The Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Consumer Behavior:

Does the Cause Matter?

by

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A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

This study uses many constructs to analyze the influence of cause-related marketing on consumer behavior. Many aspects should be considered when assessing what causes consumers to purchase or not purchase for a cause. Sometimes they may feel pressured at the checkout counter to give, or they genuinely want to lend a helping hand to those in need. It could have nothing to do with the cause itself; they may prefer to shop with a particular brand that happens to be unified with a specific cause.

The purpose of this study is to determine what factors drive consumers' behavior toward purchasing or not purchasing for a cause. The influence of three variables will be focused on: 1) cause vs. product, 2) obligation, and 3) pro-social spending. There are four constructs analyzed during this study; each construct will be broken down by the consumers' preferences regarding specific topics. These topics will be created into a series of questions and the results will be gathered and displayed through an online survey using Qualtrics.

This study differs from previous research because these constructs will be used to create questions that will help break down why each consumer chooses to purchase with intent to give to a particular cause. By comparing specific causes, the goal is to see which charity has the most substantial impact on the consumers' purchasing intention.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Cause-related marketing, or CRM, is defined as a company who partners with a specific cause or causes to help raise additional funds for that organization (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009). This study uses four major constructs to analyze the influence of cause-related marketing on consumer behavior. These aspects should be considered when assessing the factors which impact consumers' decision to purchase for a cause.

This is why the cause-related marketing strategy plays such an important role in regard to attracting consumers to purchase for a specific cause. By taking a closer look into the purchasing behaviors of each consumer, retailers will be able to see why consumers are choosing one particular cause over another. Focusing on the consumers' motivation for their purchase will give retailers an inside look on what to expect from their clientele in the future. With this knowledge retailers will be able to enhance their marketing strategies and gear them toward what motivates their consumers.

Statement of the Problem

Previous research focused on one specific cause and how it is related to the way consumers buy. One study in particular discussed the motivations of the consumer and his or her appeal toward different types of causes and how this question remains unanswered (Vanhamme, Lindgreen, Reast, & Popering, 2011). This study seeks to make the distinction as to why consumers are choosing one cause over the other. This idea is also known as brand-cause fit, which is where the consumer has an emotional connection to the cause and awareness for the brand. When implementing the cause-related marketing strategy, it is important to carefully choose the appropriate cause and brand. "With regard to brand-cause fit, Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006) show how

the act of sponsoring a cause is liked more by consumers in case of a high fit between the brand's image and the sponsored cause" (Chowdhury & Khare, 2011, p.826).

Significance

The main goal of this study is to quantify consumer attitudes toward CRM and the influence of these attitudes toward purchase intentions and consumer behavior in relation to specific causes. Each cause is different in its own right, but there is something that draws the consumers' eyes to that particular cause. Since there has been a recent increase of CRM, it is important for future business men and women to determine why this marketing strategy has become so widely implemented. If this idea comes from a specific generation, then retailers will be able to customize their business strategies to target a specific market. In order to remain competitive, it is not only important to have a vision of the future, but also capitalize on what is currently on trend. The knowledge gained from this study could change the way retailers market their businesses to their customers.

Research Objectives

For this study's research design, the dependent variable focused on is purchase intent and how it relates to the behavior of consumers. The influence of the three main factors, 1) cause vs. product, 2) obligation, and 3) past pro-social spending, were used to create four constructs. These four constructs plus three demographics are all considered to be the independent variables analyzed during this study.

1) Attitude

2) Belief

3) Obligation

4) Intent to purchase

From these constructs four hypotheses were created:

H1: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are likely to have a higher opinion of those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H2: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are aware of retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H3: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes feel obligated to participate in supporting charitable brands.

H4: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more likely to purchase from those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to test the research objectives:

Research Question 1

Was there a significant difference in familiarity with charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 2

Was there a significant difference in those that frequently purchase from charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 3

Was there a significant difference in those that feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 4

Was there a significant difference in those that pay more for a product knowing a percentage of the profits go toward charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 5

Was there a significant difference in those that have favorable opinion of charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 6

Was there a significant difference in those that if (price and fit) are equal, would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 7

Was there a significant difference in those that donate time to charitable causes based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 8

Was there a significant difference in those that frequently purchase or donate

money to charitable causes based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 9

Was there a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 10

Was there a significant difference in those who are likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to specific cause based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Limitations

Data were collected throughoutsix consecutive weeks during the 2013 fall semester. The researcher's social media account on Facebook was used to recruit participants that made up this study's sample. After the data collection process, results showed majority of the participants were Caucasian females. Ideally, more male participants and a wider range of ethnicities would have been best in order to collect a well rounded set of data. Since social media was used for those that participated in the survey, the sample was not random.

Data Collection

This study collected data through an online survey using Qualtrics. The only requirement to take the survey was that participants had to be at least 18 years of age or older. The data collection process took about six weeks; the goal for this study was

to collect 300 surveys.   The number 300 was chosen in order to have a large number of

participants and reliable data.

Definition of Terms

Brand cause fit: is where the consumer has an emotional connection to the cause and awareness for the brand.

Cause-related marketing (CRM): is when a company partners with a specific cause or causes to help raise additional funds for that organization (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009).

Charitable brand: is when a brand/retailer is paired with specific cause/causes.

Consumer behavior: is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society" (Hawkins, Mothersbaugh, & Best, 2009, p.6).

Customer value: is the difference between all the benefits derived from a total product and all the costs of acquiring those benefits (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.11).

Obligation: is when a person feels the need or pressure to carry out a specific act.

Product vs. cause: when both brand and cause work together, you receive a higher consumer attitude toward the campaign being promoted (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009).

Pro-social spending: is when money is being used toward someone other than the consumer (Aknin, Dunn, & Norton, 2012).

Theory of planned behavior (TPB): "this theory focuses on three attitudinal antecedents of behavioral intention to explain social behaviors" (Delafrooz, Paim, & Khatibi, 2011, p.71).

Qualtrics: an online data base used to create and distribute surveys to the public.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides information about the use of cause-related marketing (CRM) and its adaptation in today's society. Detailed descriptions of retailers using CRM now and those used in this study's survey instrument, plus the theoretical framework behind the study, will all be included in this chapter. It also covers the three major points discussed throughout this study (i.e. cause vs. product, obligation and pro-social spending) and the influence these variables have on the use of the CRM.

Cause-Related Marketing

The implementation of Cause-Related Marketing (i.e. CRM) to business strategies has been an ongoing trend since the early 80's. CRM is when a company partners with a specific cause or causes to help raise additional funds for that organization (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009). The objective of cause-related marketing is to encourage consumers to purchase a brand so donations can be made to that brand's associated cause. There are many different reasons companies choose to implement this type of marketing strategy. Many businesses pair with specific causes for the overall positive impact on morale; while others pair because they truly believe this strategy is beneficial to all parties involved (i.e. consumers, the company and its associated cause/causes.

The first big CRM campaign began with American Express; their efforts were to restore the Statue of Liberty. Every time a consumer used an American Express card, a percentage of their transaction went to the Statue of Liberty restoration fund. "CRM is defined as a win-win-win situation (Adkins, 2000), providing a win for the charity or cause, a win for the consumer and a win for the business" (Farache, Perks, Soares Outtes Wanderley, & Sousa

Filho, 2008, p. 213-214).

Focusing on the American Express campaign and its link to the Statue of Liberty restoration, this outcome was also a "win-win-win" situation because American Express was able to raise the funds and exceed the amount needed for the project. This would be an example of the "win" for the cause; not only was the goal met, but actually surpassed, and the restoration process was ready to begin. As the preparation of the restoration process took place, the perception of American Express as a company changed for the better. Their image as a company increased in a positive direction because of their partnership with this idea. This would be an example of a "win" for the company. Regarding consumers, they benefit in two different ways: one from the purchase of the product and second the happiness that comes from donating to a particular cause (Robinson, Irmak & Jayachandran, 2012). In this case, the consumers received the satisfaction of knowing a percentage of their money went to restoring a national monument, which actually benefits someone other than themselves.

