets and information networks: "the transmission of data at the speed of the; the digitization of texts, images and sounds; recourse, become commonplace, to telecommunications satellites; the revolution oftelephony; the generalization ofcomputers in most sectors ofproduction and services; the miniaturization ofcomputers and their networking on the Internet on a planetary scale have little by little, turned the world order upside down "as a process that has been characterized in recent years by the spectacular development of information technologies and the establishment of planetary networks.

TypeofICT

According to the OECD, the ICT information and communication technologysector is the sumofthreesectors:thecomputer sector,theelectronicssectorandthetelecommunications sector. We therefore distinguish the following categories relating to the ICT sector:

• **TheITsectorinwhichwehave:**office machines, personalcomputers, largecomputers, servers, network equipment, peripherals, cards, etc.

• **The electronic sector in which we have**: electronic components, semiconductors, printed circuits, consumer electronics equipment (televisions, radio receivers, record players, video recorders),measuringinstruments,navigationinstruments,computers,productiontechnology etc.

• **Thetelecommunicationssectorinwhichwehave:**professionaltransmissionequipment, switches, relays, terminals intended for users, cables, optical fibers, etc

ICTTools

- **Computers**

The beginning of the information age is marked by the undisputed reign of large computers, but theyare not verynumerous: in 1961, there were 6,000 in the world (Ceruzzi, 2003). Most of them work with punch cards at the entrance and store information on magnetic tape. The terminals are generally installed in a site separate from the rest of the company, and the organizationaland hierarchical model is centralized. Applications develop from the 50s to the 60s. They are focused on reducing the workforce, generally by automating existing procedures. They show no creativity and are content to copy established structures. Computerized applications do exactly the same thing as "manual" applications, but faster and in greater volume (McKenney, 1989). Since then, with networks, computers have become communicative. It is now possible to exchange information between different remote computers (Abbate, 1999).

The computer has quickly become the heart of processing and managing a large part of the informationproducedand consumed inthe company. Withthe constant increase inpower and the regular decrease in costs, computers are now present at all levels of the company (Brynjolfsson & Hitt, 2000). A computer has a brain, a nervous system, organs; we can communicate with it provided we know its language. Its memory is immense and it is not intelligent because despite progress, the computer is only a machine that translates human thought, so it will always remain dependent on man and the instructions that the latter communicates to it. We are still waiting for more powerful computers for maximum services and user-friendliness. New ergonomics are very resource-intensive. Three-dimensionalimages and all forms of animation and interactivity require considerable processing capacity and speed (Norman, 1990).

- **Software**

A computer without a program is not usable; it is necessary to give it information so that it collaborates. First, it is necessary to explain to it what is expected of it and then give it the instructionstoact.Alloftheseinstructionsarecalledaprogram,andalloftheprograms

available on a computer are called software (Bouchard, 1999). The program mustbe writtenin a language that the computer can understand (Knuth, 1997). Every computer is made up ofa set of programs called an operating system or basic software. This operating system is delivered with the computer by the manufacturer (Tanenbaum, 2001). The user can add specific and personal programs.

Basic software or operating systems: This is a set of control and processing programs that allows the management of the different tasks performed by the computer; it is, in fact, the logical intermediary between the user and the computer (Silberschatz et al., 2014). The operating system is cited as MS-DOS, Windows, Unix, etc.

Application software: These are programs developed to meet specific needs. Application software is a program developed for an application that can be either general or specialized. There is software that deals with standard problems such as programming languages (C language, Visual Basic, etc.) and office automation tools (Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc.) (Sommerville, 2011).

- Telecommunicationsnetworks

Eliminatingthenotionofspaceandtime,telecommunicationsnetworkshavecoveredthe world by wired, optical fiber, wireless, etc. Depending on their coverage, theywill be called:

a. **LANs** (Local Area Networks), which correspond in size to intra-company networks. Thecabling distance is a few hundred meters (Tanenbaum & Wetherall, 2011).

b. **MANs**(MetropolitanAreaNetworks): which correspond toan interconnection of afew buildings located in a city(Forouzan, 2007).

c. **WANs**(Wide AreaNetworks):designedtotransportdataacrossacountry(Kurose&Ross, 2017).

These networks can be terrestrial (use of infrastructure at the level: cable, fiber, etc.) or satellite (installation of spacecraft to retransmit signals to Earth) (Oppenheimer, 2010). Telecommunications networks remain dominated by switched telephone networks (Zamora, 2003).Thisrelativesituationcould, however, be modified inthe future,under theeffect ofthe continued growth of the Internet and its entry into the market economy (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014). Under the impact of the Internet, telecommunications networks will move from an architecture dedicated to voice to a structure centered on data (Abbate, 1999).

- **Smartchips**

Toprotect data, businesses andconsumers arenowusingsmartcards for a variety of purposes, suchas banking, accessingemail, bootingup computers,andcheckingphonemessages (Chien&Chen, 2009). If a higher level of security is required, a smartcard isprobablya better choice(Simoens et al., 2009). A fingerprint can easily be stored in the chip's memory, which allows for more advanced validation using a biometric reader (Jain et al., 2000). When the employee presents his or her card to the reader, he or she is also prompted to present his or her biometric reference (fingerprint). This ensures that the person presenting the card is the person for whom the card was issued. Depending on the case, access will be approved or denied (Sutherland & Schmitz, 2004).

differencebetweentheHardwareandSoftwareToolsinICT

- **HardwareToolsin ICT:**

The tangible parts ofanICT systemthat arevisible and touchable are referred to as hardware. The physical components of a computer or other ICT system are called tools. Computers, servers, networking equipment, storage devices (like hard drives), input devices (like keyboards and mice), and output devices (like monitors and printers) are a few examples of hardware. For an ICT system to perform its processing, storing, and communicationfunctions, hardware is necessary.

PhysicalComponents: Hardware parts are made to work together in orderto complete tasks. For instance, software programs are used by a computer's processor, motherboard, and memory to perform tasks. **Data handling:**Data input, output, and storage are made possible by hardware. Networking and data transfer require devices like switches and routers.

- **SoftwareToolsinICT**

Programs, apps, or systems that operate on hardware to carry out particular functions are referred to as software. Software, which is intangible in contrast to hardware, is made to enable hardware by giving it instructions on what to do. System software, such as operating systems like Windows and macOS, and application software, such as word processors, web browsers, and accounting software, are two categories of software.

Functionality: Software makes it possible for hardware to carryout particular operations. An operating system, for instance, controls hardware resources and enables human interaction with the computer, whereas application software enables users toperform certain tasks suchaswordprocessing, webbrowsing, and gaming. **UserInteraction:** Hardware can be operated byusers using an interface provided by software

tools. They can range from enterprise-level programs to simple tools that assist users with daily computer operations.

