

E-Mail: An effective marketing communication tool.

by
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Abstract

Email use is one of the major reason the online population uses the Internet for. Email has become extremely important as a channel of communication between companies and consumers and has seen growth over the past few years. Due to its advantages, it is argued that email marketing will become one of the most effective tools available to consumer markets.

This study investigates the relationship between email and marketing communication tools and examines the factors that affect email to operate effectively and successfully as a channel of communication between companies and consumers. To perform the study, 75 consumers were randomly selected, and their answers were entered manipulated through the SPSS software.

The results of the study showed that there is a relationship between email and marketing communication tools. However, this relationship may have different impacts, which are driven by a wide range of factors. These factors include the privacy of the personal information of recipients and the level of trust between consumers and companies, the permission of the people to receive the messages the consistency of landing of the email, the enquiries and complaints strategy embraced by firms and finally the way email is planned to be used for viral marketing.

The overall conclusion of this study is that e-mail's success, or failure as a channel of communication between companies and people is likely affected by the way companies are using this tool. Innovative companies, armed with a better understanding of the real needs of recipients will drive email marketing to new levels.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

BACKGROUND:

The world- wide Internet population has been increasing steadily (1). Email use is one of the main reasons the online population uses the Internet for (2). As a channel of communication between companies and consumers it has been extremely important and has seen growth over the past few years (3: 4). It is said that email marketing is becoming one of the most effective tool available to consumer market and this is not surprising, since its advantages are quite a few and important(5: 6).

The term Email is the short for “electronic mail” and it is define as the transmission of messages over communication networks (7). In this research email transmitted over the World Wide Web, between organizations and consumers will be exposed. Most email systems enable users to send email anywhere in the world, instantly and the message send can be send to many used at once. Send messages are stored in users’ electronic mailboxes until the recipient fetches them (8:). The message can be delete, stored, copied and forwarded to any number of people who maybe known to the sender or be a part of a mailing list of an individual organization (9). Formats can be text based, or can include rich media such as video formats (10). Email marketing can be defines as marketing via email (11).

But n the other hand, commercial email is starting to frustrate and irritate email users (12: 13). According to Jupiter Communication the annual number of messages per consumer will continue to increase and thus marketers must take a long view and work toward the goal of motivating consumers to open and read messages they receive (14).

In our days mailboxes are full of commercial email/junk mail. This information overload makes consumers consider commercial email as a “waist of time” as time passes (15:

16). It said that mailboxes full of junk mail in our days generate a danger of turning consumers off email as a communication channel (17). Download times and time to clear mailboxes by deleting and clicking senders can create this irritation and frustration.

Skepticism is coming from bad experiences involving inaccurate lists, irrelevant answers to complains and enquiries, and abuse of potential customers by flooding them with dozens of email per week (18). These are the reasons why a lot of email response rates are starting to fall (19). This is the main reason for which Zhivago states that "we are about to go through an email marketing renaissance" so in order to succeed in it. A company must be "very good" in the practices of it. Hence one can assume that there are some impotent that should be explored in order to understand how to get the most out of email marketing. Because the successful use of this marketing vehicle could generate great rewards from the marketing efforts focused in it(20).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research is to discover how email marketing should be used for successfully fulfilling customer's acquisition and retention marketing objectives. The project will analyze email as a marketing communication tool, which will help readers to develop an understanding of the nature of the email-marketing tool. After identifying and exploring the most important issues in the literature around email marketing and its successful use the project will explore the real practice of this tool from companies.

The research will attempt to make a discussion and possibly draw conclusion from two processes theory and practice. Firstly, the researcher will try to discover if companies have carefully thought of issues and guidelines provided from theory. This might help understand why some believe that email marketing has an uncertain future because of the problems in its creating. Therefore, possibly avoiding the creation of these problems can make its practices more effective. Secondly, from the real use of email, useful information might be given that has to do with contradiction or vagueness in the literature

around the issue related its effective use, which also might be the routes of the “email saturation” that is predicted by some. The discussion will hopefully provide useful information about the useful use of this relatively new and evolving tool, which is the aim of the research.

RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY:

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

The purpose of preliminary analysis is to evaluate projects need and scope. It is not an actual study nor does it include the collection of details to describe and verify the hypostasis. In fact, preliminary investigations are carried out to collect information in order to prepare an informal judgment about the feasibility of the proposed project.

CONDUCTION OF PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

The data collection during the preliminary investigation is gathered through the following methods.

