

An Analysis of the Psychological Tactics Used in Marketing by Frontrow in Metro Manila

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Abstract

In the 21st Century, marketers have begun to understand how consumers actually behave rather than how they should behave. However, as the years have passed, competent marketers have begun to look beyond the science of decision making and into the broader realm of psychological science. And the relationship between marketing and psychology runs deeper than that. Previous studies only discussed the exploitative nature of multilevel marketing companies, and they did not realize the beauty in it. Accordingly, the researchers have decided to delve deeper into this topic and showcase the beauty and power of the psychological aspect present in the ever-changing dynamics of the business industry. This study aims to investigate how Frontrow agents use psychological science to persuade people to join and become distributors. Priming theory played a vital role in understanding and influencing how people behave. In this research, the priming helped the researchers determine and understand the actions of networking companies like Frontrow on the subsequent impact on customers. This study has followed a Convergent Parallel-Mixed Method Approach to collect, analyze and interpret the qualitative and quantitative data. A Google form was distributed to 20 Frontrow agents to understand what psychological tactics are they using in their marketing strategies. The researchers have used thematic and narrative analysis to understand the qualitative data to better understand their experiences when using different psychological tactics. Data tabulation, frequency distribution, and weighted mean are used for the quantitative data in order to get the extent of each psychological tactic. Based on the results, Frontrow agents use practically all psychological tactics in marketing their products. This psychological tactic in marketing has a significant impact on consumers' interest in buying a good or service. According to the data gathered by the researchers, social proof and sharing one's experience are the most commonly used psychological tactic.

Keywords: Psychological Tactics, Marketing, Frontrow

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1. Introduction

Driven by behavioral economics discoveries, marketers have begun to cater to their consumers' systematic irrationalities and wield the strongest point of the human mind. It means grasping how consumers actually behave rather than how they should behave. However, as the years have passed, competent marketers have begun to look beyond the science of decision making and into the broader realm of psychological science.

Marketing psychology is the systematic application of psychological science to marketing and branding. Importantly, it follows up where behavioral science leaves off, delving into a vast spectrum of psychological perspectives. Decision-making is an important aspect of psychology for marketers to understand, yet it is only a small part of what it is to be human. Understanding these general principles and applying them to marketing practice is the goal of marketing psychology. It is also associated with how a company presents itself and how customers respond to promotional efforts. Marketing has integrated psychology to reach the correct target demographic over the years. It aims to understand how consumers think, feel, reason, and make decisions, as well as to persuade people, and make a calculated emotional appeal. Regardless of what the marketers sell, there is always a high possibility that the market is crowded. Thus, their goal is to achieve a competitive advantage (Johnson, 2021).

The relationship between marketing and psychology runs deep. There is no aspect of people's inner, psychological lives that the consumer world does not address in some way. Marketing touches everything from emotion and reasoning, intellect and pleasure, addiction and self-control, and much more. Marketing fundamentally impacts people's vision of the world and their role within it in many ways. A deeper knowledge of this relationship is necessary to enhance marketing practice. It makes the marketers envision new possibilities, create rich, meaningful consumer experiences, and form strong emotional attachments with their brands. Behavior and decision-making are only the beginning.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Marketing Psychology

Marketing psychology is crucial in defining the approaches that are essential to organizational performance.

Through valuable insight into a consumer's decision-making process, people can utilize diverse marketing strategies to ensure brand loyalty (Neave, Tzemou, & Fastoso, 2020). The reciprocity principle is one of the most popular psychological approaches that marketers include in their marketing strategies. Accordingly, businesses provide customers with advantageous offer that can be easily traded for strategic information. In marketing, a company either seek products for its consumers or find customers for its products. Marketing psychology improves the usage of consumer data to make informed judgments about product development and customer outreach. Moreover, marketing psychology perceives the human brain as an organ formed by evolutionary pressures (Johnson, 2021). These suggest that the nature of all consumer behavior is based on neurological structures and innate impulses that evolved for very different reasons. Consider the Mere Exposure Effect, which presents that the more people are exposed to something, the more they like it (Johnson, 2021).

3. Methodology

The study used the convergent parallel mixed-method research design to collect, analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative data from the different psychological tactics used in marketing and their influence on consumers. The research design intended to deepen the qualitative findings with quantitative analysis. The qualitative findings from the first part of the survey questionnaire that was given to the respondents were used to help identify the psychological tactics in marketing, which was subsequently tested during the second part of the questionnaire (quantitative) for its frequency. This research design involved gathering different but complementary data on the same phenomenon. The study was participated by twenty (20) Frontrow agents from Frontrow Enterprise Philippines Incorporated that are currently residing in Metro Manila.

