

Effectiveness of Marketing Communication on the Sales Performance of Nepal Telecom

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of marketing communication on the sales performance of Nepal telecom. Sales performance is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship and direct marketing. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, direct marketing and sales performance. The study is based on primary data from 126 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, a structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and effectiveness of marketing communication on sales performance of Nepal Telecom.

The study showed a positive impact of advertising on sales performance. It indicates that higher the advertising, higher would be the sales performance. Similarly, the study showed a positive impact of sales promotion on sales performance. It indicates that higher the sales promotion, higher would be the sales performance. Likewise, the study also revealed a positive impact of publicity and public relation on sales performance. It indicates that higher the publicity and public relation, higher would be the sales performance. Further, the study observed a positive impact of sponsorship on sales performance. It indicates that higher the number of sponsorship, higher would be the sales performance. In addition, the study observed a positive impact of direct marketing on sales performance. It indicates that adoption of direct marketing strategy leads to increase in sales performance.

Keywords: sales performance, advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, direct marketing

1. Introduction

Marketing communications assist to define an organization's associations with consumers not just by the kind of messages exchanged, as well as by the choice of medium and occurrence to go with their customers' preference (Guinn, 2006). According to Pickton and Broderick (2001), marketing communications tools that were traditionally separated and specialized in "above the line" and "below-the-line" activities, should be now integrated under the IMC concept. The study claimed that synergy is the principal benefit of bringing together the various facets of marketing communications in a mutually supportive way. From this perspective, marketing communication decisions should focus on the marketing communications channel that offers the highest benefit for all the stakeholders. The focus of this definition is still very much on communication functions (tactics) rather than on the broad view of establishing close relationships to multiple stakeholders. The integration of marketing communication should not be understood as a simple uniformity of the message transmitted across different channels (Kitchen and Uzunogu, 2014). Lin and Chang (2010) stated that marketing communication operates as a link between a seller or producer and a customer. The seller uses diverse promotional techniques to acquire the target market, depending on the features of the product, psychological opinion and point of view of the target audience. The reaction of customers to the marketing communication mix of a firm

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has continually been a concern of huge theoretical and practical value and that is why marketers at all times put great hard work to coordinate between an organization's marketing communication activities and sales performance for sustainability and growth of the firm (Matthyssens and Johnston, 2006). Due to complex and competitive business environments, demand changes constantly hence business entities have to enhance the levels of income by focusing attention on customer awareness and retention. Furthermore creating awareness and successive purchase is necessary for most organization achievement and continuing growth but the main challenge is to evaluate and assess the effect of their marketing communication work and their market outcome in the market (Okyere *et al.*, 2011).

Mihart (2012) investigated the impact of integrated marketing communication on consumer's behavior. The study concluded that the evolution of modern marketing, where integrated marketing communication has become a major way of achievement the objectives of a company. The study also showed that there is a need to identify opportunities to increase the integrated marketing communication on consumer behavior. Similarly, Onditi *et al.* (2012) analyzed the impact of marketing communication mix on sales performance. The study revealed that in order to improve the marketing tools, marketing mix must be improved. Likewise, Beverland *et al.* (2006) argued that the marketing-sales relationship is a complex one, consisting of many different elements. Homburg *et al.* (2008) examined the relationship between sales and marketing where the study shows a multidimensional model of the marketing and sales interface. The findings suggested that the most successful configurations are characterized by strong structural linkages between marketing and sales and a high extent of market knowledge in marketing. Likewise, Duncan and Moriarty (1998) revealed the parallel shifts in communication and marketing theory and show the intersections between communication and marketing.

Ramos and Franco (2005) explored the positive impact of marketing communication where the study revealed a theoretical basis that showed the influence of marketing communications as a marketing effort, on the determination of the product's brand equity. The study also concluded that brand awareness is reached through a company's marketing communications efforts towards brand equity. Similarly, Gummeson (1994) revealed that marketing budgets are being restructured to devote more resources to defensive marketing. The study also revealed that with the growth of marketing databases and the internet, reaching customers individually became a viable strategy for a wide range of firms including companies in the consumer products industry. Likewise, Hajduk (2016) investigated the necessity if advance marketing communication techniques. The study stated that increasing demands of receivers, many people are suggesting to use external marketing communication professionals which help the company to understand their customers better and also it will help them to evolve and get more engaged with customers.