Another win for the consumer would be satisfaction of helping society, knowing they are doing something good (Farache et al., 2008). The original purchase was intended for their personal gain; in regard to the consumer the "win" is not based on profit or a particular percentage. It is, however, based on positive attitude and the feeling of participating in a good endeavor. In some cases this type of generous action decreases the feeling of guilt, which in this case refers to the amount charged to their American Express card. By using the American Express card they can justify the purchase because a donation was attached.

The implementation of similar CRM programs has increased over the last few years and in most cases the programs have been successful. There are two basic questions: Why is CRM successful and what types of programs are successful. In addition, what is the driving

force behind the idea of CRM? Some question the degree to which companies partner with specific causes because they truly have a passion to help, or their intentions are mainly to enhance their company image. The historical successes of these ventures lead us to believe that a company's intent is to increase customer base, and create a greater brand loyalty, by relying on the company's connection with various causes.

One goal of this study is to determine what factors drive consumers' behavior toward purchasing for a cause. The influence of three variables will be focused on: 1) cause vs. product, 2) obligation, and 3) pro-social spending. The link of these three main factors together is the overall purchase intent of consumers.

Previous studies have shown that consumer attitudes and awareness of both cause and brand are important when choosing to purchase for a cause. When both brand and cause work together, you receive a higher consumer attitude toward the campaign being promoted (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009).

Obligation strictly deals with the influence significant others (i.e. family, friends, & peers) have on each individual consumer. In regard to purchasing for a cause, consumers may be buying because everyone else is, or they may feel personal pressure to purchase (Hyllegard et al., 2009).

Previous experience with pro-social spending is important to analyze, because if a consumer is already emotionally tied to a specific cause and previously gives their time and money, they may be more willing to participate in promotional marketing strategies. Past research indicates a link between pro-social spending and happiness; if this idea is maintained, CRM will continue to grow and adapt in the future (Aknin, Dunn, & Norton, 2012).

Cause vs. Product

Previous research discusses how individual perceptions of particular brands and their

advertising may determine their attitudes toward a certain brand, as well as determine whether they will buy that particular product (Hyllegard, Ogle, Yan, & Attmann, 2009). Although this particular study does not deal with the evaluation of brand advertisements and the message they give to consumers, the above concept does however impact the purchase intentions of consumers when focusing on their attitudes toward a specific brand. By analyzing whether or not consumers have a special tie or attitude towards a brand or cause could make a significant difference in regards to their purchase intentions, or in this particular study, their support for the cause.

The main idea of the CRM strategy is to create an alliance between a brand and a cause to increase the perceptions of both (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009). By implementing this strategy, retailers could omit the possibility of consumers leaving without a purchase. If the perception and attitude of the consumer is strong toward both cause and brand, their purchase intent may possibly be higher. This study is designed to see which variable will outweigh the other.

For some consumers, purchasing a particular brand's product may be more important than the cause itself. This study will use TOMS shoes, Target, and Susan G. Komen's Race for the Cure to see which cause or product is most sought after. Referring to TOMS shoes the idea is to focus more on the cause vs. product. The purpose is to see what drives the purchase intentions to support the cause, or if the cause even plays a role. The purchase made could specifically be for the trending TOMS shoes that the company sells. The other possibility is the consumer may not really care about the product itself, but what that pair of shoes represents. In this case the purchase of one pair of TOMS shoes allows another pair to be donated to a child in need; this is also known as the "One for One" movement, which is the cause behind TOMS. Another possibility could be both, purchasing a trending product

and the consumers' desire to donate because they love the "One for One" movement. This study seeks to make the distinction as to why consumers are choosing one cause over the other. This idea is also known as brand-cause fit, which is where the consumer has an emotional connection to the cause and awareness for the brand. When implementing the cause-related marketing strategy, it is important to carefully choose the appropriate cause and brand. "With regard to brand-cause fit, Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006) show how the act of sponsoring a cause is liked more by consumers in case of a high fit between the brand's image and the sponsored cause" (Chowdhury & Khare, 2011, p.826).

A good example of this appropriate pairing is the product Bayer Aspirin and its cause the American Stroke Association. As consumers see advertisements for Bayer Aspirin that teach taking one pill a day helps prevent strokes. By pairing with the American stroke Association, they are not only promoting their product, but creating awareness about strokes and ways to prevent them. The Bayer Company uses a percentage of its profits to raise funds to continue finding ways to help victims who have been affected by a stroke. Consumers, who are at risk, know someone who is at risk, or that has been impacted by a stroke would be more apt to purchase this product because they have been personally affected by this misfortune. Secondly, the consumer knows parts of the proceeds are going toward the American Stroke Association with a purchase of a Bayer product. Chowdhury and Khare (2011) examined brand-cause fit; their study indicated that consumers like the sponsored cause more when there is a higher fit between brand image and the sponsored cause which leads to more of a positive attitude toward the cause and brand that influences involvement toward the cause and the consumers' purchase intent. By using different charitable causes (i.e. TOMS shoes, Target and Susan G. Komen) we will be able to see what really impacts and drives the consumers' behavior.

Obligation

Another main focus of this study is obligation, whether it comes from peers, emerging trends or the consumers' own personal pressure to donate. Whatever the case may be, this study's objective is to see what influences might sway a consumer to purchase or not purchase for a cause. Subjective norm is a term used to describe the influence of those closest to the consumer, (i.e. friends, family and peers) (Hyllegard et al., 2009). By evaluating this idea of the subjective norm, we will be able to see if peer pressure has any effect on whether or not the consumer is or will be purchasing for the cause. The consumer may have strong feelings toward the product he or she is purchasing, or may just purchase said product due to a trend. Studies have shown that peer approval and social acceptance is vital in regards to experiences in social settings. Most of the time clothing is thought of as a personal choice, but is rarely seen as a social action, although social influences do impact clothing trends. By associating with certain groups, consumers tend to mimic clothing choices because of the people they interact with (Roman & Medevdev, 2011). The idea discussed above is not solely focused on clothing choices but behavior in general. People choose to follow the crowd in order to fit it with their social group. Guilt could be seen as another influence in relation to obligation. Obligation is when a person feels the need or pressure to carry out a specific act. For example, donations placed at checkout counters could be considered a "guilt trip" because the cashier asks the question "Would you like to donate to said cause?" At this point in the conversation, customers may feel obligated to give so they do not look selfish or cold hearted. They give in to their own personal pressure or guilt. This study will see which obligation is greater—that from peers or the consumers' own personal pressure they put on themselves when it comes to purchase intentions for a cause.

Pro-social Spending

Pro-social spending is when money is being used toward someone other than the consumer (Aknin, Dunn, & Norton, 2012). One main focus of this study is to see whether past pro-social spending has an effect on consumers' purchase intent toward a brand tied to a cause. If consumers grew up giving donations as a part of their family traditions, then maybe their purchase intention would be higher. Charitable giving seems to increase every year; some question why. Research suggests there is a correlation between pro-social spending and happiness. If pro-social spending increases the happiness the donator feels, he or she are more likely to continue this action in the future (Aknin, Dunn, & Norton, 2012). People generally want to prolong the feeling of happiness. Other research reinforces this same statement; people who choose to give their time or money to a particular cause reap the benefits longer than if they spent money on themselves (Aknin, Sandstrom, Dunn, & Norton, 2011). Based on the previous findings, the relationship between CRM and retailers would appear to be strong. If all retailers used CRM, this strategy would provide a way for both the consumer and cause to benefit. The outcome would be a "win win" because the consumer would still feel a level of happiness, not only for the purchase, but because of the ability to donate to a cause as well. Attitudes have a large effect on consumers' purchasing behaviors whether it is negative (i.e. guilt, pressure) or positive (i.e. happiness). This study's goal is to figure out which attitude will play a bigger role in the purchase intentions of the consumer when a cause is involved.

Retailers Targeted

Three main brands/retailers (i.e. TOMS shoes, Target and Susan G. Komen's "Race for the Cure") have been chosen to be used in this study's survey instrument. The idea behind this survey is to ask a single question but have the participants compare the three

brand/retailers. The goal is to see why consumers choose one cause over the other. Each brand/retailer has been chosen for a specific reason hoping this will help pin point the motive behind why one cause is chosen over another.