4. Results

The research study analyzes the various psychological tactics used by Frontrow agents in marketing their products and encouraging other people to join them. Based from the data gathered, the psychological marketing tactics used by the Frontrow agents are the following:

Psychological Tactics	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Evoking Emotions	3.40	Great Extent	6
Sharing one's Experiences	3.75	Very Great Extent	2
The Use of Promises	3.45	Great Extent	5
Color Psychology	3.52	Very Great Extent	3
Social Proof	3.85	Very Great Extent	1
Repetition of Words	3.50	Very Great Extent	4
Sense of Urgency	2.57	Great Extent	8
Picturing Oneself	3.52	Very Great Extent	3
Decoy Effects	3.15	Great Extent	7

Frontrow agents use practically all psychological tactics in marketing their products. These approaches have a significant impact on consumers' willingness to acquire a good or service. Based from the data gathered, social proof is the most commonly used psychological tactic, with most respondents answering "always" and with the highest weighted mean. The statistics from the survey also states that conveying a sense of urgency is the psychological tactic with the most "never" responses and has the lowest weighted mean.

4.1 Evoking Emotions

This psychological tactic uses emotions to trigger customers' decision-making. Emotional and psychological appeals resonate with consumers more than feature and function appeals. The usage of jokes when introducing their products in order to make their consumers laugh and be impressed, which will create a favorable impression on prospective customers, increasing the likelihood that they would purchase their products. Frontrow agents have also adjusted their strategies and enhanced their campaigns with the help of a better understanding of consumer psychology. These factors influence consumer behavior that the agents consider consumer psychological factors when developing marketing campaigns. These factors include emotions, desires, and motivations. Indeed Career Guide (2021) discusses that having a deeper awareness of the customer's demands may provide the marketer an advantage in accurately predicting consumer purchasing decisions, which is exactly what the researchers discovered in the Frontrow Enterprise environment. Frontrow agents usually use evoking emotions as one of their psychological marketing tactics since it is much easier to get into the emotional side of consumers rather than logically telling them that Frontrow products might benefit them for a lifetime. Aside from that, the researchers revealed that evoking emotions is not confined to their customers, but is also used by their colleagues. The Frontrow agents at the top of the pyramid scheme are using this strategy to motivate the agents beneath them and boost sales.

4.2 Sharing one's Experiences

This is a technique in which Frontrow agents prefer to incorporate fascinating and engaging personal narratives into their marketing materials, as stated by one of the respondents, "Sharing one's experiences to know the background of each other so that we can identify on how to encourage clients to buy the products or packages." They also include stories about their colleagues' experiences in the same field, which will allow prospective clients to imagine the advantages of purchasing their products. Exhibiting the extravagant lifestyle to public and to potential new members is a vital component of pyramid scheme techniques, as it is with Frontrow Philippines.

4.3 The Use of Promises

Promises are used to convey the clients of the quality and good results coming from the products that are being marketed. The demonstration of dedication and consistency in offering a money-back guarantee deeply influence the interest of the clients towards the products.

4.4 Color Psychology

Color influences a customer's behavior and decision-making. Consumers form opinions on a product within 90 seconds of initially interacting with it, and color accounts for more than half of their evaluation. Distinct colors are connected with different emotions or concepts such as the color red that is generally associated with energy, strength, or passion, but orange can make individuals feel enthusiastic, creative, and successful. Colors have an important function in drawing attention because they are the first thing that the consumer sees. Customers' acceptable colors are limited, but they play an important part in brand selection. The colors help draw the attention of the buyer to the packaging. Color perception, emotional connotations generated by specific colors, and the perceived importance of color in marketing all highlight the fact that colors catch the attention of buyers who are deciding between several distinct companies. Colors have been demonstrated to be an effective method for communicating with clients, according to Bytyci (2020). As a result, colors have a significant impact on brand development. The study discovered that Frontrow agents do not need to extend their color scheme while advertising their items because Frontrow Enterprise already has a specific hue that reflects the emotion that they desire to evoke in their clients.

4.5 Social Proof

Social proof is a psychological principle that describes how customers use the actions and behaviors of others to determine what they should do such as showing the picture of the successful person from frontrow and sharing their experiences to inspire others. Having an industry expert or influencer support a Frontrow agent's product, obtaining feedback from customers, or receiving official certification from an authority figure or organization can provide solid social proof. The basis of all consumer behavior is based on neural structures and innate impulses that evolved for very diverse reasons. Social proof is consonant with Mere Exposure Effect which discusses that the more people are exposed to something, the more they like it. (Bornstein, R. F., & Craver-Lemley, C, 2016). Hence, social proof is a psychological tactic that increases the exposure of the clients to Frontrow products when a renowned person promotes their product, which causes it to become attached to the thoughts of the consumers, eventually leading them to purchase that specific product.

4.6 Repetition of Words

The incredible power of rhyming is well embedded in the society of the country. Rhymes are simple to understand and remember, and repeating something makes people believe it is more likely to be genuine and significant. Repeated words are easily absorbed and remembered by consumers, which adds credibility. It is also a way to keep a brand or product at the forefront of consumers' minds. According to Rossiter, Percy, and Bergkvist (2018), consumers must expect extreme claims from some products and services in order to consider them for purchase; a product or service that does not specify its claims and benefits will most likely be ignored by consumers. It is also believed that repeating the benefits might create a knowledge gap for consumers, which is why certain Frontrow agents utilize this strategy to pique their customers' interest.

