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Innovative sales promotion techniques among Hong Kong advertisers – a content analysis

Abstract

Sales promotions can be seen as a service that provides encouragement to purchase a product or service by changing the perceived value-for-money equation. In the past decade manufacturers and retailers have been gradually switching from above the line mass media advertising to a variety of below the line sales promotions. Although sales promotions take up a very large share of total marketing expenditure, they remain an area which has less strategic consideration or attention than any other aspect of the promotion mix, especially in the international market arena. There is a scarcity of literature devoted to the use of sales promotion techniques within a particular Asian city over a period of time. This study focuses on the sales promotion techniques employed by advertisers in Hong Kong between 1995 and 2004, and specifically examines the effectiveness of each sales promotion technique in terms of their popularity, size, day of placement and suitability for industries.

This study content analyzes all the sales promotion related advertisements that appeared in a major Hong Kong newspaper. The research reveals that the alliance between the promotion techniques and the environment is important and underlines the importance a company should place on its environment. As marketing environment has affected promotion trends, this study provides marketing practitioners with a new perspective that would encourage them to more strategically manage the sales promotion with the consideration of the environmental dynamics along with the time line. Future research suggests the focus on understanding the sales promotion techniques via emerging technological devices.

Keywords: sales promotion, content analysis, Hong Kong advertising.

Introduction

In the past decade manufacturers and retailers have been gradually switching from above the line mass media advertising to a variety of below the line sales promotions. Although sales promotions take up a very large share of total marketing expenditure, they remain an area of less strategic consideration or attention than any other aspect of the promotion mix (Srinivasan and Anderson, 1998). The potential benefits of using sales promotions could range from giving immediacy and encouraging purchase of a product or service by changing the perceived value-for-money equation.

Despite the growth in sales promotions, there is a scarcity of literature devoted to the use of sales promotion techniques within a particular Asian city over a period of time. This study focuses on the sales promotion techniques employed by advertisers in Hong Kong between 1995 and 2004. Specifically, it examines the effectiveness of each sales promotion technique in terms of their popularity, size, day of placement and suitability for industries. This study content analyzes all the sales promotion related advertisements that appeared in a major Hong Kong newspaper.

1. Relevant studies

In the past decade manufacturers and retailers have been gradually switching from above the line mass media advertising to a variety of below the line sales

promotions. This trend reflects the ongoing disenchantment with mass media advertising based on the difficulty of measuring its effectiveness. However, the trend also reflects a desire by manufacturers and retailers to get closer to customers in some form of relationship marketing. A number of explanations have been forwarded for the increasing popularity of promotions (Dickson and Sawyer, 1990; Quelch, 1983; Low and Jakki, 2000; Dawes, 2004). One of the key factors is the changing relationship with advertising. Previously advertising and sales promotion were viewed as alternatives to each other. As concerns for growth about the cost effectiveness of media advertising came to the spotlight, there has been an increasing use of sales promotion for both packaged good and consumer durables (Quelch, Neslin and Olson, 1987), especially by market leaders such as Proctor and Gamble and McDonald's who have given promotion a newfound 'respectability' (Peattie, 1998, p. 43). Other factors include the increasing power of retailers (Toop, 1992), matching competitors' promotions (Lal, 1990), changed in marketing culture where short-term gain is becoming more attractive than long-term consumer franchise building through advertising (Peattie, 1998), and the desire of manufacturers and retailers in influencing consumers' buying behavior (Alvarez and Casielles, 2005).

Sales promotion can be defined as 'special offers' (Peattie, 1998). More specifically, referring to the Institute of Sales Promotion, it is 'a range of tactical marketing techniques designed within a strategic

framework to add value in order to achieve specific sales and marketing objectives” (Bunn and Banks, 2004). According to Branch (1990), sales promotion excludes all paid media advertising, but includes techniques like coupons, self-liquidating offers, bargain packages, gifts, sampling, and point of purchase promotions and displays. Sales promotion works as short-term incentives to encourage purchase of a product or service (Kotler, Brown, Adam and Armstrong, 2006), and therefore is value offered to the customer in a short-term orientation. It essentially aims to stimulate demand during the period in which it is set (Peattie and Peattie, 1995; Lehman and Winer, 2002; Walsh, 2000). The potential benefits of using sales promotions could range from attracting new customers from competitors to persuading customers to switch to brands with higher profit margins or simply inducing existing customers to buy more.