TOMS shoes is based out of California and was created because of a young man's desire to build a successful business while serving those in need. This company's main charity is known as the "One for One" movement. The idea behind this strategy is for every pair of TOMS shoes purchased another pair is given to a child in a third world country. The company has done so well over the years they have added a new product to this movement, eye glasses. The reason TOMS shoes was chosen as one of our selected three brands/retailers was not only because of the cause, but the product as well. TOMS shoes has become a trending item. The idea behind choosing this brand is to determine does the cause really matter, or is the consumer only after the popular trending shoes. This particular brand and cause highlights our cause vs. product variable previously discussed.

Target first opened its doors on May 1, 1962, in Roseville, Minnesota. This store is known for redefining the idea of discount stores. They did this by combining fashion, quality and service with the low prices of a discount store. You may also recognize this brand by their employee's red and khaki attire or the bull's-eye placed in their logo. Target has made a point since 1946 to help those in need by providing financial assistance to various causes. These causes include anything from fighting hunger, providing school supplies for under privileged children, to aid disaster preparedness and relief efforts. Target was chosen because it is a well known department store providing multiple departments ranging from grocery, apparel, home décor, appliances, toys, electronics and garden. This store brings in more foot traffic because of all the merchandise it provides. Target offers everyday items paired with various causes throughout the year, whereas TOMS is more of a specialty brand

paired with one specific cause. The goal in adding this retailer to the survey is to see if consumers that purchase groceries and or apparel from Target are more apt to continue purchasing from there because they know a percentage of their purchase will be given to charity.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure was started in 1946, by Nancy G. Brinker. Susan G. Komen passed away after a three year battle with breast cancer. After her passing, her sister Nancy decided to raise awareness for breast cancer because of everything her sister and family had experienced. Susan G. Komen for the Cure has invested close to $2 billion in hopes of one day fulfilling the promise of ending breast cancer in the United States and throughout the world. Funds have been raised through donations, purchasing a spot in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, and purchasing items from shopkomen.com and other affiliates. This brand is different than the other two because as a consumer you are not necessarily purchasing a tangible item. It may be in the form of a donation or a spot in a race, but the goal is to see if causes like this have an emotional impact on consumers' purchase intent. They may feel obligated or have some significant tie to this organization because of personal reasons.

The overall goal in using these three very different brands/retailers is to see if these differences impact why consumers choose one cause or brand over another. Is it mainly for the popular product that just happens to be linked with a specific cause? Or does the cause have a significant meaning and uses its resources to fund research in order to find a cure, like Susan G. Komen? Or is it just easier and everyone wins by purchasing your everyday needs at Target and knowing that at the end of every purchase a portion of your total goes to benefit someone else? These are the questions this study hopes to aim and achieve throughout this process.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory behind this study's theoretical framework is Theory of Planned Behavior (i.e. TPB) or otherwise known as an expansion based off the Theory of Reasoned Action (i.e. TRA). According to Azjen (1991) "this theory focuses on three attitudinal antecedents of behavioral intention to explain social behaviors" (Delafrooz, Paim, & Khatibi, 2011, p.71). The model created for this study shown below is an adaptation from this theory. This model displays how the three main variables (i.e. product vs. cause, pro-social spending, and obligation) affect the behaviors of the consumers regarding the four constructs (i.e. attitude, belief, obligation, and intent) being used to create a higher purchase intent which is seen as a behavioral action.
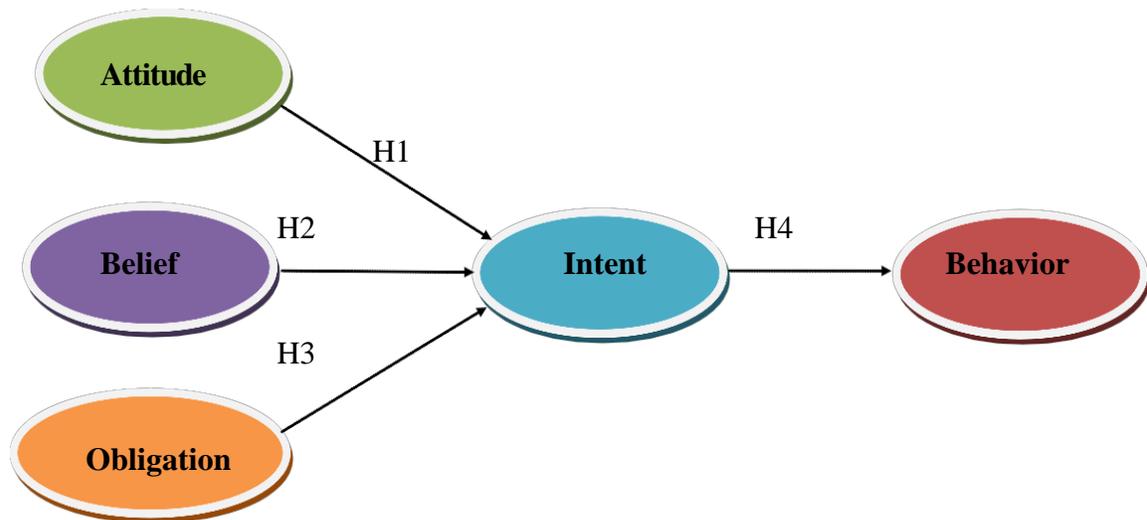
Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behavior

Consumer Behavior

There are many influences and consequences to consider when tracking the purchasing process of future consumers, which is why consumer behavior is important to examine when using a marketing strategy like CRM. "Consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure,

use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society" (Hawkins, Mothersbaugh, &Best, 2009, p. 6). The idea behind researching consumer behavior is not only to have an advantage over competitors, but to hopefully eliminate bad marketing decisions. As a company who is looking to market a specific product or charity, it is essential to understand and correctly interpret what the consumer wants, their willingness to purchase and at what cost they are willing to pay. By focusing on consumer behavior, companies are able to better determine these wants and in return boost sales because the consumers' purchasing decision has increased causing purchase intent to also increase. The retail business is always changing, but by learning to understand specific target markets change can be anticipated which is fundamental in order to plan and manage a fast pace work environment (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p. 7).

In relation to cause-related marketing, it is important for the company to create customer value when pairing with specific cause/causes. Customer value "is the difference between all the benefits derived from a total product and all the costs of acquiring those benefits" (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.11). In order for this relationship to work (i.e. the company, cause and consumer) all have to benefit. These benefits may all look differently, but for whatever reason each party receives something in return. That something might be money, better company morale, or the feeling of happiness because the consumer has just aided a charity while making a purchase for themselves, providing the consumer with a win-win. Meaning, they received a product, but were also able to benefit someone else with their purchase. Others may not view cause-related marketing as a win-win strategy. If that is the case, then those consumers are not the ones being targeted in regards to the cause-related marketing strategy.

Benefits are not the only important factor in relation to customer value. The total cost of a product is important as well. If the product cost is too high, especially when compared to a competitor, the consumer more often than not forgets about the benefits and leans toward the lower cost value. Customer value is established when there is a difference between total benefits and the total costs (Hawkins et al., 2009, p.11). When implementing any marketing strategy, it is important to include both of these variables in hopes of increasing consumers' purchase intent.

Figure 2: The Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior model displays an understanding of consumer behavior which is the foundation for marketing strategy design. Depending on how the consumers react to the marketing strategy used defines the company's efforts as a success or failure. By using this model as a reference, companies can implement consumer behavior research into their marketing strategies. The research results will then set the foundation and enhance the company's overall outcome in relation to the competition. The idea behind using this model is to know the target market, be able to meet and satisfy their needs, while staying ahead of the competition in hopes of achieving success.