Andersen (2001) examined the relationship between marketing and marketing communication. The study showed that model which integrates the development of marketing relationships with marketing communication practice. Similarly, Peterson *et al.* (2015) analyzed the relationship between sales and marketing communications. The study showed that sales and marketing communications can be a complex one with each side having its own perspectives. The study also concluded that gathering data from marketing respondents would provide dual validity as the present study focused only on the perspectives of the sales professionals. Likewise, Kitchen and Proctor (2015) investigated the changes brought

on marketing communication due to globalization. The study revealed that marketing communication is changing shape, transforming into new configurations and forms as a result of the essential technological revolution and in the face of ongoing recessionary influences. The study also found that for the first time in history, people are now exerting more influence and control over marketing processes. Further, Lagrosen (2005) examined the effects of internet on the marketing communication of service companies. The study concluded that three different communications strategies are used depending on the scope of internet use and the extent to which the companies utilize relationship marketing. Small or decentralized companies use the personalized relationship communication strategy. Large companies have the option of using either the mass relationship communication strategy or the mass transaction communication strategy.

Danaher and Rossiter (2011) examined the perceptions of marketing communication channels. The study concluded that the traditional channels of television, radio, newspapers and direct mail retain their historically favored attributes of trust and reliability of information that make them still preferred by consumer recipients of marketing communications. Similarly, Krizanova *et al.* (2019) investigated the effectiveness of marketing communication and importance of its evaluation in an online environment. The study found that the essence of marketing effectiveness is particularly useful in any business, as it assumes better business stability, long-term profit growth, increased customer satisfaction, competitive advantage, and business sustainability. Likewise, Castronovo (2012) explored the social media in an alternative marketing communication model. The study found the various social media marketing tools which is very useful for the marketers to interact and deal with the customers.

In the context of Nepal, Sharma (2021) investigated the effect of advertisement and sales promotion on sales revenue of telecommunication industry. The study revealed that Nepal Telecom needs to bring additional marketing communication tools to get much positive influencing impact of the marketing communications tools to increase the sales volume. The study also concluded that while creating advertisements, the marketing department should focus much on the trademark, despite the trademark is unique it should be much more impressive, than the slogan and color of the company. Likewise, Bista (2010) examined the effectiveness of advertising and sales promotion which has also given much more options to choose the brand for customers. The study concluded that Nepalese consumers are not forced to buy any particular brand, rather they are provided with different brands and they are quite free to choose the brand they think are the best it is because of developed marketing tools which foster marketing communication in the market to deal with customers. The study also concluded that marketing communication has made easier for customers to know about different brands and their quality. Further, Gyanwali (2019) explored the marketing in micro, small and medium enterprise. The study showed that marketing practices and decision making seems more creative, alternative, instinctive, informal, unstructured, chaotic, and unplanned. The study also concluded that conducting marketing in small business is different than in large organization because multinationals do not have the resource constraints that small businesses have.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the effect of marketing communications on the sales performance. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support

one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the effectiveness of marketing communication on the sales performance of Nepal Telecom. Specifically, it examines the relationship of advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, and direct marketing with sales performance of Nepal Telecom.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on the primary data which were collected from 126 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, direct marketing, and sales performance. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

The model

The model estimated in this study assumes that sales performance depends upon effectiveness of marketing communication. The dependent variable selected for the study is sales performance. Similarly, the selected independent variables are advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, and direct marketing. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

Consumer buying behavior = f (advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship and direct marketing).

More specifically,

$$SP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ADV + \beta_2 SAP + \beta_3 PPR + \beta_4 SPON + \beta_5 DM + e$$

Where,

SP = Sales performance

ADV = Advertising

SAP = Sales promotion

PPR = Publicity and public relation

SPON = Sponsorship

DM = Direct marketing

Sales performance was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "I believe Nepal Telecom's sales have been consistently improving over time", "I believe Nepal Telecom's sales performance is competitive in the telecommunications industry" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.858$).