- **Conclusion**

In ICT, the primary distinctions between hardware and software are found in their characteristics, capabilities, and methods of updating or altering them. Software is etherealand consists of the programs and code that run thehardware, whereas hardware is tangible and includes physical parts like CPUs, RAM, and displays (Tanenbaum & Wetherall, 2011). In a functional sense, software provides the instructions that tell hardware how to carry out tasks, while hardware offers the platform on which software runs, enabling it to do so. Software can be updated through downloads or patches without changing the system'sphysical components, but hardware can be physically changed by expanding a hard drive or adding more RAM (Sommerville, 2011).

.DigitalPlatformsandApplications

Digital platforms are online areas or systems that allow users, companies, and other stakeholders to share information, services, or goods. They serve as go-betweens, bringing together customers and service providers to build value-generating ecosystems. Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, e-commerce sites like Amazon or Alibaba, and cooperative websites like Airbnb and Uber are a few examples. These platforms take advantage ofnetworkeffects, which means that their value increases as theydraw in more users. To enable third-party developers to integrate or construct extra services on top of the platform, they frequently offer APIs (Application Programming Interfaces), resulting in a more extensiveand resilient ecosystem (Parker, Van Alstyne, & Choudary, 2016).

Digital apps, or just "apps," are software applications made to carry out particular functions for users. They can be stand-alone applications or incorporated with digital platforms to offer features like online banking, document creation, photo editing, and email management. Applications can be mobile (made for smartphones and tablets) or web-based (accessible through browsers). WhatsApp, Instagram, Google Docs, and Microsoft Office are a few examples. Apps provide a user-friendly interface for carrying out a variety of tasks orservices, and they are essential to how consumers engage with digital platforms. They are crucial to the effectiveness, productivity, and accessibility of digital interactions.Sommerville (2011)

ImpactofNTICandSocialNetworksonConsumerBehavior

ConsumerBehavior

refers to the study of the choices, actions, and procedures that people or organizations make when they buy, consume, and discard products and services. It entails comprehending how customers choose what to purchase, how to utilize items, and how to assessand discard them. A wide range of elements, such as psychological, social, cultural, and economic effects, are included in consumer behavior and have an impact on purchase decisions. Additionally, it investigates the elements that influence consumers' wants, preferences, attitudes, and perceptions of goods and services.

ImpactofNTICandSocialNetworksonConsumerBehaviour

Our everyday lives are made possible by technology, the Internet, and mobile devices. These digital channels eliminate the concept of consciousness since we are living in a world where we can know everyone and everyone can know us. We are simply related; we are not connected by any means anymore.We no longerneed a third party to present the others to one another. We are limited to a few pixels or a few mouse clicks apart from eachother. This new realitydrasticallyalters how businessesoperate,preventing themfromselling their goods and services inthesamewayasbefore. Because interpersonalrelationshipstakeplace inside a virtual community where all users are connected, they gain power and reach that cannot be equaled.

“Withvirtualchannels, you canreach your customers directly. You don’t haveto worryabout how much to spend on advertising or PR. All you have to do is let the virtual channels do the work… by doing what they want. Give them a voice, add value, make them a tool for connection, engagement, andparticipation. Inthisneweconomy, it’s moreimportantto invest time than money” (Mitch, J, 2010). In the virtual world, users can not only start their own businesses, but also promote their own personal brands. Since they are only a fewpixelsapart, they can promote brands that have the size, power, reach, and influence that rival those of larger companies. While this new reality benefits those who owntheir ownbusinesses, it is fundamentally changing the world of business. New styles of entrepreneurs are emerging every day, and even those who work for an organization are becoming entrepreneurs.

2 CHAPTIRII:RELATIONSHIPMARKETING

Thephrase"relationship marketing"refersto agroupofmarketing initiativesthat aimto build a personal, ongoing, customized relationship with each customer of a brand in order to keep them loyal over the long term and, if feasible, for life. This relationship is built through the creation of an ongoing dialogue between the brand and the customer that takes place over a variety of platforms and channels (website, email, mail, consumer magazine, etc.), and possibly through a system intended to reward the customer (loyalty card, exclusive services, invitations, etc.).

DefinitionOfRelationalMarketing

Relational marketing is a strategic approach to marketing that prioritizes establishing and preserving enduring connections with clients over focusing only on one-off deals. The goal is to establish enduring, individualized relationships that promote client involvement, satisfaction, and loyalty. According to Grönroos(1994),thisstrategyplacesa strong emphasis on ongoing communication, trust, and cooperation between a business and its suppliers, customers, and other stakeholders. With relationalmarketing, the businessgoesbeyond short-term sales goal and concentrates on adding value for clients, learning about their needs, and modifying its products accordingly. This may entail individualized offerings, loyalty incentives, and continuouscustomer service. Businesses can improve client retention, lifetime value, and positive word-of-mouth by developing meaningful relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

EvolutionOfRelationalMarketing

Relational marketing has undergone several significant phases of development. At first, traditional marketing paid little attention to client retention in favor of transactions and the "4 Ps" (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion). Customer relationship marketing, or CRM, first appeared in the 1980s and placed a strong emphasis on retaining customers through customized services and loyaltyplans. Relationship marketing, backed by improved customer data, became a formal strategy by the 1990s, emphasizing commitment, trust, and long-term connections. Relational marketing was transformed in the 2000s by the emergence of digital platforms, social media, and advanced analytics, which made it possible to engage with customersinrealtimeandonapersonallevel.Thesedays,predictedconsumerinteraction

and tailored experiences are being further improved by the integration of AI and machine learning (Berry, 1983; Grönroos, 1994; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

TechniquesOfRelationalMarketing

Relational marketing strategies concentrate on creating and preserving enduring bonds with clients inorderto increase client pleasure and loyalty. These strategies are intended to engage clients throughout their interaction with a company and produce individualized experiences. Important methods consist of:

Customer segmentation is the process by which companies break up their clientele into more manageablegroupsaccordingtoparticulartraits likepreferences, behaviors, ordemographics. This makes it possible to develop marketing plans that are specifically suited to each group, strengthening bonds withpertinent offer and content.

Personalization: Whether through tailored emails, product suggestions, or bespoke services, personalizing contactswithclients fostersdeeper emotionalbondsand increasestheir sense of value. Data analytics is frequently used by businesses to obtain information and efficiently customize services and content.
Loyalty programs: Rewarding consumers for engagement, recommendations, or repeat business helps keep them around over time. These initiatives improve customer lifetimevalue,boostsatisfaction,andprovideincentivesforrepeatbusiness.

consumer feedbackandsurveys:Businessescanbetterunderstandconsumerdemands,resolve issues, and enhance services by routinely collecting customer feedback through surveys, reviews, and direct communication. Additionally, it builds trust and a sense of partnership with clients.