- Sampling of document, forms and files.
- Research and site visits.
- Observation of the work environment.
- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Group work session

Any analysis requires data and information. If adequate information is not collected, the results of analysis are likely to be less reliable. (21)However, it is a fact that complete information is hardly ever available. This is the point where things like common sense, gut feel and experience come in (22). The advertising strategies framework offers a good

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starting point for analysis. The methodologies, which will be adopted to congregate information, are as follows:

Primary data

- Libraries
- Articles
- Research material
- Internet

Secondary data

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Discussions

STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT

The project is going to be composed of the following five chapters:

Chapter 1- Introduction:

The aim of the first chapter is to introduce the reader to the term email, its growth over past few years, and its importance to consumer marketers. Finally the chapter defines the aims and structure of the project.

Chapter 2- Literature Review:

In the literature review there is a discussion on email and the marketing Communication Mix, and issues such as permission, privacy, consistency, enquires and complaints, and viral marketing will be examined. According to those the main hypotheses will be defined.

Chapter 3- Research Methodology:

The research methodology chapter is dedicated to explain the methodology employed. The methods for gathering the data, the reasons for choosing a particular instrument and the design of survey tool will be presented. Finally, statistical tests will be chosen to analyze the collected data and their appropriateness will also be discussed.

Chapter 4- Data Analysis:

This chapter will present and analyze the results of the test and the hypotheses will be accepted or rejected. On the basis of the hypotheses the future strategies will be discussed.

Chapter 5- Discussion of findings and Conclusion:

This chapter will give a comprehensive discussion on the finding of the analysis. This chapter will also include the limitations of the research and recommend further areas of research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this part of this paper, a literature review on email marketing will be presented. It will be structured in the following way. Firstly, an analysis of email will be made under the scope of marketing communications. This will be done in order to identify and understand the relationship of the marketing communication tools with email.

Secondly, the writer will attempt to create some guidelines that emerge from theories around email marketing. These guidelines will be drawn from the basic key issues concerning the successful practice of email marketing. They are divided into 'permission to email', 'consistency', 'enquiries and complaints', 'privacy', 'viral marketing', and 'separate issues'.

These key points for successful email marketing will be explored, bearing in mind marketing objectives. Jobber (2001) separates strategic marketing objectives into two basic types: 'Building' that refers to customer acquisition, which increases sales and market share. And 'Holding' which means holding sales and market share or even letting the market share drop with increasing sales and profit. 'Holding' aims basically for customer retention.

Moreover, Court Cunningham, Vice President of DART mail (23) states that there are two email marketing solutions, the customer acquisition market and the customer communications market. 'Acquisition' means that a company can aim for obtaining email addresses in order to acquire customers via email marketing, online, offline or even both. The communication market refers more to a company that has an online presence and communicates with customers, aiming for brand liking that leads to customer acquisition and retention (24). Taking into consideration what Court Cunningham (25) and Jobber (2001) state, it can be said, that

Email marketing objectives can be separated generally into customer acquisition and retention.

2.1 Customer Acquisition and Retention

Here are some of the acts about the customer retention and acquisition.

Companies typically lose half their customers every five years.

It cost 10 times more to acquire a new customer than to keep an existing one.

Analysis show that 5% increase in customer retention rates results in a 25-95% increase in profits!" (H Fong)

If the customer acquisition and retention is to be achieved, it will be essential to ensure that tools are employed to collect useful information about customer behaviour. Additionally, consistent and relevant communication must be ongoing in order to further the strategy. The most effective way of this on going communication is Email. Email is not only cost effective it also is time and resource effective.



Some Required Elements to Ensure the Effectiveness in the Process:

- A clear idea about the target market
- A robust 'Customer strategy' throughout the organization
- Buy-in by all concerned
- Knowing which channel each customer group uses
- A web site that collects customer information
- Collection of clean customer information from the PMS
- Appropriate sales and marketing resource
- Appropriate sales and marketing resource
- One database to house all the information
- Information accuracy best practice throughout the organization
- Browser based reporting tools

- Some investment supported by an appropriate
- return on investment model
- An appropriate loyalty programme

Drive Revenues by Focusing on Loyal Customers

Absolutely nothing can compare to the ROI that companies achieve by retaining customers via email marketing. According to Don Peppers and Martha Rogers, authors of the book *The One to One Future* costs five times as much to acquire a new customer as it does to keep an existing one. Therefore, it is in a company's best interest to focus on retention marketing—that is, maximizing its current customers' spending. Here are some quick tips to remember when considering acquisition vs. retention:

1.Take Advantage of Cost Reductions by Adding Frequency

– Email costs average from 3 to 10 cents per email; whereas direct mail and telemarketing cost up to \$3 per message. (McKinsey & Company). This cost reduction should allow you to communicate with customers more frequently, thus enabling you to reap retention benefits unprecedented by any other communication tool.