Advertising was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I find Nepal Telecom’s advertising campaigns effectively communicate the benefits of its products”, “I find Nepal Telecom’s advertisements memorable and engaging” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.839$).

Sales promotion was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I find Nepal Telecom’s sales promotions are attractive and enticing”, “I often take advantage of Nepal Telecom’s sales promotions when making purchasing decisions” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.838$).

Publicity and public relation was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I find Nepal Telecom’s publicity activities effectively create positive perceptions about the brand”, “I trust information coming from Nepal Telecom’s public relations efforts” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.856$).

Sponsorship was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Nepal Telecom’s sponsorship activities positively influence my perception of the brand”, “I am more likely to support Nepal Telecom because of its sponsorship involvement” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.805$).

Direct marketing was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I find Nepal Telecom’s direct marketing efforts intrusive”, “I find Nepal Telecom effectively communicates its promotions and offers through direct marketing channels” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.807$).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

Sales promotion

Sales promotions are short-term incentives to encourage the purchase or sale of a product. Sales promotion as any activity intended to generate a temporary boost in sales (Blythe, 2006). Similarly, Farhangmehr and Brito (2015) examined the sales promotions: Prescriptive definitions and the managers’ view. The study showed that sales promotion has a positive impact on sales performance. Likewise, Ajagbe *et al.* (2014) explored the impact of promotional activities on consumer behavior. The study concluded that sales promotion to an organization growth has its contribution in the insurance industry because the growth of this industry is mainly tied to the success of good product brands and sales promotion. Further, Gedenk *et al.* (2010) found that sales promotions are a marketing tool for manufacturers as well as for retailers. The study also concluded that manufacturers use them to increase

sales to retailers (trade promotions) and consumers (consumer promotions). Further, Mela *et al.* (1997) concluded that in the long run, it is feared that sales promotions increase price sensitivity and destroy brand equity both with retailers and consumers. In addition, Xu and Huang (2014) investigated the effects of price discounts and bonus packs on online impulse buying. The study found that sale promotions often come in the form of discounts which might grow the sales performance of the company for a short term. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between sales promotion and sales performance.

Advertising

Advertising is one of the elements of the promotion mix which is considered prominent in the overall marketing mix. Similarly, Assaf *et al.* (2015) investigated the impact of advertising in sales performance. The study found that advertising induces consumers to alter subjective valuations of a product; it changes consumers' tastes and behaviors in favor of an advertised product, leading to a less-elastic demand. The study also conclude that advertising spending has a positive effect on firms' market values as well as increasing demand which will positively influence sales. Similarly, Pechmann and Catlin (2016) explored the advertising repetition. The study concluded that mass media advertising and public service announcements (PSAs), messages are placed on product labels. Likewise, Olayinka *et al.* (2015) investigated the impact of advertising on sales performance. The study concluded that advertising is any personal paid form of non-personal information which is directed to the consumers or target audiences through various media in order to present and promote a product, services and idea Further, Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) explored the impact of advertising on sales. The study stated that in an effort to improve managing and gain audience attention, advertisers create branding moment that will resonate with target markets, and motivate audiences to purchase the advertised product or service, advertisers copy test their advertisement before releasing them to the public. In addition, Nzioka and Waithaka (2021) analyzed the relation of advertising and sales performance. The study found that advertising plays a significant role in determining the level of sales performance. The study also concluded that advertising was widely used as a promotional mix tool by the commercial banks. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₂: There is a positive relationship between advertising and sales performance.