Although sales promotions take up a very large share of total marketing expenditure, they remain an area of less strategic consideration or attention than any other aspect of the promotion mix (Srinivasan and Anderson, 1998). Many such promotions accomplish little more than inviting imitation and reducing profits (Betsy, Andrew and Lam, 2007). The consumer goods manufacturer sees sales promotions as a necessary evil. It is something that is has to be done if the targets are to be met, while most marketing managers would rather meet the targets without having to resort to something as blunt and unsophisticated as a sales promotion. The advocate of brand advertising proclaims that sales promotions are a bad thing since they do not contribute to the brand building needed for future success and profitability (Dawes, 2004). Most analysts believe that sales promotion activities do not build long-term consumer preference and loyalty, instead, usually produce short-term sales that cannot be maintained (Kotler et al., 2006). However, research shows that sales promotion does have strategic potential, such as strategic communication (Lee, 2002). At the same time, those involved in running the sales promotions focus on the tactical issue of getting the greatest amount of short-term sales for the least promotional investment (Davies, 1992).

According to Peattie and Peattie (1995), promotions can be divided into two groups: ‘value-increasing’ and ‘value-adding’ promotions. Value-increasing promotions such as price deals, coupons and refund offers are the most popular promotional techniques used by retailers. Value-adding promotions include free gift, samples, loyalty schemes and a competition are often overlooked. Price-based value increasing promotions have the potential to erode the image

of the company as consumers often use price as a surrogate measure of quality (Tellis and Gaeth, 1990). In contrast, value added promotions tend to offer the customer ‘something extra’ which might provide the customer with the extra incentive to purchase the product (Peattie and Peattie, 1995; Srinivisan and Anderson, 1998).

Despite the growth in sales promotions, there is a scarcity of literature devoted to the use of sales promotion techniques within a particular Asian city over a period of time. This study will focus on the sales promotion techniques employed by advertisers in Hong Kong between 1995 and 2004. Specifically, it examines the effectiveness of each sales promotion technique in terms of its popularity, size, day of placement and suitability for industries. This study will content analyze all the sales promotion related advertisements that appeared in a major Hong Kong newspaper.

2. Methodology

Hong Kong is a free enterprise society and has been described as a dynamic *Laissez-Faire* free market. It has been touted by advertisers as the capital of sales promotion given the myriad of promotional activities that appeared in the newspapers, outside the undergrounds, inside commercial enterprises and in letter boxes. This study will focus on the sales promotion techniques and the offers that appeared in a major newspaper. Oriental Daily News is Hong Kong’s number one Chinese language newspaper in terms of readership and circulation. It was selected based on the premise that advertisers from all walks of industry are keen to communicate their products and offers via Oriental Daily News. A ten-year time frame was considered ideal for this study as it examined the marketing activities before 1997, post 1997 and the beginning of the 21st century. Before the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, Hong Kong’s economy was rosy while unemployment was at its lowest. However, after 1997, the Hong Kong economy faltered and this was made worst by the Asian financial crises. The beginning of 2001 saw Hong Kong wrangling with China over its autonomy, followed by SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and avian flu threat. In the face of all these threats, Hong Kong also registered the lowest consumer confidence index in two successive studies by Master Card International (2001-2002). A low confidence index means the consumers are worried about their future in relation to employment, regular income, stock value, and economic outlook.

2.1. Research design. Constructing the sales promotion techniques. To start off with, we examined the various marketing and advertising textbooks on the

definitions of sales promotion techniques. In the end we settled on the following 13 definitions and adjusted the wordings of each definition to suit the context of this study (See Table 1).

Table 1. Promotional technique definitions

Promotional technique	Definition
Coupons	The certificate that gives buyers a saving.
Price pack	Cent-off deals: the reduced price is marked by the producer.
Premium	Goods offered either free or at low cost.
Cash refund offer	Consumers send a 'proof' of purchase to the manufacturer.
Advertising specialties	Useful articles imprinted with an advertiser's name as gifts.
Patronage reward	Cash or other awards for the regular use of a certain product.
Point-of-purchase promotions	Display or demonstration that takes place at point of sale.
Contests	Call for consumers to submit an entry.
Sweepstakes	Call for consumers to submit their names for a draw.
Game	It presents consumers with something – bingo numbers, missing letters, every time they buy, which may or may not help them to win a prize.
Sample	A small amount of a product offered to consumers for trial.
Tie-in	A sample or another promotion for one product with the purchase of another.
Novelty	A claim that the offer is limited in supply.