Outcomes
Individual
Firm
Society

Consumer decision process
Problem recognition
Information search
Alternative evaluation
Purchase
Use
Evaluation

Marketing strategy
Product, Price, Distribution,
Promotion, Service

Market segmentation Identify product-related need sets Group customers with similar need sets Describe each group
Select attractive segment(s) to target

Market analysis
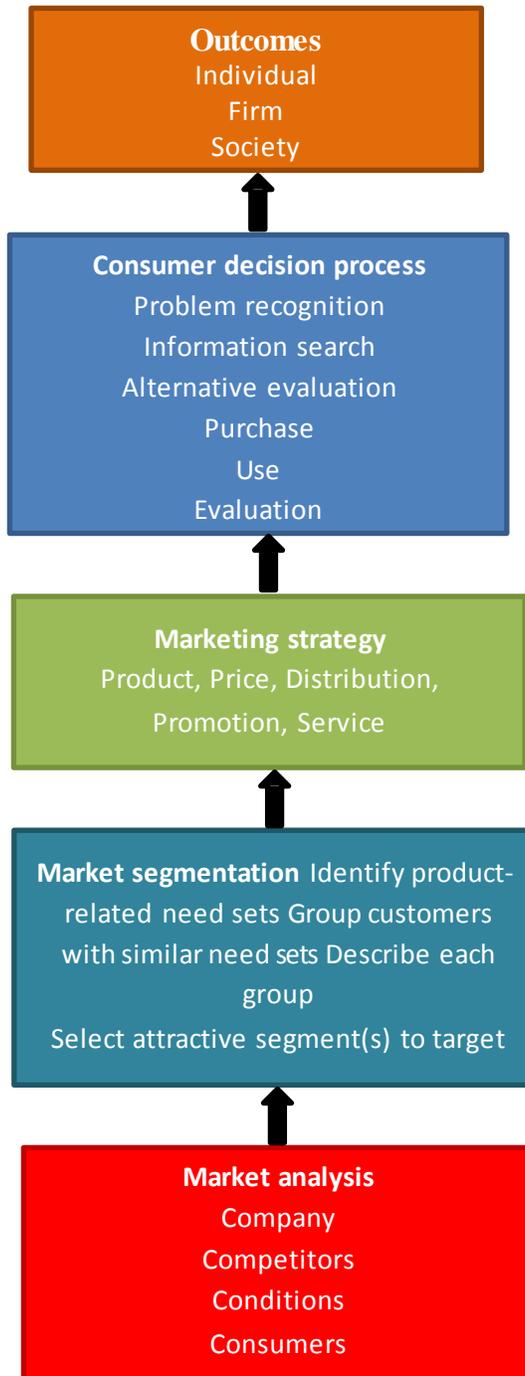Company
Competitors
Conditions
Consumers

Figure 2: Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior

This model helps break down how to successfully implement consumer behavior research into a marketing strategy. Focusing on each color block listed above, the consumer behavior research and the already existing cause-related marketing strategy can be integrated and modified in order to form an overall stronger strategy. In order for CRM to be successful, a specific target market must be found and reached, there needs to be a strong market strategy, and an in depth knowledge of the company's own successes and problems as well as the paired cause.

Market Analysis

The first step in the Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior model is market analysis. The objective of step one is for the retailer to understand its own strengths and weaknesses, as well as its competitors, the consumption patterns of future and existing consumers, while focusing on the ups and downs of today's economy (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.14). All of these variables play a key role in defining who the company is, what their future goals include, their ultimate target market, and knowledge on the existing and up and coming competitors.

Market Segmentation

The second step on the model is market segmentation, which "is a portion of a larger market whose needs differ somewhat from the larger market" (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.16). The goal behind this idea is to create more value for the customer especially in regards to competitors. Even though the goal is to create a higher value for the consumer, the company still needs to profit as well. There are four major steps when applying market segmentation:

    1) Identifying product–related needs sets

2) Group customers with similar needs

3) Describe each group

4) Select attractive segment(s) to target

These four steps help create what will be the chosen target market. Each step aims to define something or someone in order to reach this goal. For example, identifying product related need sets is used to determine the needs of each product. A watch serves its purpose to consumers by telling time, but for some they are used as an embellishment for style or status purposes. Regardless of the use, the main concept to grasp is each product has multiple uses and it is important to know each. This helps when marketing products, because each advertisement will reach a different target demographic, depending on the purpose or use of the product.

Marketing Strategy

The third step in the Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior model is marketing strategy. "Market strategy is basically the answer to the question, how will we provide superior customer value to our target market?" (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.19). This essentially is how the target market is selected; they use what is known as marketing mix to create customer value. Marketing mix is:

1) Product

2) Price

3) Communications

4) Distribution

5) Services

These variables are used to achieve customer value and meet the needs of consumers.

Consumer Decision Process

The fourth step in the Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior model is the consumer decision process. This step is unlike any other because it actually interferes with the marketing strategy and the outcomes. This is because the outcomes of the company's marketing strategy are dependent on the decision process made by the consumers. If the consumer feels there is no need for the product then the company fails. The idea is to make the customer decide the product is the best available option. They purchase said item and then the results of the purchase end with a satisfied customer. In order for the decision process to take place there are six steps involved.

1) Problem recognition

2) Information search

3) Alternative evaluation

4) Purchase

5) Use

6) Evaluation

These steps make up the consumer decision process; if a consumer does not find or recognize the problem, a purchase will never be made. This is because the consumer does not feel there is a need for something new. Once the problem is recognized, the decision process can begin and the consumer starts their search for the perfect product. The second step is information search; before making a

purchase the consumer might check online reviews, or ask friends about particular brands or stores where they can find said item. Once the consumer feels he or she has enough information on the product, the next step is to compare prices, color, and fit with competitors, just to make sure they are making the right decision. Once they have searched and tried all their options, the next step is to purchase. Once the purchase has taken place, the consumer uses said item and the outcome after that is ranged by satisfaction. The consumer can either be completely satisfied, partially satisfied or not satisfied at all. As a retailer, knowing this information is a huge advantage and can help when marketing products.

The fifth and final step in the Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior model is outcomes. This was touched on in the previous step. Outcomes are basically customer satisfaction. Outcomes are divided into three categories: firm, individual and society.

Firm outcomes include:

1) Product position "is an image of the product or brand in the consumer's mind relative to competing product and brands" (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.23). For example, a consumer might choose Coca Cola over Dr. Pepper because of their personal feeling toward the brand. They may prefer the taste or like the ever popular polar bear commercials advertising the Coca Cola brand.

2) Sales and profits

3) Customer satisfaction, it is crucial for the customer to be satisfied in order to make the initial purchase. The reason this step is so important to most retailers is because the goal is to somehow keep that customer satisfied

through other purchases. The initial purchase is the easiest part. "However,
creating satisfied customers, and thus future sales, requires that customers
continue to believe that your brand meets their needs and offers superior
value after they have used it" (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.23)

Individual outcomes include:

1) Need satisfaction, meaning the satisfaction a consumer feels after making a
   purchase. This can actually range from absolutely no satisfaction to complete
   satisfaction.

2) Injurious consumption "is when individuals or groups make consumption
   decisions that have negative consequences for their long-run well-being"
   (Hawkins *et al.,* 2009, p.24).

Society outcomes include:

1) Economic, meaning depending on the state of the country's economy is a
   huge determinant on whether or not they will decide to purchase or save.

2) Physical environment

3) Social welfare, meaning decisions on purchasing private goods which are
   considered personal goods, and then purchasing decisions regarding public
   areas (i.e. public education, parks and health care) which are often made by
   elected officials.

Consumer behavior is very important to any retailer looking to enhance business.
These ideas help mold a solid foundation for a stronger future. By applying the
Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior model to cause-related marketing,
retailers could see whether or not this particular marketing strategy would be

worth pursuing. This model helps eliminate holes or prevent error that might

otherwise be visible if consumer behavior was not applied while marketing to

consumers.

Summary

In this chapter, the evolution of cause-related marketing as a retail strategy was

discussed. In order for this marketing strategy to be effective to retailers it is

important to consider product vs. cause, consumer obligation, pro-social spending

and consumer behavior. These variables combined are what form the foundation for

this type of marketing strategy.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter includes research objectives and questions, discusses the methods used in order to prepare for the data collection process and includes a description of the survey instrument.

The primary purpose of this study is to determine what motivates consumers' purchase intention to choose one cause over another. The knowledge from this study can be used to benefit future retailers in the way they market their business. This study will be able to provide an insight for those interested in using cause-related marketing as a strategy. By determining whether or not a cause positively impacts both the consumer and a company's overall morale and financial standing will be the deciding factor on making cause-related marketing a strategy worth pursuing.

