CHAPTER - 6

CONCLUSION

In-store Advertising, long the backwater of Advertising, is now getting a fresh look by marketers. While studies have focused on other types of marketing communication, not many researchers have focused on in store communication. Increasingly marketers are realizing that the in store environment is a critical marketing communications touch point and one that they need to get right to succeed. It is now found that the majority of purchase decisions are made at the shelf. With competition thickening there is increasing urgency for brands to become even more strategic about how they communicate with consumers in store. The present study is focused on In-Store Advertising, promotions and its impact on consumers purchase decisions. The study looks at all aspects of In-store Advertising; it looks at consumer perception on various aspects of in store communication, starting from the type of Advertising vehicles, the benefits of in store advertisements, the qualities of in store advertisements, the advertisement messages, the type of in store advertisements, adjectives used to describe the In-store advertisements and store offers.

The study was an eye opener about in store advertisements. The study revealed that In-store advertisements are powerful influencers and people find them very beneficial. Marketers need to deliberate on the findings of this study and look at what consumers prefer and what they don’t, in In-store advertisements. The preferred vehicles, the top benefits, the top qualities of the advertisement, the top messages, the top type of advertisement vehicle and the top adjectives are all revealed.

The study will go a long way in demystifying the concept of In-store Advertising, which has always been a hazy field for marketers. Especially since the In-store advertisement is the last frontier before the consumer actually makes the purchase.

This study has future scope in being undertaken in other cities, states and nations, to compare the adoption and effectiveness of In-store Advertising in influencing consumer decision making.
This study has highlighted the impact of in-store advertising and consumer purchasing decision at stores in Chennai. A store that does not have any positive image and proper communication loses potential customers, who shy away from it and go to stores they understand. In order to overcome this problem, this study has been taken up. This study provides evidence showing strong support for using visual information such as graphics in stores. In-store advertising may be more explicit and less ambiguous in delivering a message. Most of the retailers are on the right track with their widespread use of “life style reflections” graphics in the stores. In a store the shoppers have 360 degree orientation, meaning that they rapidly change the direction they face. This study shows the clear picture of changing shopping behavior among consumers and therefore retailers should attract them with catchy in-store advertising devices in their stores and influence buyers purchasing decision. Digital in-store media provide methods to override consumer malaise, and increase shopping efficiency. In-store advertising highly influences the buyers purchasing decision and motivates them to shop. This study has been attempted to examine how far consumers purchasing decisions is influenced by in-store advertising.

India has seen very few research studies on the impact of in-store advertising, making it difficult for advertisers to understand whether their investments in in-store advertising are vindicated. The current study was undertaken to study the Indian scenario with regard to in-store advertising and promotion.

The current study shows that In-store advertisements have a strong influence on brand choice. A great many factors contribute to purchase decision, including consumer characteristics, brand features and situational factors. By identifying those factors, retailers may improve in-store advertising, store layout and design, merchandising, atmosphere and staffing decisions significantly.

It is seen in the current study that the food category (55.77% of respondents) is the most seen In-store advertisement. Surprisingly, the other categories such as cosmetics, soaps, cleaning products, clothes, crockery, shoes, appliances, etc did not seem to have a place in In-store advertisements. This finding, coupled with other studies that indicate that retailers use in-store advertisements for influencing purchase decisions, suggests that consumers in Chennai tend to be faced with many food brands and are not particularly
brand loyal in the food category. This lack of brand loyalty enables retailers and food manufacturers to influence the consumers’ purchase decision.

In-store advertisements were found, in the current study, to help people recognize their latent needs. The in-store advertisements are also found to be more popular among the less educated for providing more information, in the current study. The current research also reveals that middle aged (41-55) and the youth (18-29) find the in-store advertisements the most beneficial. Earlier studies support this fact and suggest that retailers need to utilize in-store advertisements in the best possible way; they need to use CRM to develop full-knowledge about customer behavior and preferences as this enables them to develop programs and strategies that encourage customers to continually enhance their business. Unless retail firms remain vigilant to changing consumer behavior patterns, they will not be able to tell apart the elements of the retail mix that could typically insulate their primary customers from responding to special competitive offers. Latent needs can be only tapped by retailers, with effective CRM. One can therefore surmise that in-store advertisements can be customized to suit the needs of the less educated and the concerned age groups, using data mining and data analytics.

The current study indicates that store advertisements were found to help impulse buying. Such advertisements should be near the billing counter, near the items advertised, so consumers will pick them up on the way out. Previous studies confirm that consumer purchasing decisions are frequently made at the point of purchase and may be heavily influenced by what takes place there. One can therefore deduce that stores can hasten impulse buying by placing displays and other visual cues near the check-out counter.