Sources: Belch and Belch (2004), Rossiter and Percy (1997), Kotler (2000), Kotler et al. (2003, 2006).

These 13 techniques are commonly quoted in the textbooks, but there is a dearth of research information with regards to their actual usage. The primary objective of this study is to try to close this academic gap by investigating the sales promotional usage in a society like Hong Kong where 'every purchase is a bargain'.

Following the identification of the sales promotion techniques, the next step was to identify the month and the week for the study. Hong Kong has a number of major religious based activities. For instance, Chinese Lunar New Year in January or February, ghost festival in July, mid-autumn festival in October, Christmas in December and summer vacation from June to August which might increase the volume of promotional activities. To avoid any biases, we focused on the 'lean' month of April with week two randomly selected for this study. In addition, only sales promotion advertisements with a minimum size of 27cm x 18cm were selected as those smaller than this size were often advertisements related to 'adult entertainment'.

Three research assistants were recruited to identify all the sales promotion techniques that appeared in

the Oriental Daily News between 1995 and 2004. The three judges were initially given briefing and training by the authors before setting out to identify the techniques based on the 13 definitions. All three judges examined one newspaper at a time. In total, the three judges examined 70 copies of Oriental Daily News (i.e., 7 copies per week over 10 years). Any disputes with regards to promotion techniques and the offers were referred to the authors and resolved immediately. At the end of the exercise, the inter-judge reliability averaged 86.3% which slightly exceeded the 85% recommended by Kassarian (1977, p. 14).

3. Results

3.1. Frequency, ad size and industry. A total of 1536 sales promotion advertisements were identified by the three independent judges. However, some advertisements consisted of more than one sales promotion techniques embedded into a single advertisement. As such, there were 1872 sales promotion techniques identified between 1995 and 2004 out of 1536 advertisements. A detailed analysis of advertisements with more than one sales promotion techniques is presented in Table 7.

Table 2. Frequency of advertisement and industry

Year	Freq	%	Industry	N	%
1995	106	6.9	Communication	90	5.9
1996	104	6.8	Banking & finance	119	7.7
1997	131	8.5	Housing	327	21.3
1998	142	9.2	Restaurant	63	4.1
1999	151	9.8	Retail	422	27.5
2000	204	13.3	Supermarket	93	6.1
2001	202	13.2	Automobile	83	5.4
2002	180	11.7	Travel agency	151	9.8
2003	156	10.2	Cosmetics & health products	85	5.5
2004	160	10.4	Other services	103	6.7
Total	1536	100.0	Total	1536	

Notes: Communication (incl. IDD and mobile, Internet, web page, Paging service); banking & finance (incl. credit cards, loan, investment, insurance); housing (incl. property developers, flat sales); restaurants (incl. chain & independent restaurants, fast food outlets); supermarkets (incl. food, convenience stores); automobile (incl. cars, car accessories, smash repairs); travel agency (incl. tours, organized food tours); cosmetics & health products (incl. slimming, hair care, health products, fitness gymnasium, Chinese medicine); other services (incl. express, hotel, flight, computer and driving education).

Table 2 summarized the frequency of sales promotion advertisements in the past 10 years. It is interesting to find that the total number of advertisements increased every year until 2000 and then began to decline from 2001 onwards. The average number of advertisements per year before 1997 was

113.7 versus 165.7 between 1998 and 2000, and between 2001 and 2004 the average was 174.5. The industry with the most number of sales promotion advertisements was ‘Retail’ (27.5%) followed by ‘Housing’ (21.3%).

In Table 3, the study revealed that most of the advertisements appeared in the ‘News’ (44.1%) and ‘Entertainment’ (30.1%) sections. In terms of ad size, it seemed that the advertisers preferred the ‘Full page’ (50.3%) and ‘Quarter page’ (22.1%) relative to other ad sizes.