SocialMedia Engagement: Social media platforms give companies the opportunity to interact with clients in real time, respond to their queries, and have deep discussions. Creating a responsive, active social media presence improves brand loyalty and fortifies bonds with others.

Excellent after-sales assistance, including follow-up correspondence, customer service, and troubleshooting,canimprovetheclientexperienceandpromoterepeatbusiness.This

demonstrates to the client that the business cherishes their relationship even after the original purchase.

Email marketing: Tailored email campaigns, like birthday presents, exclusive discounts, or product updates, keep clients interested and feel valued, resulting in enduring partnerships.
Co-creation and Customer Involvement: Including customers in the processof creating goods or services (by crowdsourcing, beta testing, or feedback) can increase their sense of investmentinthecompanyandfortifytheiremotionalbondwithit.

When properly applied, these strategies assist companies in increasing customer satisfaction, establishing trust, and cultivating enduring relationships all of which contribute to client retention and business expansion.

DifferenceBetweenTransactionalMarketingAndRelationshipMarketing

Table1:DifferenceBetweentransactionalandrelationship marketing:

	TRANSACTIONAL MARKETING	RELATIONSHIP MARKETING
Timeperspective	Short term (one shot approach)	Long term (and even lifelong) (continuous approach)
Dominant marketing approach	Marketingmix	Interactive marketing (supportedbythemarketing mix)
Mainstrategiccomponentof thecompany	Objective dimension (productapproach)	Relational dimension (proposalofsolutions)
Customer satisfaction measurement	Customer Market share control(indirectapproach)	Controloftheshareofwallet (directapproach)
Customerinformationsystem	Satisfaction surveys (episodic measurements)	Real-timefeedbacksystems (instantaneous measurements)

Interdependence between company functions	Compartmentalization between functions and limited interfaces (vertical and hierarchical organization)	Transversal approach and importance of interfaces (horizontalandcollaborative organization)

The emphasis and methodology of relationship marketing and transactional marketing arevery different. The goal of transactional marketing is to maximize individual transactions in order to generate short-term sales. Using mass marketing techniques, incentives, and advertising, the main objective is to make quick money, frequently with little considerationfor retaining customers. Success is determined by immediate sales volumes, and customer contacts are usually brief with little post-sale engagement (Kotler, 1967).

Relationship marketing, ontheother hand, is focused oncreating enduring bonds withclients. Through individualized communication and ongoing engagement, it places a strong emphasis on client happiness, loyalty, and engagement. In order to keep clients and raise their lifetime value, this strategy aims to establish a closer relationship with them. Understanding each person's needs, offering outstanding service, and building trust are the main goals. Instead of short-termsales, success is determined by long-term loyalty, customer pleasure, and retention (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Therefore, relationship marketing is about fostering long-termclient ties and loyalty, whereas transactional marketing concentrates on short-term advantages.

Formsofrelationshipmarketing:

Relational marketing can take three primary forms: **database marketing**, **interpersonal marketing**, and **network marketing**.

1. **Database Marketing**:

   Database marketing involves the creation of comprehensive databases that include suppliers, clients, products, and other essential information. This data is stored in historical files (DATAWAREHOUSE), which enable more detailed analysis of customer behavior and profiles through statistical methods like **DATAMINING**. Building a database entail establishing relationships between various datasets and implementing management toolsthat define how dataisstored and accessed. Thegoal

of database marketing is to create and analyze existing relationships between groups, such as product, client, operation, and support, in order to optimize marketing efforts. The database must meet both operational and marketing management needs (Stone & Woodcock, 2014).

2. **InterpersonalMarketing**:

   Interpersonal marketing focuses on identifying the best customers, recognizing their value,and maintaining long-termrelationshipswiththem.Companiesmust understand a customer's lifetime value before implementing personalized follow-up strategies. This approach helps increase brand loyalty through innovative loyalty programs, including personalized direct mail, electronic marketing campaigns, and consumer events (Berry, 1995). These personalized relationships foster stronger bonds between the company and its customers, driving continued business growth.

   NetworkMarketing:

   Network marketing refers to the marketing strategies that leverage networks to enhance business outcomes. These networks can be specific to any homogeneous population, and they can be used for various purposes, such as prescribing, representing, or influencing. The purpose of a network goes beyond selling and includes activities like collaboration, information sharing, and advocacy. Managing these networks requires continuous monitoring and tailored management strategies to suit each specific network's needs (Kotler et al., 2015).

Thecontributionsofrelationshipmarketingandtheconsequencesforthe supplier and the consumer

Table2:contributionsofrelationshipmarketing :

Interestforthesupplier	Contribution	Interestforthe consumer
Minimization of "just in time"stocks Capacityforreductionand decision-making	Speed	Satisfaction; reduction of timeloss;
Loyalty	Interactivity	Possibilityofdialogue

Possibilityof“repairingthe error”	Performancemonitoring	Betteradjustmentofsupply todemand
Reductionoffixedcosts	Resource sharing	Possibilityoflowerprices. "Complete offer"
Loyalty; Increaseinturnover	Intelligence Expertise	Betterconsiderationofthe need.

RelationshipMarketingTools

Thefollowingaresomeofthemostcommontoolsusedinrelationshipmarketing:

• TheDirectmail:entailssendingapersonalizedadvertisementthroughthemail.

• Social media networks: social media networks have evolved into valuable tools for relationship marketing,allowing forgenuineconnectionbetweenthebrandandtheconsumer.

• Telemarketing: Using the phone to do effective relationship marketing is still a viable option;Sephora,forexample, hasadedicated linefor itsVIPcustomers. There isalso alist of all consumer services that can be reached by phone.

• Email:E-mailingallowsyoutomaintainapersonalizedrelationshipwithyourcustomers for a fraction of the cost of a print advertisement.

• Storytelling:Storytelling isaspecific methodthatentails narratingatale inorderto capture theattentionofthecustomer and providethe brand withagenuine imagethat willstrengthen the existing relationship.

• Special offers: This allows you to show a client that you know who they are by offering themadiscountonaproductthattheymight enjoy. After inspectingtheclient purchases, it is feasible to determine the clients preferences.

Theobjectivesandstrategy ofrelationshipmarketing:

Objectives

InthecontextofaCRMproject,relationshipmarketingfocusesondifferentaspects:

- CustomerRelationship,

- Personalization,Individualization,
- Loyalty,DurationoftheRelationshipwiththe Customer,
- MaintenanceofaDatabaseofInformationonCustomersand Prospects,
- MonitoringandAnalysisofPurchases.