Research Objectives

For this study's research design, the dependent variable focused on is purchase intent and how it relates to the behavior of consumers. The influence of the three main points, 1) cause vs. product, 2) obligation, and 3) pro-social spending, was used to create four constructs. These four constructs plus four demographics are all considered to be the independent variables analyzed during this study.

1) Attitude

2) Belief

3) Obligation

4) Intent

From these constructs four hypotheses were created:

H1: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are likely to have a higher opinion of those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H2: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are aware of retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H3: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes feel obligated to participate in supporting charitable brands.

H4: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more likely to purchase from those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

   Gender, age, race and religious beliefs are the demographics used to identify the differences in the constructs discussed above. For example, men and women often perceive fashion, charitable giving, and the use of CRM differently, and by adding age and culture (race) into the mix, the study can highlight the range of views. Religious beliefs will be used to analyze past pro-social spending. The idea is to see if religion plays a positive role in past pro-social giving. If a consumer donates money and is involved in evangelical missions through their religion; then maybe they would be more willing to purchase for a cause.

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

   The following research questions were developed to test the research objectives:

Research Question 1

Was there a significant difference in those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 2

Was there a significant difference in those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 3

Was there a significant difference in familiarity with charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 4

Was there a significant difference in those that feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 5

Was there a significant difference in those that donate time to charitable causes based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 6

Was there a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause based on the

belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, apparel companies, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 7

Was there a significant difference in those that frequently purchase from charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 8

Was there a significant difference in those that pay more money for a product knowing a percentage of the profits go toward charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 9

Was there a significant difference in those that if (price and fit) are equal, would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Research Question 10

Was there a significant difference in those who are likely to purchase from a retailer implementing CRM based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

Method

Theoretical Framework

The theory behind this study's theoretical framework is Theory of Planned Behavior. The model created for this study shown below is an adaptation from this

theory. This model displays how the three main variables (i.e. product vs. cause, pro-social spending, and obligation) effect the behaviors of the consumers regarding the four constructs (i.e. attitude, belief, obligation, and intent) being used to create a higher purchase intent, which is considered to be a behavioral action. In Figure 3, the product vs. cause variable is represented by the construct attitude. Consumers' ideas and personal opinions of charitable causes play a role in purchase intent. The construct belief represents the pro-social spending variable; it focuses on past/present donations to specific causes. This type of behavior is thought to encourage and strengthen the consumers' intent to purchase because of their previous involvement. The construct obligation represents the obligation variable signifying the consumer's feeling of compulsion to purchase in order to help those in need.
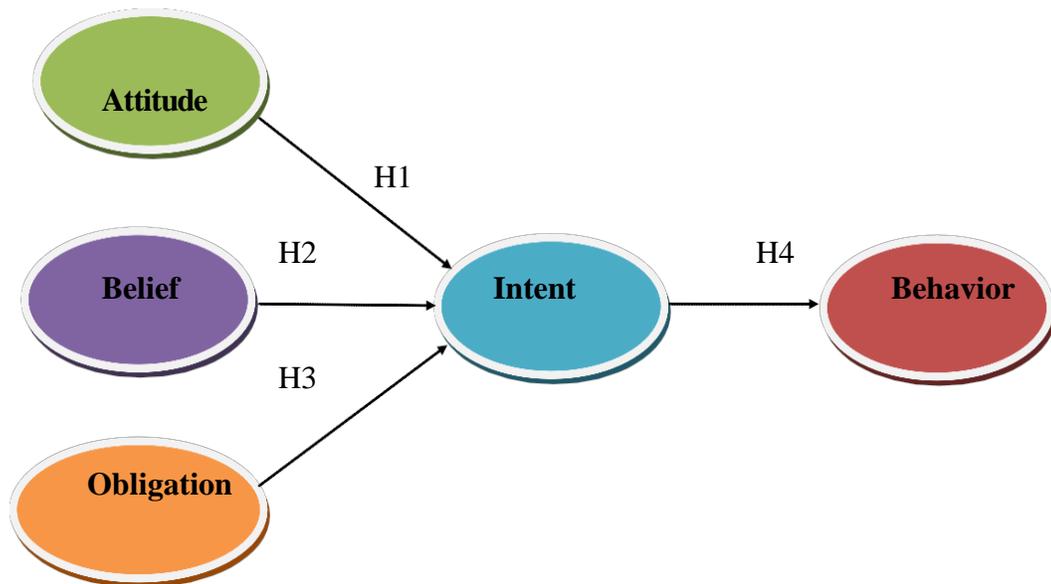

Figure 3: Theory of Planned Behavior

Instrument

Hyllegard et al.,'s (2009) previous research was used as a guide in regards to the

research design for this study's survey instrument. The previous study uses a Likert scale which will be implemented as part of this study's research method. The questions used in the survey will be created from the influence of the four constructs and four demographics previously discussed. As shown in the model, each construct has a series of questions in order to help answer the hypotheses attached. The survey instrument has been broken into two parts. The first section is basic questions any participant can answer; they are purely intended for the participant's personal opinions. The second section of the survey contains similar questions, but refers to three particular causes and or retailers. This is to show the difference or preference of one cause over another. The questions are set up in a Likert scale format, with the targeted retailers listed under each question. The participant will read the question and select an option ranging from 1 being strongly agree, to 5 being strongly disagree. They will answer the same questions for all three retailers. Demographics and psychographics of each participant in the survey will be evaluated as well.

The reason behind listing each targeted retailer under each question is to see what really drives the consumers' purchase intentions to support the cause. The outcome could be based on the product the company sells, the brand name of the company, or because they love the cause. If this statement proves to be true, this would mean the cause would outweigh the desire for the specific brand or product. By using different charitable causes, we will be able to see what really impacts the consumers' behaviors.

Sample Selection

The reason behind the survey is to reach more people; the sample used for this

study is both male and female, ages ranging from 18-80 years old. The reason for such a large sample group is to see which generation has a larger influence in regards to CRM. This study wanted to make sure the four major generations (i.e. Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y) making most of the purchases in today's society were included in order to get well rounded results. By using a larger sample group, the study is sure to gather enough information to answer the research questions previously discussed. The intended sample size is 300 just in case some surveys have to be omitted.

Data Collection

This study will focus on gathering data through an online survey using Qualtrics. Breaking down the research tends to be a little easier to understand and it is quicker to conduct what is needed. This survey will be dispersed using social media. A link will be posted to Facebook, Twitter and Email leading the willing participants to the correct location. Once the participants have taken the survey, the data will be stored in the Qualtrics system. There will be only two people who have access to this data system, the researcher and the P.I. All the participants' information is completely anonymous; this is to ensure the safety of each participant's opinions.

Summary

This chapter includes sections on the research objectives and questions, discusses the study's theoretical framework and construction of new model, and an explanation of the sample selection and data collection. In addition the survey instrument was discussed as well as the study's measurements regarding the data collected.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Introduction

This study sought to determine the factors in consumers' decision to purchase for a benevolent cause. The study about CRM focused on three variables related to influence: 1) cause vs. product, 2) obligation, and 3) pro-social spending. These three variables impacted the four major constructs used to create the survey questions for this study. Each question asked during the survey is linked back to the study's four hypotheses.

By focusing on the major constructs we are able to see the participants' attitudes, beliefs, obligation and intent to purchase toward a cause, brand or particular retailer. The survey instrument used to collect the data was posted during the fall of 2013. During that time, several posts were made reminding willing participants on social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter and Email) to take part in the survey. The goal of 300 willing participants was exceeded giving the survey an overall total of 311 participants.

Research Objectives

There are four constructs that make up the research objectives for this study:

1) Attitude

2) Belief

3) Obligation

4) Intent

From these constructs four hypotheses were created:

H1: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are likely to have a higher opinion of those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H2: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are aware of retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H3: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes feel obligated to participate in supporting charitable brands.

H4: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more likely to purchase from those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

Demographics

There were four demographic descriptors measured; these include ethnicity, religion, gender and year the participant was born. Although there were 311 participants that took the survey, however some did not respond to all demographic questions.