Table 3. Where the ads appeared and size of ads

Section	Freq.	%	Size of ad	Freq.	%
News	677	44.1	Less than qtr page	34	2.2
Entertainment	463	30.1	Quarter page	339	22.1
Business	183	11.9	Half page	103	6.7

Travel & technology	142	9.2	Junior page	226	14.7
Horse racing	33	2.1	Full page	772	50.3
Other sports	25	1.6	Other odd sizes	62	4.0
Miscellaneous	13	0.1			
Total	1536				

3.2. Popularity of sales promotion techniques.

Although the 13 definitions are often quoted in the textbook, we found some of the techniques like ‘Advertising specialty’, ‘Novelty’, ‘Contest’, ‘Sweepstake’, ‘Game’, ‘Sample’ and ‘Tie-in’ were extremely unpopular among the advertisers. For the purpose of this study, we combined these techniques into ‘Advertising specialty and novelty’, ‘Contest/sweepstake/game’, and ‘Sample and tie-in’ as they seemed to fit neatly and at the same time the enlarged frequencies will help facilitate statistical analysis.

Table 4. Popularity of sales promotion advertisements by year

Techniques	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Coupon (n = 129)	1	2	9	9	10	18	23	22	24	11
PP (n = 593)	32	26	40	45	49	92	81	82	75	71
Premium (n = 560)	46	42	51	54	54	63	66	75	61	48
CRO (n = 4)			1			1		1		1
Ad specialty & nov. (n = 8)								1	3	4
PR (n = 20)	1	1	10	1		2	2	3		
POP (n = 422)	33	36	38	59	57	50	62	32	16	39
CSG (n = 111)	10	7	13	12	13	23	9	14	6	4
Sample & tie-in (n = 25)	1	1	4	4	4	4	2	1	3	1
Total (n = 1872)	124	115	166	184	187	254	245	233	185	179
Percentage	6.6	6.1	8.9	9.8	10.0	13.6	13.1	12.4	9.9	9.6

Notes: PM = Premium, POP = Point-of-purchase, PP = Price pack, PR = Patronage reward, CRO = Cash refund offer, CSG = Contest/sweepstake/game.

In Table 4, Column 1, we highlight the popularity of each of the nine sales promotion techniques. The most popular technique is ‘Price pack (PP)’ (31.6%) followed by ‘Premium goods’ (30%) and ‘Point-of-purchase’ (22.5%). The least popular technique is ‘Advertising specialty & novelty’. On a year by year analysis, ‘Coupon’ is becoming relatively popular between 2000 and 2003 before waning in popularity in 2004. A similar trend is recorded by ‘Price pack’ and ‘Premium goods’. For ‘Point-of-purchase promotion’, its popularity took a huge dive in 2003 relative to 2000 before rising again in 2004. A finding worth noting is that ‘Contest/Sweepstake/Game’ is becoming less popular since 2001 (except in 2002) with its usage dropping to a mere four by 2004.

The study also revealed that Friday (21.6%), Saturday (16.4%) and Sunday (14.1%) have the most number of sales promotion techniques (See Table 5). Note that in order to reduce clutter, only those sales promotion

techniques which appeared more than 10 times per day are cited in the table. For customers who enjoy receiving discounts and/or free gifts, Friday is the day where there are relatively more ‘Price pack’ and ‘Premium goods’ advertisements than on other days. In contrast, ‘Point-of-purchase promotion’ is more popular during the weekend than weekdays. In fact, its popularity on Sunday is about 8 times more than it is on Wednesday.

Table 5. Popularity of sales promotion advertisements by day

Techniques	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Coupon	17	12	19	32	27	12	10
Price pack	86	75	48	71	158	93	62
Premium goods	74	80	64	89	111	76	66
Cash refund offer	-	-	2	1	1	-	-
Advertising specialty & novelty	2	-	2	2	1	-	1

Table 5 (cont.). Popularity of sales promotion advertisements by day

Patronage reward	2	4	4	4	6	-	-
Point-of-purchase promotion	42	24	15	35	71	116	119
Contest/sweepstake/game	15	18	16	21	28	8	5
Sample & tie-in	5	5	8	3	1	2	1
Total (n = 1872)	243	218	178	258	404	307	264
Percentage	13.0	11.6	9.5	13.8	21.6	16.4	14.1

The findings relating to which industry used what technique and on which day are summarized in Table 6. The ‘Communication’ industry typically used ‘Premium’ on Wednesday and Friday. For ‘Bank-

ing & finance’, the industry starts the week with ‘Price pack’ and ‘Premium’, but only used ‘Premium’ for the rest of the week. The ‘Housing’ industry used a combination of techniques across the whole week, with ‘Point-of-purchase promotion’ being the most popular on Sunday. They also used ‘Premium’ from Friday through to Tuesday. The ‘Retail’ industry used at least two sales promotion techniques per day, but when it comes to Thursday and Friday, the industry used at least four techniques to win over the customers. It is interesting to note that the retail industry used ‘Point-of-purchase promotion’, ‘Coupon’ and ‘Context/sweepstake/game’ only on Thursday and Friday.