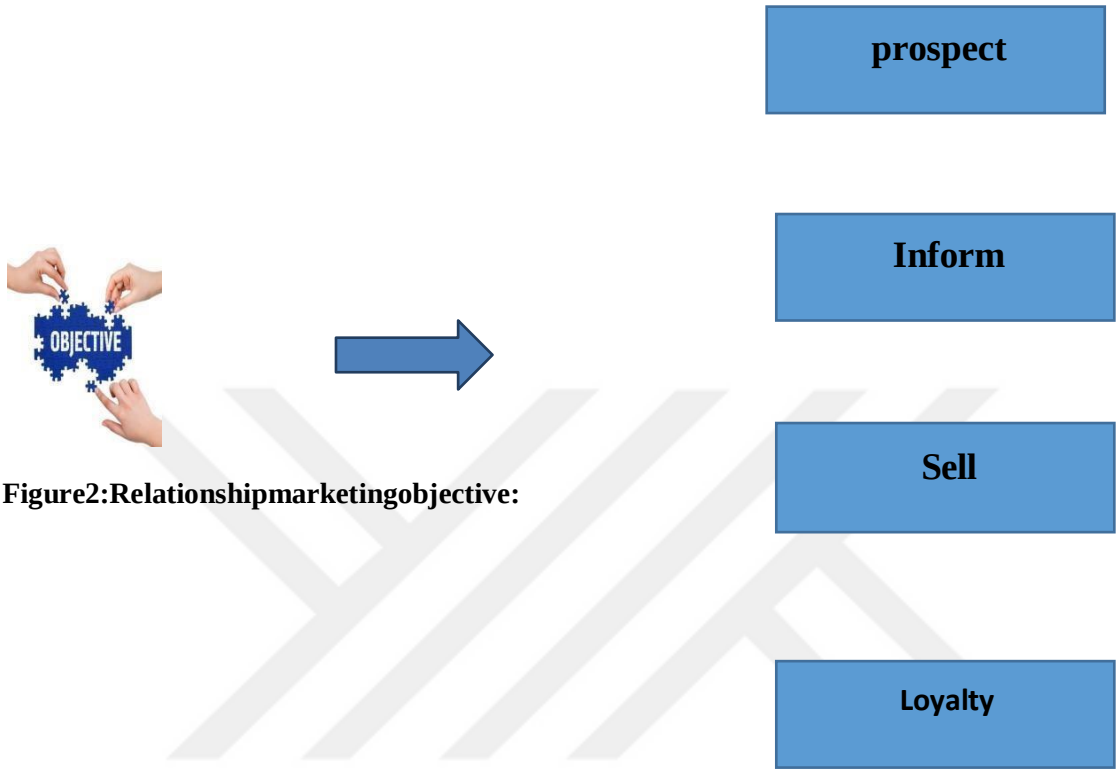

Figure2:Relationshipmarketingobjective:

Relationship marketing focuses on several key aspects within the context of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) project:

Analyzing the Market: This allows businesses to gain valuable insights into the market through consumer surveys, feedback, and telemarketing campaigns. By understanding customer preferences and behaviors, companies can tailor their marketing strategies effectively (Payne & Frow, 2005).

Informing Customers: Businesses use relationship marketing to keep customers informed about key events, such as new prices, promotions, or products. Regular communication ensures that customers are aware of the latest offerings, strengthening their engagement with the brand (Chaffey, 2015).

Sell: To achieve its sales goals, the company needs to develop and maintain a strong relationshipwithitscustomers.Ifarelationshipalreadyexists,thegoal istoreconnectwith

the customer to renew their purchase. For new customers, the focus is ondriving traffic to the point of sale, encouraging purchases through personalized engagement (Kotler et al., 2015).

Build Loyalty: The ultimate goal of relationshipmarketing is to establish and maintain a close, ongoing relationship with the customer. By fostering trust and delivering personalized value, businesses aim to build long-term loyalty and customer retention (Grönroos, 1994).

Strategy:

Figure3:RelationshipMarketing Strategy:

Knowingyourcustomersgoesthroughthecreationand enrichmentofadatabase;

- **Communication:**existsthroughdifferentchannels:mail,email,newsletter,telephone etc.,
- **Activelistening:**isat theheartofourrecruitmentcriteriaandourtraining systems
- **Thereward**:ismade thanksto the loyaltyoperationsofwhichwehave theexpertise
- **Theassociation**:theultimatestep,aimstomake yourcustomerstheambassadorsof your brand

Theplaceofrelationshipmarketinginthemarketingmix:

Within the marketing mix, **direct marketing** can incorporate two primary functions: **distribution** and **communication**. Regarding its function as a distribution tool, it is regarded as a channel. For example, **VPC** (vente par correspondence), whichcanbe used inadditionto other distribution channels (such as the online sale of travel) (Jobber & Ellis-Chadwick,2013). As a communication tool, direct marketing can encompass all aspects of the communication mix, such as advertising, sponsored content, promotions, and more.Compared toother communicationchannels, direct marketing offers the significant advantage of both starting and continuing the conversation, fostering ongoing engagement between the company and the customer (Duncan & Moriarty, 1997).

RelationshipMarketing:ParetoPrinciple:

The **Pareto law**, also known as the **80/20 rule**, was developed by Italian economist and sociologistVilfredoParetoin1896.Thisprincipleisaprobabilisticconceptthathas

applications in various domains, particularly in labor efficiency. It suggests that only 20% of the effort results in 80% of the outcomes, whether positive or negative (Pareto, 1896). Pareto first observed this inequality while studying wealth distribution across several countries, including England, Russia, France, Switzerland, Italy, and Prussia. He noted that, in each of these countries, 20%ofthe population controlled 80% ofthe wealth, a patternthat still holds, though today, just 1% of the population holds around 50% of the global wealth, pointing to increasing inequality (Pech, 2013).

In the 1950s and 1960s, **Joseph Juran**, a Romanian engineer, applied the Pareto principle to quality control, considering it a universal tool for analysis that helps distinguish between the essentials and the extras (Juran, 1964). In business, particularly in **relationship marketing** and **CRM**, the Pareto principle holds that 20%of a company's customers generate 80% ofits revenue. Thus, organizations should focus their marketing efforts on these key customers to maximize returns. This principle underscores the importance of understanding each customer individually to optimize customer relationship management (Peppers & Rogers, 1993).

