

Is 'P-Commerce' The Future of Business and E-Commerce? An Empirical Study of Elite Customer Experience and Perception

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of e-commerce was initially a technological development. It offered a new dimension to business, and new opportunity to creative people. However, not all the e-com ventures could be equally successful. There can be many factors, and the people element is surely one of them, which cannot be isolated from business. The people-power and that of fast-changing / emerging values is going to drive transformation in forms and formats of business in future; beyond e-com, social media and internet based marketing. This paper is prepared in light of the ideas generated in a landmark book titled: Marketing 3.0 – From Products to Customers to Human Spirit by Philip Kotler, H Kartajaya and Iwan S. (2010) and is based on data collected from 37 respondents from LinkedIn. The paper gives insight of deep level changes happening inside the minds of high-end consumers with advent of irreversible globalization and its impact beyond Internet based platforms. This paper explores the relevance of those ideas for something we will call 'P-Commerce'; (participation- commerce) in this paper.

Keywords: E-Commerce, Collaborative Marketing, Brand, Hierarchy of Desires, Customer Partnerships, Participation Commerce.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

It was in 2010 while I was serving one of the Business Management Colleges in Navi Mumbai. A student came to my office excited about one of the old-time books from Hindu scriptures and talked about how relevant

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was the message of the book for young managers and entrepreneurs. We agreed that we procure a few copies and run a workshop or mini-course. However, the availability of that book was under question mark! He recommended that I use flipkart for finding that book, which did, that website as well as the book.

The Point: Earlier to his recommendation and in spite of being thorough 'Netizen' I had never come across that website, though it existed for 3 years by then! The finer point: Can the warm people-element from business and marketing ever go away? Even if e-commerce is here to stay, what is going to be the future form / format of e-commerce?

The pain of businesses to connect with people is getting obvious, companies are in making presence on Facebook, they are collecting 'likes' and interacting many other ways. The changes in patterns are fast-paced, and if decisions are taken on superficial understanding, they will be irrelevant within no time.

Authors selected to design a study based on insights from the books like Marketing 3.0; the ones that cover well researched ideas. For example, Marketing 3.0 starts by defining 3 stages of marketing, from product oriented (1900-1970s) to service oriented (1970-2000) to the future of marketing beyond 2000s. The authors of book recommend that Marketing 3.0 Strategy must incorporate 'how-to' for marketing company mission to consumers, company values to employees and channel partners and company vision to share-holders. They further suggest an application model to deliver socio-cultural transformation, creating new-age market entrepreneurs, and environmental sustainability. They conclude the book with ten credos for future of business (See Annexure VI), and pose a question: *is it possible to be a human-centric company and still be profitable?*

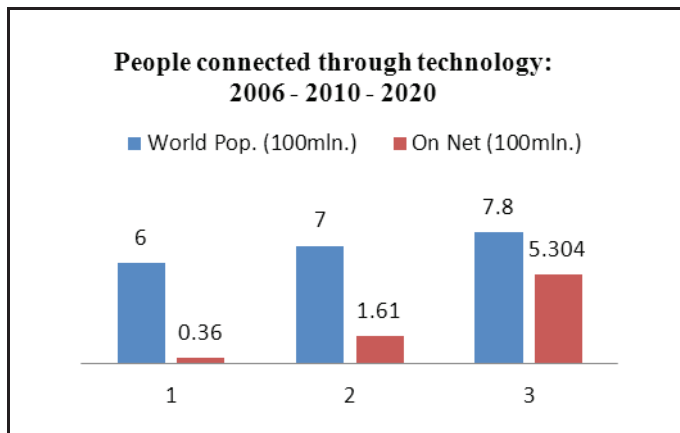
In the world where more than 5.3 trillion are going to be 'technologically-connected by 2020, the power of connected- people cannot be ruled out, specially, when they are using their judgement, when they are driven by subtle desires; we take up this research, to validate acceptance level for some of stirring ideas presented for future of business; the ideas that will ultimately go through people to become a reality.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Doyle Yoon, et al (2008) in their study factors for relationship building in online retail environment by applying a relationship investment model adapted from De Wulf, Odekerken-Schröder, and Iacobucci (2001). In

a proposed model, three sub-dimensions of perceived interactivity and three marketing tactic variables were incorporated as the antecedents of perceived relationship investment that subsequently influenced perceived relationship quality and behavioural loyalty. They conclude that direct mail and tangible rewards, synchronicity and two-way communication play significant antecedents for the relationship building process of online retail brands. The study indicates that the fundamental process of relationship building remains similar in the online environment