Ethnicity was broken down into five groups which included:

1) Hispanic

2) Asian

3) African American

4) Native American

5) White/Caucasian

The White/Caucasian group was the ethnic majority totaling to 282 people. Six participants did not indicate ethnicity.

Religion is also broken down into 5groups:

1) Agnostic

2) Christian

3) Muslim

4) Atheist

5) Other

According to the data set, there were three participants unaccounted for leaving a total of 308 participants that chose to answer this particular question. 92% or 289 participants chose Christianity as their religious belief, making this group the most popular. Out of the 308 total participants choosing to answer this question, 83% of the participants that completed this survey were female and only 16% were male.

Since the demographics for this study are not diverse as anticipated, before analyzing the data any further a cleansing process took place. This was to ensure better data results. The first step was eliminating all the male participants. The reason behind this action was to make the data analysis process a narrow focus. The female participants clearly outnumber the males making the comparison weak to begin with. The second step was to look at religion, since there was not a lot of diversity here either a decision to eliminate everyone except those who chose Christianity as their religion. The reason behind this action was because Christianity was the highest ranking religion amongst all the others, making this comparison weak. The new demographic sample is 233 Christian Caucasian females. These respondents' answers are the only ones being analyzed in order to assemble final results for this study.

Findings

H1: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are likely to have a higher opinion of those retailers who support charitable/social causes. Hypothesis 1 was tested by the following questions. Based on the findings, H1 was accepted.

Research Question 1

Was there a significant difference in those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 42.474 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who have a favorable opinion of charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 2

Was there a significant difference in those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those who are more likely to tell friends to

purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause with belief. There is a significant difference in those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause in based upon belief yielded an F value of 27.636(df 2,231;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

H2: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are aware of retailers who support charitable/social causes. Hypothesis 2 was tested by the following question, Hypothesis 2 was accepted.

Research Question 3

Was there a significant difference in familiarity with charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing familiarly with belief. There is a significant difference in familiarity with brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in familiarity based upon belief yielded an F value of 8.345 (df 2, 232; p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who believed cause- related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more familiar

with charitable brands.

H3: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes feel obligated to participate in supporting charitable brands. Hypothesis 3 was tested by the following question, Hypothesis 3 was accepted.

Research Question 4

Was there a significant difference in those that feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that purchase from charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in purchasing from charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 13.460 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 5

Was there a significant difference in those that donate time to charitable causes based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that donate time to charitable causes with belief. There was no significant difference in those who donate time to charitable causes and belief of the benefit of CRM.

H4: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more likely to purchase from those retailers who support charitable/social causes. Hypothesis 4 was tested by the following questions, Hypothesis 4 was accepted.

Research Question 6

Was there a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, apparel companies, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause with belief. There is a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause is based upon belief yielded an F value of 19.883(df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 7

Was there a significant difference in those that frequently purchase from charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that purchase from charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that purchase from charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in purchasing from charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 18.797 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who purchase from charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 8

Was there a significant difference in those that pay more money for a product knowing a percentage of the profits go toward charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that pay more money for a product knowing a percentage of the profits go toward charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that pay more for a product knowing a percentage goes toward charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in paying more for a product knowing a percentage of the profit goes toward charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 25.716 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who pay more for a product knowing a percentage of the profit will go toward charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 9

Was there a significant difference in those that if (price and fit) are equal, would

choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that if (price and fit) are equal, would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support with belief. There is a significant difference in those that if (price and fit) are equal, would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in purchasing from charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 23.237(df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. When price and fit were equal, people would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 10

Was there a significant difference in those who are likely to purchase from a retailer implementing CRM based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause with belief. There is a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause in based upon belief yielded an F

value of 19.883(df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Summary

This study sought to determine the factors that drive consumers' behavior toward purchasing or not purchasing for a cause. The study focused on three variables related to influence: 1) cause vs. product, 2) obligation, and 3) pro-social spending. The goal is to see why consumers choose one cause over another and if there was indeed a link to CRM and purchase intent.

In order for cause-related marketing to be seen as beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable causes, it is important the four objectives, belief, attitude, obligation, and purchase intent, be significant variables throughout the process. Data showed that if there was a commitment to a particular cause, than the intent to purchase would be higher, making this statement significant. When focusing on pro-social spending, the variables compared showed no significance. Meaning those that choose to donate time or money to charitable brands are the same people who feel CRM is beneficial. Those that are willing to purchase from charitable brands are also the same people who will tell and encourage their friends to shop there as well. Attitude plays a large part in whether or not people believe CRM is beneficial; data shows that if the person has a favorable opinion and is familiar with a charitable brand they are most likely to believe CRM is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Many retailers have made consumer social responsibility (CSR) a fundamental part of their business. A previous study indicated those that use CSR are benefiting in ways such as company sustainability, reducing liabilities and insurance cost, as well as improving brand image (Raman, Lim & Nair, 2012). This design has given many retailers an advantage in more ways than one. It allows them to cut costs, boost their company morale and promote a cause they publicly stand behind. A retailer's success is now being measured by how much they contribute to society, which is why cause-related marketing has become such a popular marketing strategy over the years (Raman, Lim & Nair, 2012).

Consumers start to recognize brands/products because of the cause they choose to support. Literature supports, "It is found that the percentage of consumers who are more likely to recommend a brand that supports a good cause over the one that does not is 52%. Meanwhile 55% of consumers contend that in a recession they will buy from brands that support good causes even if they are not necessarily the cheapest" (Raman, Lim & Nair, 2012). Based on the percentages previously given, cause-related marketing has the opportunity to be a very successful strategy if implemented correctly. Neito (2009) confirmed when CSR and branding strategies are combined it adds value to both the consumer and employees (Raman, Lim & Nair, 2012). If implemented correctly, studies show that CSR programs can enhance consumer loyalty (Raman, Lim & Nair, 2012).

One major goal shared between most retailers is keeping a consumer happy and continuing to meet their needs. The intent is to keep bringing them back, making them a loyal consumer. Retailers often have many of the same programs geared toward maintaining consumer loyalty. According to previous literature, by making sure the quality of service is what forms the relationship between the retailer and consumer, the retailers' chances for consumer loyalty are much greater. In regard to loyalty programs, higher quality customer service is one of the best ways to maintain consumers (Azrin, Omar & Sarah, 2009). Edward C. Powell Jr., stated "Low rates, fee waivers, and enhancements are easily matched by competitors, but superior customer service is much harder to duplicate in the card business" (Azrin, Omar & Sarah, 2009). Consumer loyalty is an objective being pursued by every retailer. Duplicating the same loyalty programs is not enough to set you apart from all the other retailers trying to meet the same goal. The aim is to be set apart from the other retailers in the way consumer loyalty is shaped. By combining cause-related marketing (CRM) and consumer social responsibility (CSR), these strategies together may be what it takes to implement a strong brand/cause marketing foundation whose objective is to increase the loyalty of its consumers. By maintaining and increasing consumer loyalty, the purchase intent should increase making more revenue for the retailer and the cause it supports.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior. The model below was created as an adaptation to this theory in order to display how the four major constructs were used. The goal was to see if product vs.

cause, pro-social spending and obligation had any effect on consumers' behaviors in regards to attitude, belief, obligation and intent. Each construct fits into one of the main three categories previously discussed.