Loyaltythroughrelationshipmarketing:

customersaretheoneswho createrevenue, everycompanymust do everything it canto retain them. The benefits offered to customers can take different forms, such as:

- Loyaltycards orprograms,
- Exclusiveservices,
- Invitationsto meetings,previews,andexclusives,
- Personalizedadvice,
- Promotionaloffersonhigher-endoradditionalservices.

Different levelsofcustomer loyaltycanbe observed, ranging fromloyaltyto aproduct, brand, supplier, retailer, or store. For example, a customer may exhibit brand loyalty to a specific manufacturer (e.g., Thomson for refrigerators), a product category (e.g., refrigerators and freezers), a distributor, or an online retailer (e.g., Darty) (Oliver, 1999). These varyingdegreesofloyaltyare correlated andoccasionally contingent. For instance, acustomer maybe loyal to Darty because it carries their preferred brand, Brandt, and offers freezers manufactured by a reputable company, Thomson. Despite being somewhat underdeveloped overall, the literature has begun to focus on the idea of the degree or type of loyalty (Crié, 1999).Moreover,itis evidentthat the objectof loyaltyplays a significantrole,although no

studyhasyetthoroughlyexaminedthedifferentobjectsthatcouldguideandsustaincustomer loyalty (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978).

Theadvantagesandlimitationsofrelationshipmarketing:

Advantages:

• **Freedom**: A key feature of relationship marketing is the freedom it offers. One of the main drawbacks of traditional work is the complete lack of freedom experienced by employees,who must align their actions within the global framework set by their employer. This is the opposite of a relationship marketing activity, where individuals enjoy complete autonomy in the workplace. In fact, those who choose multichannel sales have fullcontrol over whether or notto work. Additionally, they have the benefit of choosing their work location and schedule, potentially gaining more time for family. Moreover, this type of work allows for less involvement compared to traditional work contracts binding an individual to an organization. Workers in network marketing have the freedom to work however they choose, as long asthey respect the general business requirements. They also have the flexibility to choose when to take vacation time, although their income level is directly tied to their output (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

• **Opportunity to touch infinite riches**: The main goal of any activity is to generate income for daily expenses, and network marketing offers the significant benefit of unlimited profit potential. Employeesengaged inrelationship marketing earncommissions for eachsale made, unlike salaried employees who receive a fixed income. This suggests that income in network marketing is highly variable and depends on individual performance, with the potential for accelerated financial gains (Tanner et al., 2013).

• **Concentrate on giving your customers value**: Placing emphasis on customer conservation is essential. Relationship marketing provides a strong foundation for achieving a competitive advantage by focusing on quality and service. Studies from various businesses show that the costs associated with retaining existing clients are only a fraction of the costs required to acquire new ones. Thus, it is often more reasonable to focus on nurturing current clients (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Long-term customers can even provide free publicity byreferring others, and they are less inclined to visit competitors, which makes it harder for competitors to enter the market (Grönroos, 1994).

Limits:

Relationshipmarketinghasseverallimitations,amongothers:

- Establishing personalized and regular communication with consumers is very expensive: cost of purchasing the database or entering names, IT costs, media costs (mailing, voice servers, etc.).

- Profitabilityisnotimmediatebecausewearenotlookingtogeneratesales intheshortterm.

- Not all products lend themselves to this form of communication: the purchase must be involving (plane, car) andthe unit price ofthe product and its margin must allow loyaltycosts to be absorbed. For mass consumption products with low unit value

.-Notallconsumersarelookingfor apersonalized relationship.

- Manycompanies hesitateto invest inthecreationandexploitationofthesedatabases: Large- scale distribution still uses mass marketing techniques

The goalofrelationship marketing is to establish and maintain a relationship between a brand and itstargetaudience(customersorprospects).However,relationship marketing isn't just for the store's customers; it's also for potential customers. It involves maintaining a special relationship with potential customers in order to persuade them to make a purchase. Subsequently, several levels of connection are observed in relationship marketing. According to the Pareto law, 20% of clients generate 80% of the total revenue. Therefore, itis essentialto stick with and respect these customers. Once this is done, the relationship can be adjusted based onthetype ofclient. Relational marketing is changing quickly because it keeps up with technological advancements. As a result, we have witnessed the emergence of electronic loyalty cards, delocalized message delivery, and database management (Peppers & Rogers, 2016; Kotler & Keller, 2016; Reichheld, 1996).

3 CHAPTERIII: THE NEW INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONTECHNOLOGIESAPPROACHANDSURVEY ANALYSIS

This chapter includes the study's research methodology as well as the key techniques used to carry it out by the researcher. In this study, a focus group approach is employed as theprimary research technique. A focus group involves a structured discussion with a smallgroup of selected participants, typically guided by a moderator, to explore their perceptions, attitudes, and experiences regarding a specific topic. The qualitative data collected through these discussions provides in-depth insights into the participants' viewpoints, which helps the researcher understand the underlying reasons behind certain behaviors or opinions. Furthermore, this chapter also covers the analysis and results of the research, offering a comprehensive overview of the findings derived from the focus group discussions.

StatementoftheProblem

Through focus group talks, the current study examines how influencer marketing affects Generation Z (Gen Z) and Millennials' purchase behavior in Turkey. The study intends to provide insights into how influencer marketing methods affect customer behavior in different demographic groups through the use of qualitative data from a variety of culturalbackgrounds.

ResearchMethodology

In This research, we aim to understand the effects of cutting-edge information and communications technology (ICT)on relational marketing strategies. This study, in particular sets out to isolate how transforming data driven ICT innovations including for example artificial intelligence and advanced analytics alternate the production of relational marketing strategies. It examines them in the context of how these advancements are turning customer relationship management into personalised engagement. Moreover, the study will investigate how these technologies influence consumer loyalty and satisfaction but also map out weaknesses as well as opportunities emerging through a digital use of advanced ICT tools within relationship marketing practices.

Below are two succinct research hypotheses concerned with the effect of cutting-edge information and communications technology on relational marketing strategies.

H1 - The useofadvanced ICT tools, including artificialintelligence and data analytics greatly enhances relational marketing strategy effectiveness through the improved ability to personalize interactions with customers.

H2: Firms incorporating advanced ICT in their relational marketing strategies would obtain greater levels of customer loyalty and satisfaction as compared to those which avoided reliance on traditional modes of service delivery (Control I firms).

ScopeoftheStudy

Focus groups will be used to collect rich qualitative data for the study on how modern information and communications technology (ICT) affects relational marketing techniques. The goal is to comprehend how emerging technologies, such advanced analytics and artificial intelligence (AI), affect client interaction and relational marketing tactics. An overview ofthe focus group data collection procedure used for this study

DataCollectionandSampling

Thematic analysis will be used as the research's analysis methodto find important themes and patterns in the focus group conversations, especially with regard to the impact of ICT tools like data analytics and artificial intelligence on relational marketing. Comparative analysiswill look at differences between participant groups, while content analysis will measure the frequency of key terms. Sentiment analysis will evaluate the talks' emotional tone, and triangulation will verify the findings' dependability by comparing them to previously published research. Together, these techniques will offer a thorough grasp of how ICT affects relational marketing tactics and consumer interaction.