Figure 1: World Population and Population Connected Through Technology—Scenario by 2020



Tao Sun (2011) examined the roles of experience and cultural propensity to trust in consumer confidence in conducting e-commerce. They find that consumers from a high-trust society (West Germany) exhibit more confidence in conducting e-commerce compared to consumers in a low-trust culture (France)

Adel I. El-Ansary (2010) highlights the transition enabled by Internet such as digitization, interconnectivity; interactivity, global reach, time-free and location-free access, personalization and customization, and market deconstruction.

Wu and Lin (2006) hypothesized that, to improve decision-making quality, the degree of information control should be matched to the degree of expertise of consumers. The results of the study show that experts perform better at decision making in high-information conditions, whereas novices perform better in low-control conditions. This indicates the need for creating a new system for learned and experts which goes beyond the information available on the net.

Martinsons (2008) examines challenges facing e-commerce in China. A theory is developed to explain how the lack of dependable rules encourages guanxi and relationship-based commerce. It suggests that personal trust, contextual and informal information, and blurred boundaries between business and government have shaped e-commerce in mainland China. Case studies reveal how dynamic business relationships with complementary service providers and state agents can overcome institutional deficiencies, how SMS-based m-commerce other leapfrogging information technology applications could transform Chinese consumer behaviour and improve economic efficiency. The evidence from China helps to explain the influence of culture and institutions on different types of IT applications.

A study by Bharadwaj and Soni (2007) in Pennsylvania on small businesses that successfully deployed e-commerce indicates that main parts of an e-commerce infrastructure included (1) flow of information; (2) organizational image; (3) reaction to customer needs; (4) increased sales; and (5) access to new markets. And points concerns like security on Internet.

Li (2006) shows how the development of e-commerce and associated phenomena such as bundling sales can be analysed using an infra-marginal framework and concludes that infra-marginal analysis provides insights into the operation of networking decisions, e-commerce and bundling sales, over and above conventional marginal analysis.

Fuller et al (2007) use social judgment theory to explain how reputation information's effect on perceptions may be fleeting, and examined how user trusting beliefs related to an e-vendor change after a simple exposure to the Web site. This research also has implications on the design and use of trust-building technologies. However, it is important to note that with internet, the reach get accelerated, so does the making or breaking of the business reputation!

Balakrishnan and Geunes, (2004) explore the supply chain which needs to be efficient and responsive to dynamic market. Collaboration and coordination opportunities beyond organization introduce new challenges and complexities as a result of increased scale and scope with advent of e-powered commerce. The authors feel that this introduces great opportunity for consumer-participation in business.

The paper '*Scaling Service Quality of Five Distribution Firms*' (2012) outlines business characteristics of a distribution company in the context of E-commerce spreading far and wide as well as its operation forms. and

concludes that among all dimensions of distribution service is the most important and information service is fairly important.

Somani (2012) stresses that virtual communities is perfect place to listen to customers. Because there is a social element, exchange of view, ideas, feelings and experiences, and active socialization is happening there.

Jansen, and Resnick (2006) report results of an investigation on effect of sponsored links on ecommerce information seeking on the Web. In this research, 56 participants each engaged in six ecommerce Web searching tasks. The study also investigated the relationship between searching self-efficacy, searching experience, types of ecommerce information needs, and the order of links on the viewing of sponsored links. Data included 2,453 interactions with links from result pages and 961 utterances evaluating these links. The results of the study indicate that there is a strong preference for non-sponsored links, with searchers viewing these results first more than 82% of the time. Searching self-efficacy and experience does not increase the likelihood of viewing sponsored links, and the order of the result listing does not appear to affect searcher evaluation of sponsored links.