   The construct Attitude is used to measure the consumers' attitude, awareness and overall opinion regarding a brand and its charitable cause. The construct Belief focuses on the consumers' past/present affiliation with a specific cause. This construct represents pro-social spending, because if a consumer is already associated with a specific cause, intention may be higher than for someone who does not affiliate with a designated cause. Obligation represents the Obligation category which measures consumers' feelings of obligation toward purchasing or not purchasing for a cause. Intention represents the pro-social spending category, which measures consumers' previous donations toward specific causes and whether or not this impacts purchase intent.
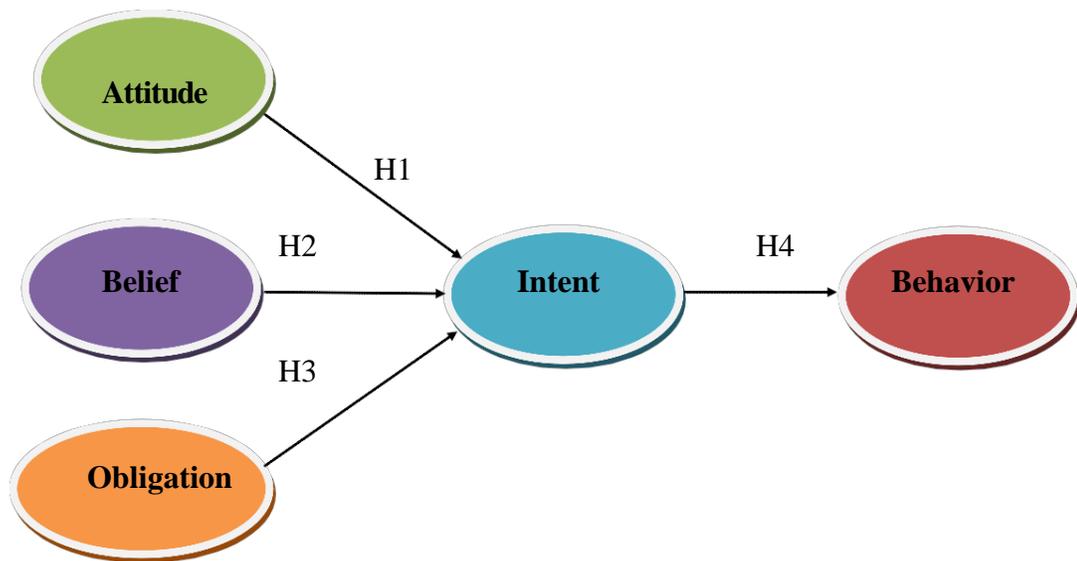
Figure 4: Theory of Planned Behavior

By comparing the four major constructs with the variable, the belief that cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers' created the research question used throughout the study as well as the four hypotheses.

Research Objectives

There are four constructs that make up the research objectives for this study:

1) Attitude

2) Belief

3) Obligation

4) Intent

Gender, age, race and religious beliefs are the demographics used to identify the differences in the constructs discussed above. From these constructs four hypotheses were formed:

H1: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are likely to have a higher opinion of those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H2: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are aware of retailers who support charitable/social causes.

H3: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes feel obligated to participate in supporting charitable brands.

H4: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more likely to purchase from those retailers who support charitable/social causes.

Research Design and Data Collection

For this study's research design, the dependent variable focused on is the belief CRM is beneficial, which will either have a negative or positive effect on purchase intent and how it relates to the behavior of consumers. The design was based off of Hyllegards et al.,'s (2009) previous research; this was used as a guide when creating this study's survey instrument. Data were collected for six consecutive weeks during the 2013 fall semester. The survey instrument was dispersed using social media, specifically Facebook, Twitter and email. A link to the survey was posted on various social media sites and updated at the end of every week. These updates explained and encouraged participants to take the survey. A goal of 300 surveys was set in hopes of reaching a reliable number for the data analysis process. The reason behind the survey was to reach a wider range of participants. The sample for this study was both male and female, ages ranging from at least 18-80 years old.

A cleansing process took place because there was no diversity when it came to the data results regarding the study's demographics. Instead the sample consisted of only Caucasian females who chose Christianity as their religious preference. The reason behind these chosen groups was because they were ranked the highest out of their category. At the end of the six week period, a total of 233 surveys were analyzed and results were comprised using the new sample.

Instrument

An instrument was developed by the researcher using a Likert scale. This type of scale was chosen to show the likelihood a person would or would not purchase a product from a specific brand/retailer and its associated cause. This survey instrument had eleven questions geared toward each of the four major constructs. The purpose

behind this idea was to see if these four major constructs actually have any influence on consumers' behavior regarding purchase intent.

Research Questions

H1: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are likely to have a higher opinion of those retailers who support charitable/social causes. Hypothesis 1 was tested by the following questions. Based on the findings, H1 was accepted.

Research Question 1

   Was there a significant difference in those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

   An ANOVA was performed comparing those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those that have a favorable opinion of charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 42.474 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who have a favorable opinion of charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 2

   Was there a significant difference in those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause with belief. There is a significant difference in those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause in based upon belief yielded an F value of 27.636 (df 2,231;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who are more likely to tell friends to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

H2: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are aware of retailers who support charitable/social causes. Hypothesis 2 was tested by the following question, Hypothesis 2 was accepted.

Research Question 3

Was there a significant difference in familiarity with charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing familiarly with belief. There is a significant difference in familiarity with brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in familiarity based upon belief yielded an F value of 8.345 (df 2, 232; p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who believed cause- related

marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more familiar with charitable brands.

H3: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes feel obligated to participate in supporting charitable brands. Hypothesis 3 was tested by the following question, Hypothesis 3 was accepted.

Research Question 4

Was there a significant difference in those that feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that purchase from charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in purchasing from charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 13.460 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who feel obligated to purchase from or donate to charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 5

Was there a significant difference in those that donate time to charitable causes based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that donate time to charitable causes with belief. There was no significant difference in those who donate time to

charitable causes and belief of the benefit of CRM.

H4: People who believe cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes are more likely to purchase from those retailers who support charitable/social causes. Hypothesis 4 was tested by the following questions, Hypothesis 4 was accepted.

Research Question 6

Was there a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, apparel companies, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause with belief. There is a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause is based upon belief yielded an F value of 19.883 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 7

Was there a significant difference in those that frequently purchase from charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that purchase from charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that purchase from charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in purchasing from charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 18.797 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who purchase from charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 8

Was there a significant difference in those that pay more money for a product knowing a percentage of the profits go toward charitable brands based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that pay more money for a product knowing a percentage of the profits go toward charitable brands with belief. There is a significant difference in those that pay more for a product knowing a percentage goes toward charitable brands and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in paying more for a product knowing a percentage of the profit goes toward charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 25.716 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who pay more for a product knowing a percentage of the profit will go toward charitable brands are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 9

Was there a significant difference in those that if (price and fit) are equal, would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary

support based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those that if (price and fit) are equal, would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support with belief. There is a significant difference in those that if (price and fit) are equal, would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in purchasing from charitable brands based upon belief yielded an F value of 23.237(df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups.

When price and fit were equal, people would choose to purchase from charitable brands over a brand that does not give monetary support are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Research Question 10

Was there a significant difference in those who are likely to purchase from a retailer implementing CRM based on the belief cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable/social causes?

An ANOVA was performed comparing those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause with belief. There is a significant difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause and belief of the benefit of CRM. Difference in those who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause in based upon belief yielded an F value of 19.883 (df 2,233;p<.0000). The Bonferonni post-hoc multiple

comparisons test further showed significant differences between all three groups. People who are more likely to purchase from charitable brands because of their commitment to a specific cause are more likely to believe CRM is beneficial.

Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the hypotheses created prior to the study, all four were confirmed. If consumers believe CRM is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and specific charitable/social causes, then they are more likely to have higher purchase intent, are more aware and have favorable opinions based on charitable brands, and will feel more of an obligation to support these charitable brands over those who believe otherwise. This information is important to know when deciding if this marketing strategy is worth implementing. Before making the decision to use cause-related marketing there are a few things to keep in mind. This strategy can be beneficial to companies when implemented the correct way. Any business can pair with a cause and choose to give monetary support. The question is how well can retailers apply CRM into their already existing company strategy? In order to make CRM a successful marketing tool three key components are needed: brand cause fit, consumer behavior, and customer loyalty. If applied correctly, together these three variables can successfully form a strong competitive marketing strategy into any company or organization.

Brand cause fit is particularly important, because without each other the CRM strategy would be nonexistent. Meaning, in order for this to work and get the best results possible, both brand and cause have to be a strong fit. The term strong fit is referring to the product(s) of the brand and the idea behind the cause. The ideal pairing would be a well known brand and its poplar product joined with a cause most people are familiar with. For example, TOMS does a great job of selling its products

and promoting its cause "One for One" movement.   When one pair of shoes is

purchased another pair is being donated to a child in need. This pairing is beneficial

because the product is strong and well known, as well as the attached cause. When

choosing a cause, make sure it is one that can easily be promoted and really makes an

impact on those whom are being helped. By promoting the cause and the

product/brand, it creates a stronger brand cause fit which affects the consumers'

awareness and opinion of the product, brand and cause. If this is done correctly and

consumers have a positive opinion of the product, brand and cause, the purchase

intent increases, meaning a higher profit for the brand and contributions for the

cause.