Table 6. Type of industry and usage of sales promotion techniques by day

Industry	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Communication			PM (10)		PM (11)		
Banking & finance	PP (12) PM (12)	PM (13)	PM (18)	PM (16)			
Housing	PM (14) POP (35)	PM (10) POP (16)	POP (12)	POP (12)	PM (17) POP (45)	PP (10) PM (26) POP (73)	PM (33) POP (92)
Restaurant							
Retail	PP (20) PM (14)	PP (18) PM (25)	PP (14) PM (16)	C (12) PP (29) PM (35) POP (10) CSG (13)	C (13) PP (66) PM (41) CSG (17)	PP (40) PM (25)	PP (20) PM (12)
Supermarket		PP (11)			PP (46)	PP (15)	PP (10)
Automobile					PM (10) POP (18)	PM (10) POP (25)	POP (12)
Travel agency	PP (20) PM (12)	PP (16) PM (11)	PP (14)	PP (10) PM (10)	PP (12)	PP (15)	PP (12)
Cosmetics & health products				C (10) PP (10)			
Other services					PP (10) PM (11)		

Notes: PM = Premium, POP = Point-of-Purchase, PP = Price pack, CSG = Contest/sweepstake/game, C = Coupon.

The ‘Supermarket’ industry used ‘Price pack’ towards the weekend with Friday having the most number of advertisements. Similar strategy has been adopted by the ‘Automobile’ industry, but instead of using ‘Price pack’, the industry used ‘Point-of-purchase promotion’ and ‘Premium’. Meanwhile, the ‘Travel’ industry used ‘Price pack’ throughout the whole weekend, but supplemented it with ‘Premium’ on Monday and Tuesday. The ‘Cosmetics & health products’ industry only heavy-up their sales promotion on Thursday with techniques like ‘Coupon’ and ‘Price pack’. In Table 7, we specifically highlight the various combinations of sales promotion techniques as preferred by their primary users.

Table 7. Integrated sales promotion techniques

Techniques	N	Primary users
PP + Premium	104	Retail (44); Travel agency (13); Banking & finance (10)
PP + POP	35	Housing (16); Automobile (12); Retail (8)
PP + PR	5	Retail (3); Supermarket (2)
PP + CSG	11	Retail (4); Banking & finance (3); Restaurant (2)
Premium + CSG	11	Banking & finance (6); Communication (3); Retail (2)
Premium + POP	85	Housing (64); Automobile (13); Communication (3)
POP + CSG	7	Housing (4); Automobile (2)
PR + CSG	3	Communication (3)
Sample/Tie-in + POP	2	Cosmetics & health products (2)

Table 7 (cont.). Integrated sales promotion techniques

Sample/Tie-in + Premium	2	Banking & finance (2)
Sample/Tie-in + PP	3	Cosmetics & health products (3)
Coupon + Premium	8	Retail (3); Travel agency (2); Cosmetics & health products (2)
Coupon + PP	14	Retail (6); Housing (3); Supermarket (3)
Coupon + POP	6	Housing (4)
Coupon + CSG	3	Cosmetics & health products (2)
Coupon + PP + Premium	1	Retail (1)
Coupon + POP+ Premium	4	Retail (2); Cosmetics & health products (2)
Coupon + PP + POP	3	Cosmetics & health products (2)
PP + Premium + CSG	6	Retail (3); Supermarket (2)
PP + Premium + POP	10	Housing (5); Retail (2); Automobile (2)
Premium + POP + CSG	5	Housing (2); Retail (2)
Coupon + POP + PP + Premium	3	Cosmetics & health products (3)
Premium + POP + CSG + PP	5	Housing (3); Banking & finance (2)

Notes: PM = Premium, POP = Point-of-purchase, PP = Price pack, PR = Patronage reward, CSG = Contest/sweepstake/game.