Discussion Format: To guarantee a fair and impartial discussion, a qualified moderator will lead focus group talks. The moderator will make sure that every topic is discussed and will encouragepeopleto voicetheirthoughtsfreely. RecordingtheSessions: Withtheparticipants' permission,audioandvideorecordingsofthefocusgrouptalkswillbemade.After then,thedatawillbetranscribedforfurtherexamination.

Duration: In order to facilitate in-depth conversations, each focus group session will be between sixty and ninety minutes.

The present study employed a focus group methodology to gather primary data with the aimof examining the effects of influencer marketing on the purchase behavior of Gen Z and Millennial customers living in Turkey. In order to obtain a deeper understanding of how influencer marketing influencesthepurchasingdecisionsand behaviorsofthetarget audience, a series of sixteen questions was used in the focus group method. These questions were intended to facilitate qualitative discussions and exchanges among participants. The conversations were captured on video and written down for in-depth examination and understanding.

A wide range of volunteers representing different cultural backgrounds and life experiences were specifically chosen for the sample. two women and four men made up the balanced gender representation of six participants in each focus group. In order to guarantee rich and different perspectives, the selection criteria placed a strong emphasis on active social media usage, awareness to societal trends, and a diversity of employment experiences.

Three age-based groups with a range ofcultural backgrounds are included in the sampling for this study. The first group, which consists of individuals aged 18 to 25, represents younger GenZand Millennials fromBosnia, Morocco,Turkey, and the Uyghur community. The older Millennials fromIran, Lithuania, and Turkey make up the second group, which spans ages 26 to 34. Participants from Greece, China, Pakistan, and Turkey make up the third group (ages 35–41), which provides perspectives from both younger and older Gen Xers and Millennials. A wide variety of cultural and generational viewpoints are guaranteed in the study because to this varied sampling.

Theclassifications ofthe groupswereas follows:

First Group (Ages 18–25): This group represented younger Millennials and Gen Z from various cultural contexts and consisted of two women and four three men from Bosnia, Morocco, Turkey, and the Uyghur people.

Second Group (Ages 26-34): This group represented somewhat older Millennials with a variety of cultural influences. It was made up of three women and three men from Iran, Lithuania, and Turkey.

Third Group (Ages 35–41): This group, which consisted of three men and three women from Greece, China, Pakistan, and Turkey, offered perspectives from both younger and older Gen Xers and Millennials with a range of cultural experiences.

Data analysis

Presents the participant demographics, categorizing individuals into three distinct groups based on age range, gender, and cultural backgrounds. Group 1 consists of participants aged 18-25, with a gender distribution of 2 women and 4 men, representing diverse cultural backgrounds including Bosnia, Morocco, Turkey, and Uyghur. Group 2 includes participants aged 26-34, with a gender balance of 3 women and 3 men, and their cultural backgrounds encompass Iran, Lithuania, and Turkey. Finally, Group 3 comprises participants aged 35-41, again with an equal gender distribution of 3 women and 3 men, and their cultural origins are Greece, China, Pakistan, and Turkey. This table highlights the varied and multicultural composition of the participants across different age groups.

Table3:Prticipantdemographics:

Group	Agerange	Gender	Cultural Backgrounds
1	18-25	2Women,4 Men	Bosnia, Morocco, Turkey, Uyghur
2	26-34	3Women,3 Men	Iran, Lithuania, Turkey
3	35-41	3Women,3 Men	Greece, China, Pakistan,Turkey

Table4: keysthemeformfocusgroup discussions:

Theme	**Group 1(18-25)**	**Group 2(26-34)**	**Group 3(35-41)**
InfluencerTrust	High trust in influencers;seenas	Trust varies; some skepticismpresent	Lower trust; more criticalofinfluencer

	authentic		motives
Purchasing Behavior	Influencers significantly impact purchases	Moderate impact; more influenced by product quality	Minimal direct impact; influencers seenaspromotional tools
SocialMediaUsage	Heavy usage; strong influence from social media platforms	Moderateusage; balance between social media and traditional media	Less frequent usage; preference for traditional media
CulturalImpact	Influencers often reflect culturaltrends and values	Cultural context affectsperceptionof influencers	Diverse cultural perspectives; more criticalofcultural appropriateness

CommentsAnalysis

Influencers play a key role in shaping purchasing decisions, especially when they align with personal values and appear authentic. Social media platforms like Instagramand TikTok have a strong impact, though some participants prefer product reviews, quality, and independent research. Traditional media and personal recommendations are also important, with some viewing influencers more critically as promotional tools.

Group1(Ages18-25):

- Participants frequently mentioned that influencers play a crucial role in their purchasing decisions, especially when the influencer aligns with their personal values or interests.
- Comments highlighted that authenticity and relatability were key factors in their trust in influencers. Many participants felt that influencers who shared personal stories or demonstrated genuine use of products were more persuasive.
- Theimpact of social media platforms, particularly Instagram and TikTok, was notedto be profound in shaping their purchasing behaviors.

Group2 (Ages26-34):

- There was a mixed response regarding the trustworthiness of influencers. Some participants appreciated the advice and recommendations from influencers, while others were cautious and preferred researching products independently.
- Participants from this group expressed that they were influenced more by product quality and reviews rather than solely by influencer endorsements.
- Social media was used more strategically, withparticipantsfollowing influencers who aligned with their interests but also relying on traditional media sources.

Group3 (Ages35-41):

- This group exhibited a more critical view of influencers, with many perceiving themas promotional tools rather than trusted advisors.
- Participants noted that while influencer marketing was recognized, it did not have a significant direct impact on their purchasing decisions. Instead, they preferred to rely on personal recommendations from friends or family and traditional advertising.
- The influence ofsocial media was less pronounced compared to younger groups, with a preference for traditional media channels.

ComparativeAnalysis

Influencers have a varying impact on purchasing decisions, with some strongly influenced by socialmedia, whileothersprioritizeproductqualityand traditionalmedia. Trust in influencers ranges from high, based on authenticity, to skepticism about their motives. Social media engagement is most frequent among those who use it heavily, while others engage more selectively or favor traditional media. Cultural factors also play a role, with some viewing influencers as trendsetters, while others critically assess their cultural relevance.