Consumer behavior is also important to consider when implementing CRM. Being

aware of consumers' decisions and the process that takes place before a consumer

makes a purchase is vital. As a retailer, knowing what a specific target market is

looking for in a product/brand makes the job easier. Retailers will be able to use

consumer behavior patterns and their purchase decisions to increase business.

Knowing who to target is important when focusing on purchase intent; using what the

target market values as a tactic to make the product more attractive and worth the

purchase over another brand is the main goal.

The Consumer Behavior Model can be used as a guide when implementing any

type of strategy. This model will help retailers define a specific target market, look

into the target markets' buying behaviors and purchase decisions. By following the

steps created in this model, error can be minimized or eliminated completely based

off the information that can be learned from the behaviors of consumers, making sure

to remember customer value is another important concept. When using CRM, all

parties are supposed to benefit from the purchase of a product. If one party is left out of the benefit process, the strategy ultimately fails. Creating a strong product/cause alliance is equally imperative as making sure each party receives their benefit from the purchase.

Some will argue that all parties involved in CRM do not receive any benefits. It is easy to see the advantage the retailer and cause have over the consumer. One way to increase the benefit factor for consumers would be to create consumer loyalty programs for those retailers tied to a specific cause. Most retailers have a program like this already implemented. By adding consumer loyalty programs, charitable brands will be able to give consumers and incentive for purchasing for a cause. Even though they do receive other benefits (i.e. happiness for donating to a cause, product being purchased, and guilt free feeling) some of the benefits are not tangible, and to some people not worth purchasing for a cause. If charitable brands start rewarding their consumers for the amount of purchases made each month, this would increase customer loyalty and may even reach out to new consumers.

Previous studies have shown, in order for loyalty programs to successfully work, retailers need to focus on creating and keeping relationships with consumers. There are three benefits identified to help create this type of consumer retailer relationship. These include financial benefits (i.e. focusing on pricing incentives), social benefits (i.e. being seen and treated as a valued customer), and structural benefits (i.e. being a part of a relationship that saves time and money for the consumer) (Omar, Azrin & Sarah, 2009). The idea behind applying loyalty programs is to create a stronger relationship with consumers in hopes of gaining their frequent return. This is done by using programs such as loyalty cards, to keep track of how much each customer

has spent. In return for their monthly visits, the retailers can give a percentage discount each month as a thank you for being a valued customer. Everyone wants to know they are appreciated, and rewarding consumers with monthly/yearly incentives will only create a stronger consumer base in the future.

Summary

The goal of this study was to try and find what makes consumers choose one cause over another, but instead of really uncovering this objective, it showed how to effectively and efficiently implement this strategy. Knowing what works and does not work is a vital part when trying to market a product, brand, or particular strategy. The main point learned from this study is for companies to make sure there is a strong brand cause fit before attempting to implement CRM. Without a strong foundation and commitment from both the retailer and the charitable/social cause, the marketing strategy will fail. Another key point to remember is that each party involved in the CRM campaign needs to benefit in some way. Providing a strong loyalty program is just one way retailers can show their appreciation to their returning consumers. Building consumer retailer relationships are important, especially when pairing with a cause. The retailer needs the consumers to purchase in order to make enough profit, but to also generate enough money to give monetary support to specific charitable/social causes.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Dr. Deborah Fowler and Taylor Fields would like to find out more about your attitude about buying products which promote their connection with a social cause. There is no right or wrong answer to the questions, just what you think. You should be 18 years old or older to participate. This survey will take about 5 minutes of your time, and we will use the results for a research study. We will not be able to identify you. If you would prefer not to answer a question, please leave it blank. Your participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Dr. Deborah Fowler at 806-742-3068 X 295.

Thank you for helping us with this research. Please read the following before completing the survey. The topic of this research is Cause-Related Marketing which is when a company partners with a specific cause or causes to help raise additional funds for that organization (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009). Using the information given above please answer the following questions listed below. "TTU also has a Board that protects the rights of people who participate in research. You can call to ask them questions at 806-742-2064. You can mail your questions to the Human Research Protection Program, Office of the Vice President for Research, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas 79409, or you can email your questions to hrpp@ttu.edu."

Survey topic: Cause-Related Marketing

Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) is when a company partners with a specific cause or causes to help raise additional funds for that organization (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009).

Using the information given above please answer the following questions listed below.

Please respond to each question.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am familiar with brands and or charitable/social causes paired with a particular cause.					
I have frequently purchased brands that pair themselves with specific causes.					
I feel obligated to purchase a brand or give to charitable causes because it is the right thing to do; in order to benefit someone else.					

I would be willing to pay more money for a product if I knew a percentage of the profits from the sale was being donated to a charitable/social cause.					
I have a favorable opinion of companies that provide monetary support for charitable/social causes.					
Cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, apparel companies and charitable/social causes.					
If all other factors (e.g., price and fit) were equal, I would choose to purchase an apparel brand that provides monetary support to charitable/social causes over a brand that does not.					
I frequently donate time to charitable causes.					
I frequently purchase or donate money to charitable causes.					
I would be more likely to purchase from retailers based on their commitment to a charitable/social cause.					

Using the information below, please answer the following questions to the best of your ability, using the three given retailers.

If all other factors (e.g. price/fit) were equal, I would choose to purchase an apparel brand/product that provides monetary support to charitable/social causes over a brand/retailer that does not.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I am familiar with this brand, retailer and or charitable foundation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I have frequently purchased or made contributions to this brand, retailer and or charitable foundation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

This is an exceptional brand/retailer.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

This brand/retailer represents excellent value.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

This brand/retailer is well made.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

This is an appealing brand/retailer.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I feel obligated to purchase this brand or from this retailer because my significant other (e.g. friends, family, peers) makes frequent purchases there.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I feel obligated to purchase this brand or from this retailer because it is popular.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I feel obligated to purchase this brand or at this store because it is the right thing to do; in order to benefit someone else.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

Cause-related marketing is beneficial to consumers, retailers, and charitable causes.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I would be willing to pay more money for apparel goods or other products knowing a percentage of the sale was donated to a specific charitable/social cause.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I would be more likely to tell a friend to purchase from these retailers based on the brands' and or retailers' charitable cause.

	Definitely	Yes	Possibly	No	Definitely Not
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

I would be more likely to tell a friend to purchase from these retailers based on their charitable/social cause.

	Definitely	Yes	Possibly	No	Definitely Not
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

In the future I intend to purchase products from these brand/retailers.

	Definitely	Yes	Possibly	No	Definitely Not
TOMS Shoes					
Target					
Susan G. Komen (Race for the Cure)					

Please indicate the year you were born:

Gender:
      Male
      Female

Ethnicity:
      Hispanic
      Asian
      African American
      Native American
      White Caucasian

Religion:
      Agnostic
      Christian
      Muslim
      Athiest
      Other

Location: State

APPENDIX B

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD LETTER

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Vice President *for* Research

September 13, 2013

Dr. Deborah Fowler
Nutrition, Hospitality and retailing (NHR)
Mail Stop: 1240

Regarding: 504103 The Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Consumer Behavior:
Does the Cause Matter?

Dr. Deborah Fowler:

The Texas Tech University Protection of Human Subjects Committee approved your
claim for an exemption for the protocol referenced above on September 13, 2013.

Exempt research is not subject to continuing review. However, any modifications that (a)
change the research in a substantial way, (b) might change the basis for exemption, or (c)
might introduce any additional risk to subjects must be reported to the Human Research
Protection Program (HRPP) before they are implemented.

To report such changes, you must send a new claim for exemption or a proposal for
expedited or full board review to the HRPP. Extension of exempt status for exempt
protocols that have not changed is automatic.

The HRPP staff will send annual reminders that ask you to update the status of your
research protocol. Once you have completed your research, you must inform the
HRPP office by responding to the annual reminder so that the protocol file can be
closed.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Cogan, Ph.D., ABPP
Protection of Human Subjects Committee

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