4.7 Sense of Urgency

According to the principle of scarcity, people appreciate a rare object more than an abundant object. When there is a risk, they will not be able to get something, it makes them want it much more. Scarcity can be used to drive people to act quickly. Frontrow agents may employ the phrase "limited edition" or simply "rare" to express urgency and trigger their impulsive tendencies to buy that product.

4.8 Picturing Oneself

Picturing oneself is a tactic that encourages buyers to use their imaginations to envision how they might use Frontrow's products. The said psychological tactic indicates that the key to implementing this marketing concept

is to examine the target market's desired lifestyle. Hence, a Frontrow agent may create content that demonstrates how their product will help customers in achieving their desired lifestyle.

4.9 Decoy effects

When clients are choosing between two options, the addition of a third, less desirable option (the decoy) can influence their perception of the original two options since they are fully inferior to one alternative (the target) but just substantially inferior to the other (the competitor). When presented with a decoy alternative, customers prefer to make decisions based on what appears to be the most advantageous option rather than which option will best fulfill their needs.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Frontrow agents tend to delve into the emotional side of the consumer rather than the intellectual side since humans are emotional beings. When they are emotionally heated, they tend to think irrationally, using their emotions as a driving force to do or make decisions. As a result, Frontrow agents harness consumer emotions to create a good image, increasing the likelihood of prospective clients purchasing their items. The agents share their personal experiences with the products and services they offer to ignite a consumer's interest. Because humans are inherently curious about what they see and hear, enlightening customers about other people's experiences and the benefits of the items may stimulate their curiosity. Furthermore, humans have a natural desire to share their experiences since it can show commonalities that might help them connect and become closer. Because of this, Frontrow agents talk about their own and other people's tales in order to capitalize on their clients' curiosity and the bond that they have created.

Promises are an expression that can establish a connection and trust between two or more people. So, Frontrow agents use promises to recruit clients. They would tell their customers that the products they are selling are effective for them, and thus will be effective for their clients, or that they would promise clients a profit if they sold their products, even if it is uncertain. This is especially true if the agent promises that by simply buying and selling their products, clients will have a comfortable lifestyle, even if it is too good to be true. Because humans are vulnerable beings, they all have a tendency to deny reality because they have chosen to believe beautiful lies over harsh reality. Some customers were aware that achieving their ideal life would be challenging, but they chose to dismiss those rational thoughts in favor of clinging to a thin string of words promised to them by Frontrow agents. The emphasize of the Frontrow Trademark color delivers a powerful interpretation to their clients. Color is important in brand development because it creates an image and an impression in the minds of customers. Additionally, various colors have different connotations that cause the brain to transmit positive or negative emotions; this can affect a person's mood and decision-making. As a result, to make a favorable impression on clients, Frontrow agents use color to create an image for them or to match the color of Frontrow Enterprise.

The advertisement of the products by showcasing positive feedback from previous consumers. It puts prospective clients at ease knowing that Frontrow has established a good reputation in the market. Presenting social media influencers and artists is also an excellent technique to sell products rapidly because they have a huge number of followers or fans. They have a strong fan base of people who believe in them and would try what they are promoting. Besides that, when numerous influencers advocate a specific product, it creates a trend, and many people will get on board and follow the newest trend. People will always want to keep up to date in order to avoid falling behind. The consistency in emphasizing the products by repeating what they have said. Repeating a statement will help clients understand what is being conveyed. Moreover, repeating can expose clients to what is being said and make the message more prominent, which might influence their perception of a product. It can also persuade them that the Frontrow agent is telling the truth. Thus, Frontrow agents repeat product-related claims in order to establish trust and expose clients to the product.

The sense of urgency in their clients persuades them to purchase their products. Since humans are not designed to work under pressure and only a few people can handle it well, Frontrow agents would assume that the majority of their customers will be unable to think clearly under pressure, which may activate their impulsive behaviors. Specifying time or terms that can activate their impulsiveness, such as "rare" and "limited," can convince individuals to purchase a product. Frontrow agents take advantage of their clients' impulsiveness in order to sell their products. Imagination and the ability to produce ideas are two of the most potent instruments for convincing someone to embrace a desired lifestyle. Humans enjoy the idea of buying good things, not worrying about money and having a comfortable lifestyle. Likewise, displaying the simplest and most pleasurable way to accomplish anything may generate positivity, while exhibiting adversity may result in negativity. This is why Frontrow agents use the simplest technique to attain their objectives, which is to have the target client visualize themselves living a pleasant life because it promotes positivity and can simply be used to persuade people to buy Frontrow products.

Presenting multiple options and selections may influence perception and cause confusion. As a consequence, consumers' minds might easily be swayed into believing that a specific product is inferior. Because of this,

Frontrow agents exploit the numerous possibilities to create a mental image in the minds of their clients that a particular selection of their product is superior to the others. However, in the end, they simply seek to sell the most profitable products. When it comes to psychological tactics, social proof is the most frequently used as a marketing strategy, followed by sharing one's experiences which sometimes come into play. Interestingly, creating a sense of urgency alone proves ineffective every single time.

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