InfluenceonPurchaseBehavior

In the first group, influencers have a strong influence on purchasing decisions, primarily driven by high engagement with social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Participants in this group are highly active on these platforms, and their purchasing choicesare often swayed by influencers who align with their values and interests. The authenticityand relatability of these influencers are key factors in establishing trust and driving consumer behavior.

In the second group, the influence of social media recommendations is moderate. While participants are still receptive to influencer endorsements, they tend to adopt a more balanced approach by considering factors like product quality, reviews, and personal research. Theyrely on social media for recommendations but are also more discerning and likely to verify product claims before making a purchase decision.

In the third group, the direct influence of influencers is minimal. Participants in this group prefer traditional media, such as TV and print, and rely more heavily on personal recommendations from friends, family, or colleagues. Theyare less likelyto be influenced by social media endorsements and tend to view influencers with a more critical eye, often questioning their motives and authenticity. This group values trust and prefers more established, direct sources of information.

TrustinInfluencers

In Group 1, participants exhibit high trust in influencers, primarily because they value authenticity. Influencers who share personal stories, demonstrate genuine use of products, or align with the participants' values are seen as more trustworthy. This group tends to believe that influencers are transparent and reliable, especially when they appear relatable and true to their audience. The authenticityof an influencer’s content whether it’s about their lifestyle or product recommendations plays a crucial role in fostering trust and encouraging purchasing decisions.

In Group 2, trust in influencers varies. While some participants still trust influencers, appreciatingtheir adviceandrecommendations, othersare morecautious. Skepticismarisesas participants recognize the potential for influencers to be motivated by financial incentives or brand partnerships. This group tends to approach influencer recommendations with a more critical mindset, balancing influencer opinions with other sources, such as product reviews or independent research. Theyare less likely to blindly follow influencers and are more focused on gathering a variety of information before making purchasing decisions.

In Group 3, trust in influencers is lower overall, with participants often viewing them with skepticism. This group is more critical of influencer motives, believing that influencers are primarilydrivenbycommercialinterestsandsponsorshipsratherthangenuine

recommendations. Participants are waryofthe authenticityof influencers and tend to question whether their endorsementsarebased onpersonalexperience orpaid partnerships. Asa result, theyare less likely to trust influencer-driven marketing and prefer more traditional sources of information, such as word-of-mouth from friends and family or reputable media outlets.

SocialMedia Engagement

In Group 1, participants demonstrate heavy usage of social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, where they engage with influencers regularly. These platforms play a central role in their daily lives, and they are highly influenced by the content shared by influencers. The constant exposure to influencer recommendations shapes their purchasing behavior, and they often rely on these platforms for product discovery, trends, and lifestyle inspiration. Social media is an essential tool for staying connected to the latest trends, and influencers play a key role in shaping opinions and choices. The frequency and intensity of their engagement with social media platforms amplify the influence of influencers on their decision-making.

In Group 2, social media usage is moderate, with participants following influencers more strategically. They are selective about the influencers they follow, often focusing on those whose content aligns with their specific interests or needs. These participants may follow influencers for particular product categories or lifestyle choices but tend to limit their engagement to avoid overload. While they are still influenced by social media recommendations, they place greater importance on product reviews, recommendations from peers, andtraditionalmediasources. Their socialmediausage is morecalculated and aimed at gaining valuable insights rather than seeking entertainment or trends.

In Group 3, social media usage is less frequent, with participants showing a clear preference for traditional media like television, print, and radio. While they may occasionally engagewith social media, they do not rely on it for product recommendations or decision-making. This group tends to trust more established forms of advertising and communication, such as TV commercials, newspaper ads, and personal recommendations from friends or family.Their lower engagement with social media platforms means that influencers have less of an impact on their purchasing behavior, and traditional media remains their primary source of information and influence.

CulturalImpact

In Group 1, influencers are seen as powerful figures who not only reflect cultural trends but also actively shape them. Participants view influencers as trendsetters, with the ability to introduce and popularize new styles, behaviors, and values. They play a significant role in defining cultural norms, especially on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, where trends can go viralquickly. Influencers in this group are often credited with influencing everything from fashion and beauty standards to social causes and lifestyle choices. As a result, participants feela strong connection tothe cultural movements promoted by influencers, often adopting or participating in trends they see online.

In Group 2, cultural context influences perceptions of influencers, but it is not the sole determining factor. While participants recognize the cultural backgrounds and values of influencers, they are more critical in their evaluation. The influence of cultural trends is considered alongside other factors, such as the quality of the content, product relevance, and personal interests. Culturalelements shape how participants engage with influencers, but they are not the primary driver of their purchasing decisions or attitudes toward influencer marketing. This group tends to view influencers through a more nuanced lens, balancing cultural relevance with other key considerations.

In Group 3, participants offer more diverse perspectives on the cultural appropriateness of influencer content. They are often critical of influencers who they feel may not fully understand or respect cultural differences, particularly when it comes to representing diverse cultural backgrounds. This group is more likely to challenge the authenticity of influencers' portrayals of cultural trends, particularly if they perceive these trends as beingcommercialized or misrepresented. Participants in this group emphasize the importance of cultural sensitivity and authenticity, viewing influencers who exploit cultural symbols for profit with skepticism. They are more inclined to question whether influencers are genuinely contributing to cultural conversations or merely capitalizing on them for financial gain.

Result ofthe research

This study offers significant insights into the impact of influencer marketing on thepurchasing behavior of various generational and cultural groups in Turkey. It reveals distinct differencesinhowGenZ,Millennials,andoldergenerationsperceiveandengagewith

influencer-driven content. Younger participants, particularly those in the 18-25 age group, were highly influenced by social media influencers. They valued authenticity and relatability, often relying on influencers for product recommendations, and were heavily engaged with platforms like Instagram and TikTok. This group was more likely to trust influencers who shared personal stories or demonstrated genuine use of products. Their purchasing decisions were frequently shaped by social media content, with influencers playing a significant role in both trend-setting and product discovery.

On the other hand, older participants, particularly those aged 35-41, showed a much lower level of influence from influencers. They expressed a preference for traditional media sources such as TV, newspapers, and personal recommendations from family and friends when making purchasing decisions. This group was more skeptical of influencer marketing, often questioning the authenticity of influencer endorsements and viewing them as commercialtools rather than genuine advisors. They valued direct, personal connections and trusted established forms of media over influencer-driven content.

Trust in influencers varied significantly across the generational groups. Younger participants exhibited the highest levels of trust, largely due to the authenticity they perceived in influencers. They were more likely to believe that influencers were offering genuine product recommendations based on personal experience, rather than solely motivated by financialgain. In contrast, older participants were more cautious and expressed varying degrees of skepticism, especially when it came to the perceived commercial motives behind influencer endorsements. For these participants, the influence of traditional media and word-of-mouth recommendations from trusted individuals outweighed the credibility of influencers.