Melnik (2002) discusses that with internet based commerce, a buyer cannot directly examine the product and so must rely upon the accuracy and reliability of the seller in deciding whether to buy / bid or not. In this setting, the seller's reputation can become an important factor in the bid. This paper examines the impact of the seller's reputation on the willingness of buyers to bid on items sold via internet auctions.

Prinz (2012) compares the traditional and virtual Shopping Trips and further get into taxation aspect of travelling for shopping. The paper iterates that shopping trips in the real world induce social costs of travelling whereas shopping trips in the virtual world trigger transport costs when physical goods are shipped and also that not only the goods create utility but also shopping trips.

Datta (2011) have studied the ecommerce technologies among users in developing countries. Even though the internet promised to be the great equalizer, there are conditions and contingencies that shape user adoption of ecommerce technologies. Building on previous research on technology adoption, the paper proposes a global information technology (IT) adoption model. Hence, this paper is limited to technological aspects of e-marketing practices.

Rose et al (2011) opine that customers interactions with an organization's website create opportunities for positive experiences that can lead to long-term relationship building. The range of potential interactions is now

quite diverse, including product information search, purchase transaction and/or service delivery. The domain of customer experience (CE) is well developed in the face-to-face context, but little attention has been paid to exploring the concept in the online context. This paper provides a review of the online consumer literature in order to inform understanding of the antecedents and consequences of online customer experience (OCE) in the purchase context. The paper offers four important contributions for both academics and practitioners. First, it adds to understanding of OCE in the purchase context and, second, specifically recognizes and discusses the antecedents of OCE by drawing on existing literature relating to online consumer purchase, thirdly it proposes the potential consequences of OCE and provides a framework for future testing.

THE KNOWLEDGE GAP

Most of published research has either technological or marketing orientation. There is little study in the area of emerging segment of net-connected consumers, who are enterprising, who are driven by value-centric theorization about themselves and surrounding, and who have enormous influence capacity. The literature review indicates that there is scope to further study in areas and questions like these:

- a. The behaviour of technologically connected and e-active elite group who are forming very strong and independent identity due to professional success, elevated intellectual awareness and certainly resourceful in terms of buying capacity and influencing capacity
- b. Changes and challenges businesses may face beyond Internet
- c. Is buyer connected only to the website? Is seller image only influencing factor?
- d. Socio-economic implications and complications due to shopping-experience itself becoming a product
- e. How do learned users get into 'collective chewing, assimilation and utilisation' of information

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the emerging factors on marketing by studying the opinion of 'connected' elite e-active group on 12 key indicators (Online rationale in Annexure-V)

2. To identify if some kind of segmentation is happening in e-active 'tech-connected' elite community

DATA COLLECTION AND ARRANGEMENT

An online survey was conducted (Annexure-I) on LinkedIn, Facebook and through e-mail with professional contacts of researchers and their tier-II contacts. This ensured quality of responses to 'qualify' as per # 3.a Total 37 responses were collected within 5 days, which also shows reliability of data on time frame.

The questionnaire had two parts, one to generate interest in survey by asking their e-buying experience. The main second part of survey had 12 representative statements which, after data analysis; is likely to indicate if a) the opinion pattern of emerging new segment (objective-1) are getting consolidated to start working like a factor; and b) will validate further the strength of such segment if that needs to be taken note of by business and marketing strategists.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data Analysis is divided into two parts as per the research Objectives:

1. Factor Analysis - To identify the emerging factors on marketing by studying the opinion of 'connected' elite group on 12 key indicators
2. Cluster Analysis - To identify if some kind of segmentation is happening in e-active 'connected' elite community

Factor Analysis

For purpose of ascertaining factors, we used the perception statement agreements (5-1: Strongly agree-Strongly disagree)

This is carried out in two stages: 1) to 'extract' (reduce) the factors in such way that there is minimum 'loss' of information gathered, to capture up to 80% of information) and let go those factors that carry remaining 20% or so; and then 2) to identify the statements (variables) that comprise these key factors.