Publicity and public relation

Publicity is the disseminating of information by personal or non-personal means, which is not directly paid for by the organization, nor is the organization the source. Aworemi *et al.* (2008) examined the impact of publicity and public relations on the performance. The study concluded that publicity and public relation is concerned with making good relations with consumers as well as creating firm's image. Similarly, Inganga and Kibe (2023) analyzed the relation between publicity and public relation with sales performance. The study found that adopting public relations strategy is one of the marketing strategies to help them enhance sales in a business environment that faces tight competition, which has hindered them from registering modest profits. Likewise, Mersham *et al.* (2009) examined the public relations and communication management. The study stated that the publicity in its simplest form is the means of conveying information to the general public through the media. Further, Aula

(2010) analyzed the social media, reputation risk and ambient publicity management. The study found that the better media chose the better result obtained. In addition, Ahluwalia *et al.* (2000) concluded that public relation should be noted that publicity is communication and communication is a two-way transaction. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between publicity and public relation and sales performance.

Sponsorship

George (2012) explored the effect of sponsorship on marketing communication performance. The study argued that sponsorship is a two way mutually beneficial partnership between an organization being sponsored and the sponsor which will be directly related to marketing communication. Similarly, Lee *et al.* (1997) examined the attitudinal constructs towards sponsorship. The study concluded that since traditional media have become more expensive, sponsorship is viewed by marketers as a cost-effective alternative. Likewise, Palmer (2005) assessed the sponsorship as a marketing communication tool. The study stated that sponsorship is getting involved and/or investment in events or causes in order that an organization can achieve objectives such as increased awareness levels, enhanced reputation, etc. Further, Naidenova *et al.* (2016) found that football sponsorship is more charity than commercial investment. In addition, Kim and Jung (2015) assessed the effect of sponsorship on firms' performance. The study revealed that the performance of players sponsored by the firm has a significant and positive impact on the firm's revenue. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between sponsorship and sales performance.

Direct marketing

Direct marketing as an interactive system of marketing that uses one or more advertising media in acquiring a measurable response and/or transaction at any location. Similarly, Muhanji and Ngari (2015) analyzed the influence of integrated marketing communication and sales performance. The study found that financial sector has extended its face to face selling towards direct marketing of products and services in the form of phone, mail or computer transactions so that, firms can identify their customer interests. Similarly, Todorova (2015) investigated the changes in direct marketing by years. The study concluded that direct marketing is not considered as part of the promotional mix, but it has become an integral part of the integrated marketing communications of many organizations and often includes separate targets, budgets, and strategies. Likewise, Kim and Kumar (2018) examined the effectiveness of direct marketing in marketing communication. The study showed that direct marketing efforts are geared toward explicitly featuring economic or relational values. Further, Brassington and Pettit (2000) analyzed the effectiveness of direct marketing. The study explored that direct marketing is an interactive system of marketing, using one or more advertising media to achieve measurable response anywhere, forming a basis for creating and further developing an on-going direct relationship between an organization and its customers. In addition, Kurniawan and Suhermin (2023) analyzed the influence of sales promotion, direct marketing and personal selling on consumer purchase intention. The study revealed that through direct marketing consumers can save time and for sellers to establish long-term

relationships with customers and gain new opportunities. Likewise, Karaxha *et al.* (2016) revealed that direct marketing is very important in creating good relations with clients for the presentation of new products/services. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₅: There is a positive relationship between direct marketing and sales performance.

3. Results and discussion

Correlation analysis

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients matrix

This table presents Kendall’s Tau coefficients between dependent variable and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 126 observations. The dependent variable is SP (Sales performance). The independent variables are ADV (Advertising), SAP (Sales promotion), PPR (Publicity and public relation), SPON (Sponsorship), and DM (Direct marketing).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	SP	ADV	SAP	PPR	SPON	DM
SP	3.154	0.698	1					
ADV	3.167	0.778	0.105**	1				
SAP	3.135	0.662	0.085**	0.224**	1			
PPR	3.171	0.608	0.127*	0.193**	0.070	1		
SPON	3.178	0.665	0.160*	0.139*	0.193**	0.154*	1	
DM	3.152	0.762	0.228**	0.196**	0.081**	0.228**	0.184**	1

Notes: The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the result are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows that advertising is positively correlated to sales performance. It indicates that higher the advertising, higher would be the sales performance. Similarly, sales promotion is positively correlated to sales performance. It indicates that higher the sales promotion, higher would be the sales performance. Likewise, publicity and public relation is positively correlated to sales performance. It indicates that higher the publicity and public relation, higher would be the sales performance. Further, sponsorship is positively correlated to sales performance. It indicates that higher the number of sponsorship, higher would be the sales performance. In addition, direct marketing is positively correlated to sales performance. It indicates that adoption of direct marketing strategy leads to increase in sales performance.