The current study indicates that in-store advertisements should point out the location of items. Respondents want in-store advertisements to provide information about new products. Earlier research suggests that customers may develop associations of trust, value, quality of goods and services, price, warranty and guarantee, etc as they come across visuals such as signage, window dressing, logo, etc based on past shopping experiences. As consumers became more sophisticated, retailers have discovered new roles for effective appearance: communicating product information and store image, assisting consumers in making purchase decisions, and creating an existing shopping environment, as shown in previous studies. As a result of the above mentioned factors, consumers had a more
favorable attitude toward merchandise and service quality and felt more aroused or pleased with a store where more appearance cues were present. Consumers perceived that they would be more likely to shop in a store that had more in-store display of graphics with user-friendly meaning. Manufacturers’ utilization of cross-category promotions and retailers’ shelf-space allocation decisions across product categories within a store are important. These previous studies support the current findings and reiterate the importance of providing information to the consumer through in-store advertisements, that enhance the shopping experience. Retailers need to invest resources to modify the supermarket appeal to offer hedonic and utilitarian value to customer.

The current research reveals that in-store advertisements prompt purchase of items of high value and medium value. With the food category (55.77% of respondents) being the most seen In-store advertisement, the in-store advertisements focusing on food products may therefore offer less returns to retailers than items of higher value. The In-store advertisements can play a big role in helping the consumer make an informed choice as indicated by this study. This finding refutes previous research which suggests that advertisements are more effective for low involvement or low value products. Considering this phenomenon, one can consider that in-store media play a more strategic role than media inside the house. By being available at the location where the consumer is already in a buying frame of mind, the in-store visuals also propel purchase of high involvement product.

Discounts are the biggest motivators, according to this study. This supports previous research that Indians are deal hunters and identifying the right price specials for consumers is crucial for retail success. Studies in other countries suggest that consumers may prioritize differently and give more importance to a pleasing and less crowded environment. Also, in other countries price may not be all that predominant in influencing store loyalty. This study suggests that conditions in India favor price related promotions and deals in in-store advertisements.

The current study finds consumers looking for well lit, attractive, properly communicated, believable, relevant, strategically located, giving more information on features and functions of the product, benefits of the product and the right way to use the product, discounts, warranty, Help and Benefit. Consumers are not so satisfied with the
merchandise display. Consumers are also not happy with the knowledge of the staff. Banners/posters are the preferred in-store advertisements. Products displays are also very highly rated. The other advertisement instruments preferred by the respondents are Mannequins, Danglers, and Portable displays. Technology in POP displays is also popular among the less educated consumers. These findings support earlier studies that show that new technologies can enhance the shopping experience, but applications must be tailored to the unique requirements of consumer segments and product categories. This leads to the conclusion that technology does increase the effectiveness of in-store advertising and consequent consumer satisfaction.

Respondents in this current study desire new product lines that are new and exciting. Respondents also suggest special offers in the In-store advertisements, special advertisements and offers during festivals, adequate training to store staff in the areas of product knowledge, location, etc., wider selection and convenient hours, customer feedback system, appropriate return policies with cash refunds when required, extend store hours, convenient parking facilities, strong headline in the advertisements, memorable messages, different ways to arrange and display merchandise that will make it easier for customers to buy, distinctive merchandise that is different from competition, more Advertising for private label brands, Use of advertisements for cross marketing, simple text advertisements on shopping cart handles, In-store videos that display location and offers for various brands, In-store advertisements that compare price and features of competitive brands, multiple media such as packaging, videos, displays, to communicate a single message, so as to create a more powerful impact and research by companies to see what type of messages and media increase sales of a particular brand In-store. The In-store advertisement needs to be good enough to make people stop and read it, understand and engage with it and ultimately activate the consumer to go a pick up the product. Respondents suggest to link the in-store advertisement to the parent advertisement shown in media outside the store.

The above suggestions of respondents of the current research, supports earlier studies. The consumer is the final authority on the effectiveness of in-store advertising. These initiatives by the retailer will make the customer spend more time in the store, which is one of the biggest challenges for retailers. The more time the consumer spends, the more he or she ends up buying, as shown in various studies. The outcome of another study
emphasizes that store environment, social surroundings, temporal perspective, shopping
task and antecedent situational dimensions influence the amount of money spent and
number of items purchased. These findings leads one to construe that “retail branding” is
significantly susceptible to in-store advertising and promotion. In the past, store displays
were mainly used for promotional purposes. However, Store image is a concept which is
more than the sum of its parts; it represents interaction among characteristics and includes
extraneous elements; it has some emotional content and a combination of factual and
emotional material.

In-store advertising is an integral part of the store image. In-store advertising can be
extended to other store facilities as anything that enhances the shopper’s in-store
experience contributes to store loyalty and purchase. In-store advertising defines consumer
experience and loyalty, which inturn is a measure of how much money the consumer
spends and how any items he or she ends up buying.