Table 1: Drawing Inference About Pattern of Factor, and Suggesting A Suitable Phrase

Factor	Comprising of statement	Statement narration	Suggested phrase**
1	5	There can be something like a 'responsible brand	Connected Branding
	9	Customers are smart: they quickly understand whether a brand is fake or real.	
	11	We have a generic subtle anxiety and desire to make our society (and world at large) a better (or ideal) place to live	
2	1	Because social-media is low-cost and bias free, it will be the place for future of marketing communication.	Investment of Words
	7	People trust each other more than they believe a company	
	12	When you give recommendation, you risk your reputation; so only strong brands will survive	
3	6	Public Opinion' is the next big P of marketing Mix	(Opinion) Formative Positioning
	8	Succeeding in business requires support from community just as much any other factor.	
4	3*	The R&D will change to C&D – connect and develop.	Connected Branding
5	10*	A product-positioning must meaningfully touch the four elements of your 'whole-being (Stephen Covey: "physical-mental-emotional-spiritual components make a whole being")	(Opinion) Formative Positioning

NOTES

[*] Based on weak relationship between un-rotated and rotated matrix values, should be ideally closer to 1, hence no new phrase has been suggested here.

[**] Discussions at Para 7

The output values for Variable 2 and 4 are not reliable since they are nowhere closer to 1 (having negative values in fact) , and there is major deviation in values for un-rotated and rotated component. Hence the researchers leave the Factor 5, keeping it open for further study.

To achieve this researchers used the Principal Component Analysis in SPSS and found that as many as just five factors carry almost 75.8% of total variance. (Annex- II) Although ideally this should be as high as 80%, we accept this under the limitation of small size (37 cases) of sample. We accept this result because this fairly good bargain to work with 5 factors than with 12 individual statements.

Now these five factors comprise of a group of statement/s that we need to identify using two matrices of un-rotated and rotated factor SPSS produced the output (Annex. – III). It is ideal to select those statements from within one column which have a) high loading – as close as possible to 1 – in un-rotated as well as rotated Factor Table. For example, for statement 7, we find value of 0.778 on Rotated Factor Table, and 0.808 in Non-rotated factor Table; which is acceptable. Following this exercise, we were able to construct each of the five factors. Table 1 also gives suggested phrases that describe the statements as one entity.

CLUSTER ANALYSIS

The purpose of this set of analysis is to see if there some kind of 'segmentation' emerging in 'connected' market. We will use Cluster Analysis for the purpose.

Using the SPSS, for all the 37 respondents we analyzed data for their perception (12 statements) doing hierarchical cluster, the software generated Agglomeration schedule. By comparing the difference in coefficient of subsequent clustering, researchers noticed possibility of presence of two clusters, and proceeded with classification based on K-Mean so that we could get cluster profile and cluster strength (Annex IV) in terms of membership which to some extent indicates 'stability' of segment.

Cluster Profile: The two clusters have distinction in opinion patters C1 strongly / agrees with variables 2, 3, 5, 9 and 11, whereas C2 strongly / agrees with variables 1, 4, 7 and 12. Both the clusters strongly / agree with variables 6, 8 and 10. Cluster 1 has 63% membership; hence we can conclude that 1. Variables 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11 (8 out of 12 variables) are gaining strength.

DISCUSSIONS

Business factors are driven also by consumer opinion. Going by concept of opinion-leaders, we studied the opinion pattern of emerging e-active

class who are also striving for meaning for life, who have valid capacity to question the status quo and most important; they are likely to be quite enterprising, even if they are not a full-fledged entrepreneur. Table 1 is product of output generated from assessment of their responses. Here is a brief discussion what do the proposed phrases for these factors signify:

1. **Brand-Connect:** In simple words Brand can be defined as “what actual and potential customers think” about that name. The 3 variables here capture the deeper level of elite customers: they think in terms of responsibility (5), they use informed judgement (9) and their thoughts are coloured with desire to be part of something that has potential to change their society (11). Very few people also feel that ‘connect and develop’ will replace ‘research and development’ (3) and it is quite true: there is a new cliché in bloggers’ circles: *Creat less and promote more.*
2. **Investment of Words:** Scaling up business always depended on people’s contribution: shares are one form of it. Are the words a new form? People can make or break a business with the words they invest in it: words and clicks at social media, mobile, and one-on-one (1). This phenomenon can make even financially non-capable an investor, and he can participate in business process! And, it is a natural tendency to trust friends more than an unknown company (7). While we ‘share’, we are actually and subtly making a recommendation; and there is a small class (cluster 2) that is cautious about what they recommend since they feel their personal image is integrated in the process. Hence, they recommend and share only what is strong. (12)
3. **(Opinion) Formative Positioning:** ‘Formative’ captures the idea of allowing the ‘influence’ to work both ways: companies influencing customers has been the practice of past, now we need to see how we can allow the customers to influence the company. Hence, after the 4Ps and 7Ps now we may have 8th ‘P’ in marketing: Public Opinion’ (6). Then the business may have to move away from consumer, to community because of the technology’s effect to generate collectiveness: the community factor, and support from them (8) Interesting to note is the fact that this community is simply connected due to technology, but also for something more significant; they are likely to support only that touches their whole being, their conscience (10)