In total there were 336 of such combinations. The most popular combination is ‘Price pack + Premium’ (31%) with primary users including ‘Retail’, ‘Travel agency’ and ‘Banking & finance’. Next on the popular list is ‘Premium + Point-of-purchase’ combination (25.3%) followed by ‘Price pack + Point-of-purchase’ combination (10.4%). The ‘Housing’ and ‘Automobile’ industries used both types of combinations to entice the customers to visit their show flat or car showroom respectively. The least popular combination is ‘Coupon + Price pack + Premium’, but not ‘Coupon + Price pack’.

4. Limitation of research

Although this study revealed that some sales promotion techniques were heavily used over others between 1996 and 2004 in Hong Kong, the drawbacks of the specific techniques should be investigated when it comes to planning and designing the sales promotion strategy, such as decreasing brand loyalty (Bridge, Briesch and Yim, 2006), increasing consumer price sensitivity (DeVecchio, Krishnan and Smith, 2007), emphasizing short-run marketing planning (Betsy et al., 2007) and eroding brand-quality image (Raghubir and Corfman, 1999).

Discussion and managerial implications

Aligning promotion techniques with the environment. This study has attempted to examine the sales promotion techniques used by advertisers in Hong Kong between 1995 and 2004. The study reveals the alliance between the promotion techniques

and the environment. It shows the number of pragmatic approaches undertaken by advertisers when it came to the dynamic marketing environment. For instance, prior to 1997 the Hong Kong consumers and advertisers benefited from a healthy economy. The employment rate was high and so consumers’ buying power and the income levels were rising. The use of sales promotion techniques was kept to the minimum as there was less effort requirement for enticing consumers to spend. However, Hong Kong’s free market encountered a big crisis with the onset of Asian financial crisis in 1998, when many people lost their jobs. The change of the economy has directly affected the composition of a household’s expenditure. Hitherto the culture of going to work as secondary to investing in stock markets and properties has turned into a fear of retrenchment and redundancy culture. As a result, people are spending less and paying more attention to sales promotion. To meet the change in consumer buying behavior, advertisers increased the usage of ‘Price pack’ and ‘Premium Goods’ techniques. Additionally, in order to encourage consumers to visit the establishments, most advertisers have also increased the usage of ‘Point-of-purchase’ technique. Noticeable among the advertisers was the ‘Housing’ developers offering ‘Point-of-purchase’ technique like a free bus service to visit a flat and a free car park as the purchase of a flat took a dive post 1997.

The economic situation was further compounded by outbreak of SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and avian flu in early 2003, which also changed a consumer’s behavior dramatically. During the SARS epidemic period, stores in almost all shopping malls were empty. As a result, ‘Point-of-Purchase’ was least used in an apparent response to the consumers’ growing fear of infection, however the use of this technique increased after these epidemic outbreaks in 2004.

Managerial implication. This study underlines the importance the company should place on the environment. As the marketing environment has affected promotion trends, the results of this study provide marketing practitioners with a new perspective that may encourage them to more strategically manage the sales promotion with the consideration of the environmental dynamics along with the time line. In addition, the size of the ads and the day of their placement should be taken into account when it comes to the practical techniques in designing the sales promotion. Such factors may be influenced by the environment, society and culture.

However, despite the variety of promotion techniques, the most frequently applied are ‘Price pack’ and ‘Premium’, either individually or together. Over

the next few years, apart from the change of external environment of the company, the application of sales promotion techniques should draw a greater attention within the industries with the continuously growth of both consumers and retailers' demand for promotions, and with the increasing short-term business performance pressures manufacturers face, who are driven by the need to meet targets which usually set in terms of sales revenue, contribution or market share. In addition, the change of consumers' behavior under the influence of the external environment change should also be closely monitored. According to "Engel's laws", which has been often supported or verified by later studies (Perthel, 1975), there are differences regarding family spending patterns in response change of income level. Spending power increased and so there was the demand for sales promotion techniques (Kotler et al., 2006). Also, if the consumers are generally more educated in the marketing environment,

the techniques will need to be more deliberately selected and designed.

Future research. Sales promotion techniques will keep changing based on their effectiveness in attracting consumers towards a companies' product or service. In relation to this matter, technology has been playing a very important role in providing alternatives and choices for the betterment of the modern life style and needs of individuals and organizations. The usage of Internet and mobile telecommunication devices as another means of communication channel to reach consumers needs to be the next focus of identifying the effectiveness of sales promotion techniques. Although the interactivity advantages and hype brought by this channel are yet to be proven, we need to understand the acceptance of the sales promotion techniques via emerging technological devices.

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