Culturalfactors also played a keyrole inshaping howinfluencers were perceived acrossthese generational groups. Younger participants were more likely to view influencers astrendsetters, seeing them as integral to shaping cultural movements, from fashion to social causes. They often admired influencers for their ability to start trends and push boundaries. However, older participants were more critical of this role, questioning whether influencers accurately represented cultural values or were simply capitalizing on trends for profit. They were particularly concerned about the commercialization of culture and the authenticity of influencers, feeling that many influencers were exploiting cultural symbols without truly understanding their significance.

Overall, the study underscores the evolving nature of influencer marketing, highlighting how its effectiveness varies significantly across age groups and cultural contexts in Turkey. It suggests that for influencer marketing to resonate across diverse generational and cultural segments, brands need to consider the authenticity of their influencers, the media preferences of different age groups, and the cultural sensitivities of their target audiences.

LimitationsoftheStudy

There are a number of restrictions on this study on influencer marketing in Turkey. The findings'generalizabilityisconstrained bythe limitedsample size (sixparticipantsper group). The study's emphasis on particular age groups and ethnic backgrounds may not fully capture the diversity of viewpoints, and focus groups may introduce biases like group conformity or moderator influence. Furthermore, the study depends on qualitative data, which, although informative, do not offer a more comprehensive, quantitative knowledge of the problem. Additionally, the study ignores conventional types of influencer marketing and focuses on specific socialmedia sites, leaving out more recentones. Lastly, because influencer trends are constantly changing, the results could soon become old.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, influencer marketing's effectiveness in shaping consumer behavior depends heavily on age, cultural context, and social media engagement. For brands and marketers, these findingssuggest thatto maximize the impact ofinfluencer marketing, campaignsshould be tailored to the specific preferences, trust levels, and media consumption habits of different age groups.

The success of the relational approach can be explained by the relevance of a strategy which, in the current context of fierce competition, is based on customer loyalty to the detriment of customer renewal to the detriment of permanent renewal. Indeed, relationship marketing consists of attracting, maintaining and strengthening the relationship with the customer. This conception, based on the notion of exchange, favors relational exchange, which refers to along temporal pattern, as opposed to a transactional exchange, characterizes a one-off relationship, not to say ephemeral. Relational exchange presupposes a deeper knowledge of thetarget,unnecessaryona single transaction. Information must be collected, stored, updated, which makes it essential to set up a database.

In this logic, the improvement of commercial productivity comes from the knowledge of marketing data, fed by information whose origin is identified.

Household consumption and industrial consumption are therefore both part of a so-called “demand construction” logic, in which both the supplier, upstream, and the customer, downstream, intervene to participate, along with the companies.has the definition ofan offer adapted to these types of clienteles.

The results of the survey that was given to the respondents revealed a lot of fascinating information about the effects that NICTs have on customers and how relational marketers employ them. The data's findings highlight the significance of these technologies for advancing personalization, enhancing the consumer experience, and fostering connections. In the current digital business landscape, NICTs are essential for achieving goals related to relational marketing with customers. As a firm, you need to possess this knowledge and expertise to be successful.

The ultimate fusionand consequences ofnew informationand communicationtechnologies in the relational marketing realm could be outlined as: The effect of new information and communication technologies (NICTs) onrelational marketing is the waybusinesses now meet targeted customers, so the purpose of this paragraph is details the new way businesses can interact with customers. The depth of this paper in its entirety has looked into different areasof this change which is broken down into a few chapters. The first chapter of thisinvestigation depicts the advancement of customer conduct in the advanced period with an extensive concentration on customer direction. Among the most important components of marketing cited were from the 20th century where; the emphasis on building long-term customer is known as relationship era of marketing and second recognized component of marketing during this period was known as changing era in development of marketing from transactional marketing to the retention of business relationships, show that relationship is playing key role during this period (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010, p, 10). NICTs can empower customers making them far more knowledgeable and will let them desire customized experiences (Smith & Wiese, 2007).

Relationship Marketing and howthe concept beganand the different Strategiesused, focusing towards Customer Relationship Management, Social Media Engagement and Content Marketing (Peppers & Rogers, 1997; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), the chapter also mentions that brands are finding ways to get consumers to love their brand even more through having themjoin like communities thereby increasing the customer's Lifetime Value (LTV). With an impact on customer behavior and brand loyalty as concluded in Chapter 3- NICT Approach and Survey Analysis. The survey results show the impact of relationship marketing. The results from the survey of personal marketing, social media, and mobile technology are a few ofthe highlights fromChapter 3 (Davenport 2020, De Vries et al., 2012). The introduction of this research paper details many implications of the research for marketers and businesses some of which may be higher costs because of personalization. We have learned through our research that personalization is important to the consumer and that creates more demand for personalization. Using data analytics and AI, marketers and businesses need to know that if they want to compete on the experience then they have to deliver more personalized experiences (Rust & Huang, 2014). Using social media Strategically: social media has now become a necessity when companies deal with their customers. In order for businesses to really make a great customer experience through social media, theyhave to know how to use

these platforms. They should create an environment favorable to opportunity and have to create some loyalty for the people who believe in their brands (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

As Javornik (2016) argued, these two technologies will have a big impact on building a more immersive and interactive customer experience. Voice-activated technology has experienced significant growth in popularity in recent years with the development of IoT devices and voice-activated assistants (Laudon & Traver, 2018). As voice-activated technology has advanced, developers have created new IoT devices and voice-activated assistants that have brought forth a plethora ofopportunities to companies in their customer engagement and data collecting initiatives (Laudon & Traver, 2018). The predicaments around ethics and confidentiality of customer information are more and more important as organizations unquestionably use more customer facts. It is imperative that corporations confront these obstacles in an ethical manner since customers place an immense amount of trust in their hands (Martin, 2016).

Overall, Customer transactions and data management could be saved on the Block-Chain that can help protect data, offer transparency, change the way trust is made, more than that it'svery quick reaching a consensus before updating the ledger as at when due (Iansiti, M., & Lakhani, K. R. 2017).Thus, the networking between the producer and consumer on customer decision journey and opportunities are the role of new information and communication technologies (NicTech) which are increasing and which are representing quite the challenge for brands. But also have opportunities to overcome these challenges ifthey want to continue to reach high customer levels, the companies have to keep up to date with the latest technology and change their strategies to accommodate the changes the customers are expecting. The future of relational marketing is poised to be more personalized, interactive, and technologically driven, emphasizing the importance of ethical practices and customer centric approaches .

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