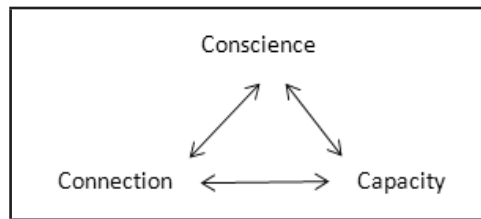
Cluster Analysis shows that membership for two clusters have distinction in opinion patterns C1 strongly / agrees with variables 2, 3, 5,

9 and 11, whereas C2 strongly / agrees with variables 1, 4, 7 and 12. Both the clusters strongly / agree with variables 6, 8 and 10. Cluster 1 has 63% membership; hence we can conclude that 1. Variables 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11 (8 out of 12 variables) are gaining strength. This is indication of a strong but subtle force at the level of opinion that drives the e-active, connected elite customers.

CONCLUSIONS

Collecting the ideas from section 7 we can conclude that there can be new forms of end-user participation in business that is mutually helpful, that is driven by values, and that which empowers the customers to 'voice' and 'do' something significant; and businesses must think of how to accomplish better participation with customers creatively by going beyond collecting feedback, 'likes' and testimonies.

Figure 2: Factors forcing Customers' Participation in Business



Authors of the paper recommend application of the three magic C's that emerge from the work, and the ones customers hold: capacity (to recommend or de-recommend), connection (with an average of 400 'friends' - like-minded people, with compounding effect at tier-II and tier-III) and conscience (the values and desires deep within that effect the decision and behaviour). Application of these three elements can help evolve the e-commerce to the next level: p-commerce: the participation commerce©.

There are sufficient examples of how successful participation of end users can be for a business: few are Youtube, Wikipedia, Facebook, and on manufacturing front, even 3-D printing is replacing conventional manufacturing by involving people to contribute designs and ideas. The key for success of user participation in business lies in developing a right business model that is rewarding and / or satisfying for end user to feel some kind of 'ownership'.

Authors feel it appropriate to present differentiators among the business/ecommerce, network marketing and proposed format of Participation Commerce (Table 2)

Table 2: How is Proposed 'P-Commerce' Different?

Sr. No	Consideration	Business/ecommerce	Network Marketing	Participation Commerce
1	Role	Purchase	Buy for own use and sell to others	Adding value much above simple buying / selling
2	Profile	Various	Ambitious, may or may not be fully developed as an 'entrepreneur'	Educated and enterprising
3	Impact on overall business model	None	Negligible	High. They apply freedom and creativity to use the 'platform' of parent business to create entirely new applications

LIMITATIONS FACED

Few elements which may have restricted the utility of this research are:

1. Selection of variables – not exclusive
2. Respondents' comprehension of statements in questionnaire
3. Time-frame and Sample size: In place of working with 37, more reliable results can be expected with sample of 200-250 respondents, collecting this could expand time-frame.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research can be taken up in related areas like:

1. Case studies in success and failures of tech-based innovative business models
2. Measures to educate customers to elevate usage of technology from socialising to monetising

3. Study of attention-span of people on tech-platforms (how many seconds it takes to skip or delete an email / sms / comment)
4. Many other related topics.

