

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of relationship marketing tactics (including: direct mail, preferential treatment, interpersonal communication, and tangible rewards) on perceived relationship investment and their outcomes. In addition, this research also examined the moderating effects of consumer characteristics (including: product category involvement and consumer relationship proneness) on the relationship between perceived relationship investment and relationship quality.

The researcher used survey method and self-administered questionnaires as instruments to collect the primary data. The sample included AIS mobile phone users who have used mobile phone in GSM Advance system for at least two years. Three hundred and eighty four respondents were included in the sample size. Structural equation modeling by AMOS program was practically used to test the research hypotheses.

Data from 384 respondents indicated that tangible rewards, interpersonal communication, and preferential treatment have positive effects on perceived relationship investment. Perceived relationship investment also affects relationship quality and ultimately leads to behavioral loyalty. These findings suggest that it pays off for service providers to invest in customer relationship, because it results in increased loyalty. Moreover, the researcher did not find moderating effects of product category involvement and consumer relationship proneness. Thus, the effect of perceived relationship investment on relationship quality is not contingent on these two consumer characteristics.

According to the findings, this study makes four recommendations. First, service provider should reward their loyal customers by offering attractive airtime promotion and launch point accumulation scheme.

Secondly, service provider should educate and train its employees to know how to interact with customer. Marketing and sales managers also should screen for social abilities when hiring sales personnel.

Thirdly, service provider should make customers feel special by putting them to the first priority group to know about new campaigns or new releases of the company, also offering faster service and individualized additional services. Preferred customer club should also be established to serve these customers.

The fourth recommendation will be technology development in order to know about their customers' lifestyles, attitudes, interests, and such.

A challenging further study can study other forms of relationship marketing such as suppliers and employees. In addition, this study can be applied to other service firms for the next research in order to know whether the results will be the same or not. Considering the different levels of relationship length between customer and service provider is also recommended to further study.