Regression analysis

Having indicated the Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, and direct marketing on sales performance.

Table 2

Estimated regression results of advertising, sales promotion, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, and direct marketing with sales performance

The results are based on 126 observations using linear regression model. The model is $SP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ADV + \beta_2 SAP + \beta_3 PR + \beta_4 SPON + \beta_5 DM + e$ where the dependent variable is SP (Sales performance). The independent variables are ADV (Advertising), SAP (Sales promotion), PPR (Publicity and public relation), SPON (Sponsorship), and DM (Direct marketing).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					Adj. R _{bar} ²	SEE	F-value
		ADV	SAP	PPR	SPON	DM			
1	2.988 (10.401)**	0.144 (1.808)					0.184	0.6922	3.27
2	2.78 (9.218)**		0.119 (1.269)				0.005	0.6967	1.61
3	2.437 (7.469)**			0.226 (2.238)*			0.312	0.6875	5.011
4	2.437 (7.469)**				0.216 (2.242)*		0.035	0.6862	5.485
5	2.307 (9.048)**					0.269 (3.416)**	0.079	0.6704	11.671
6	2.52 (7.269)**	0.125 (1.496)	0.76 (0.778)				0.015	0.6933	1.932
7	2.036 (4.713)**	0.092 (1.086)	0.07 (0.723)	0.192 (1.846)			0.034	0.6866	2.449
8	1.762 (3.525)**	0.075 (0.881)	0.039 (0.402)	0.167 (1.602)	0.158 (1.637)		0.047	0.6819	2.532
9	1.482 (3.185)**	0.37 (0.434)	0.421 (0.439)	0.126 (1.214)	0.117 (1.220)	0.207 (2.472)*	0.085	0.6679	3.334

Notes:

- Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- Sales performance is dependent variable.

The regression results show that the beta coefficients for advertisements are positive with sales performance. It indicates that advertising has a positive impact on sales performance. This finding is consistent with the findings of Assaf *et al.* (2015). Similarly, the beta coefficients for sales promotion are positive with sales performance. It indicates that sales promotion has a positive impact on sales performance. This finding is consistent with the findings of Farhangmehr and Brito (2015). Likewise, the beta coefficients for publicity and public relation are positive with sales performance. It indicates that publicity and public relation has a positive impact on sales performance. This finding is consistent with the findings of Inganga and Kibe (2023). Further, the beta coefficients for sponsorship are positive with sales performance. It indicates that sponsorship has a positive impact on sales performance. This finding is consistent with the findings of Naidenova *et al.* (2016). In addition, the beta coefficients for direct marketing are positive with sales performance. It indicates that direct marketing has a positive impact on sales performance. This finding is consistent with the findings of Todorova (2015).

4. Summary and conclusion

Marketing communications assist to define an organization's associations with consumers not just by the kind of messages exchanged, as well as by the choice of medium and occurrence to go with their customers' preference. Marketing communications tools that were traditionally separated and specialized in "above the line" and "below-the-line"

activities, should be now integrated under the IMC concept. The study claimed that synergy is the principal benefit of bringing together the various facets of marketing communications in a mutually supportive way. From this perspective, marketing communication decisions should focus on the marketing communications channel that offers the highest benefit for all the stakeholders. The focus of this definition is still very much on communication functions (tactics) rather than on the broad view of establishing close relationships to multiple stakeholders.

This study attempts to examine the effectiveness of marketing communication on the sales performance of Nepal Telecom. The study is based on primary data of 126 respondents.

The major conclusion of the study is that sales promotion, advertising, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, and direct marketing have positive impact on sales performance. It indicates that higher the sales promotion, advertising, publicity and public relation, sponsorship, and direct marketing, higher would be the sales performance. The study also concludes that direct marketing is the most significant factor followed by publicity and public relation that determines the sales performance.

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