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ANNEXURE I: ONLINE SURVEY

Full questionnaire was made available through Google Forms

1. What describes your e-commerce experience (including travel booking, show booking, ad booking, Cell/DTH recharges, subscription, bill payments, real-estate and matrimonial) best:

Variables 1-5: E-Commerce experience	Never 1	1-5 times 2	6-10 times 3	11-25 times 4	25+ times 5
1- Used only for pre-purchase survey					
2 - Made purchases					
3- Satisfied					
4- Not satisfied					
5- Recommended to others					

2. Following are some statements – how do they describe your opinion:

Variables 6-17: Perception / Opinion (Please indicate your opinion by rating from 5 (Strongly agree) to 1 (Strongly disagree)	Rating				
	5	4	3	2	1
1. Because social-media is low-cost and bias free, it will be the place for future of marketing communication.					
2. The 'brand' is no more in full control of company because of collaborative power of consumers.					
3. The R&D will change to C&D – connect and develop.					
4. "People perceive themselves to be powerless against global companies that show a disregard for both – their local communities and environment" (Marc Gobe in Citizen Brand)					
5. There can be something like a 'responsible brand'					
6. 'Public Opinion' is the next big P of marketing Mix					
7. People trust each other more than they believe a company					
8. Succeeding in business requires support from community just as much any other factor.					
9. Customers are smart: they quickly understand whether a brand is fake or real.					
10. A product-positioning must meaningfully touch the four elements of your 'whole-being (Stephen Covey: "physical-mental-emotional-spiritual components make a whole being")					
11. We have a generic subtle anxiety and desire to make our society (and world at large) a better (or ideal) place to live					
12. When you give recommendation, you risk your reputation; so only strong brands will survive.					

ANNEX. II: IDENTIFICATION OF 'FACTORS' USING PRINCIPAL COMPONENT MATRIX

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.719	22.658	22.658	2.719	22.658	22.658	2.374	19.780	19.780
2	2.337	19.472	42.129	2.337	19.472	42.129	2.077	17.311	37.091
3	1.675	13.961	56.090	1.675	13.961	56.090	1.657	13.805	50.896
4	1.288	10.730	66.819	1.288	10.730	66.819	1.536	12.800	63.696
5	1.084	9.030	75.849	1.084	9.030	75.849	1.458	12.153	75.849
6	.715	5.955	81.804						
7	.566	4.714	86.518						
8	.484	4.033	90.551						
9	.408	3.400	93.951						
10	.318	2.651	96.602						
11	.240	2.002	98.604						
12	.168	1.396	100.000						

ANNEX. III: UN-ROTATED AND ROTATED VALUES FOR ELEMENTS THAT COMPRISE FIVE FACTORS

	Factor 1		Factor 2		Factor 3		Factor 4		Factor 5	
	Unrot.	Rotated	Unrot.	Rotated	Unrot.	Rotated	Unrot.	Rotated	Unrot.	Rotated
VAR00001	0.051	-0.253	0.669	0.74	-0.339	0	-0.342	0.214	-0.082	-0.175
VAR00002	0.598	0.152	0.132	0.054	-0.11	-0.037	0.07	0.903	-0.672	0.038
VAR00003	0.674	0.434	0.231	0.167	0.054	-0.114	0.549	0.389	0.015	0.657
VAR00004	-0.188	-0.358	0.261	0.356	-0.72	-0.615	0.119	0.033	-0.01	-0.042
VAR00005	0.613	0.834	-0.559	-0.161	-0.024	-0.124	-0.196	-0.014	0.27	-0.251
VAR00006	0.048	-0.1	0.354	0.165	0.548	0.758	-0.42	0.238	-0.284	-0.125
VAR00007	0.284	-0.046	0.808	0.778	-0.068	0.147	-0.048	0.222	0.061	0.259
VAR00008	-0.213	-0.132	0.35	0.094	0.739	0.786	-0.145	-0.272	0.162	0.208
VAR00009	0.714	0.807	-0.29	-0.034	0.117	-0.008	0.01	0.099	0.243	0.07
VAR00010	-0.123	-0.232	0.413	0.01	0.334	0.112	0.745	-0.081	0.11	0.89
VAR00011	0.879	0.69	0.081	0.258	0.099	0.147	-0.128	0.494	-0.066	0.041
VAR00012	0.26	0.253	0.526	0.798	-0.202	-0.037	-0.2	-0.287	0.605	0.075

ANNEX. IV: CLUSTER PROFILE AND MEMBERSHIP STATUS

Variable	Cluster Profile Cluster 1			Cluster Membership of Cases		
	Cluster 1		Cluster 2	Cluster 2		Distance
	Case Number	Distance	Case Number	Distance	Case Number	Distance
VAR00001	1	4	2	1.808403	1	3.328142
VAR00002	4	2	4	2.097798	3	3.284938
VAR00003	4	2	5	2.704404	7	3.91947
VAR00004	1	4	6	2.868247	10	4.464714
VAR00005	5	2	8	2.002362	12	3.036344
VAR00006	4	5	9	2.728412	14	3.306611
VAR00007	2	5	11	3.204734	16	3.059779
VAR00008	4	5	13	3.546078	17	3.732784
VAR00009	5	2	15	1.808403	22	3.284938
VAR00010	5	5	18	4.354994	25	3.284938
VAR00011	4	1	19	2.760099	29	3.059779
VAR00012	2	5	20	3.136166	30	3.732784
			21	3.251872	31	3.328142
			23	2.370263	37	3.91947
			24	1.808403		
			26	2.097798		
			27	2.704404		
			28	1.808403		
			32	1.808403		
			33	2.728412		
			34	3.251872		
			35	2.760099		
			36	2.868247		
			23 cases (62%)		14 cases (38%)	

ANNEXURE – V: RATIONALE FOR THE 12 KEY ELEMENTS FOR THIS SURVEY

1. Because social-media is low-cost and bias free, it will be the place for future of marketing communication.
Your network indicates your reach, your desire to reach and influence.
2. The 'brand' is no more in full control of company because of collaborative power of consumers.
A company may own patents, but you hold the key to opinion on what a product or service can do; sharing opinion and experience is very human nature.
3. The R&D will change to C&D – connect and develop.
In lines of 'man proposes, God disposes'; company create, customer reject. Company must 'connect' before and after creating a product for acceptance.
4. "People perceive themselves to be powerless against global companies that show a disregard for both – their local communities and environment" (Marc Gobe in Citizen Brand)
It is like a guest is welcome, a thief is beaten. As an individual one may feel powerless, but that very feeling slowly gathers and makes the weak, the strong; all revolutions are led by sense of being oppressed.
5. There can be something like a 'responsible brand'
Shift in what is taken in account - from customers' needs to customers' totality (that includes his values, desires community and environment)
6. 'Public Opinion' is the next big P of marketing Mix
They are intelligent, they are aware and they are connected.
7. People trust each other more than they believe a company
We have always had a tendency to 'verify' what our neighbour / relative of colleague felt about using a product, we seldom go by the word, the claims brochures and sales staff make.
8. Succeeding in business requires support from community just as much any other factor.
Permissions from law can be purchased, that from people has to be earned.
9. Customers are smart: they quickly understand whether a brand is fake or real.
All communications ought to be earnest: walk-the-talk.

10. A product-positioning must meaningfully touch the four elements of your ‘whole-being (Stephen Covey: “physical-mental-emotional-spiritual components make a whole being”)
There is a spiritual element in me: it is a sense of concern and compassion for others and surrounding, and my desire to do something for its betterment.
11. We have a generic subtle anxiety and desire to make our society (and world at large) a better (or ideal) place to live
The human society as whole is progressing: people in general are looking to satisfy the need to serve a larger purpose of life.
12. When you give recommendation, you risk your reputation; so only strong brands will survive.
This is a state of cusp: between being professional and spiritual. A totally spiritual person is hardly concerned about what others think, whereas a professional guards his reputation.

ANNEXURE – VI: THE TEN CREDOS FOR MARKETING IN FUTURE

1. Love your customers, respect your competitors
2. Be sensitive to change, be ready to transform
3. Guard your name, be clear about who you are
4. Customers are diverse; Go first to those who can benefit most from you
5. Always offer a good package at fair price
6. Always make yourself available, spread the good word
7. Get your customers, keep and grow them
8. Whatever your business, it is service business
9. Always refine your business process in terms of quality, cost, and delivery
10. Gather relevant information, but use wisdom in making final decision