2.Focus on Loyalty

The 80/20 rule maintains that 80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers. Therefore, it is wise to focus on drive revenues by increasing the lifetime value of your current customers. According to Frederick Reichheld's book *The Loyalty Effect*, a 5% increase in retention rate can lead up to a 75% increase in the lifetime value of a customer.

3.Use the Watering Can Analogy

– Think of your potential customers as “seeds” waiting to sprout. Imagine you are given only one watering can to water several hundred of these seeds. Since one can is not enough for all seeds, it is probably in your best interest to only water some of the seeds and instead focus on nurturing them to their fullest potential. This is true of your customers. Focus on nurturing a smaller number of loyal customers and let the rest go.

4.Fire Your Worst Customers

– Along these lines, many successful marketers believe in "firing" their worst customers. Instead of sending two mailings to 1,000 people who are indifferent to the information,

they send two mailings to 500 people anticipating the information. Again, this is another way to drive revenues by sending more frequent communications to current customers.

5. Find a Balance between Retention and Acquisition

– Given the above, do not cut out your acquisition plan all together—especially given the cost effectiveness of email marketing. Customer acquisition costs average only \$24 for email versus \$82 for PR, \$958 for print ads, and \$1,457 for radio ads (Fiore & Collins). Yet with lower costs, higher click through rates, and higher conversion rates, you should also keep in mind the better economics inherent in retention programs when allocating funds for acquisition and retention.

2.1 Email and the Marketing Communication Mix

Smith (1993) defines marketing as the activity of transferring goods from the producer or the retailer to the consumer. According to McCarthy's four Ps of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) (cited in Smith, 1993), marketing communication tools are those dedicated to the promotion of a product. Some of those are direct marketing, public relations, sales promotion, sponsorship and advertising. Email marketing is mostly linked with promotion and is a vehicle of marketing communications (26). Of course an email can offer a direct purchase of software or deliver a purchased article for example (27); therefore it can be a place of transaction or a product on the online environment.

'Direct marketing is an interactive system of marketing which uses one or more media to affect a measurable response and/or transaction at any location' (Direct Marketing Assn 1991 cited in Squires 1993: p40). It brings the market to an individual's home or office instead of him or her having to go to the market (28). According to this definition email seems to be a communication tool of direct marketing. This is because it is delivered personally anywhere; it is highly interactive and measurable.

But email seems to be not just direct marketing or direct mail as Lewis (2001) states. It is an important tool of public relations (29; 30) since it surely is a tool that can contribute highly towards mutual understanding of a company with consumers due to its high potential level of interactivity. And this is one of the basic goals of public relations (31,

32). It can be a tool with which companies can deal with complaints, get feedback and generally enter into a dialogue with consumers. This helps and raises the quality of companies' databases, targeting and product or service development (33). Email can also be a tool for creating publicity for events and corporate messages through corporate newsletters (34; 35). It can also create 'buzz' (36) through viral marketing and word-of-mouth. This can be helpful for companies that wish to create awareness, publicity or branding objectives, which can help for both customer acquisition and retention (37).

Email can also be a vehicle of sales promotion (38) through messages that provide information about special offers, contests, prizes and free newsletters. This application of email is considered to be very important. The importance of sales promotion will be specifically highlighted further in this literature review. Sponsorship can also communicate via email through logos presented in the email or through information in newsletters. Finally elements of advertising can be identified through messages sent to a large number of people, which are usually spam messages, since these emails are instantly sent from a company to a mass of consumers. Hence, it is can be a marketing tool that has a low level of personalization (39). Therefore, email can be a vehicle of each of the following marketing strategies.

Sometimes one email can be a vehicle of more than one marketing strategies at the same time. For example an email can contain a personalized product offer, which are direct marketing and sales promotion combined. In the same email a logo of a sponsorship can be placed, and contacts for views or enquiries can be provided (which is a public relations element).

2.1.1 Email as a Communication Tool:

Electronic communication, because of its speed and broadcasting ability, is fundamentally different from paper-based communication. Because the turnaround time can be so fast, email is more conversational than traditional paper communications. Email is now one of the fastest ways to gain or lose potential customers.

With the ease and speed that email offers today, the written word is becoming one of the most important vehicles for business communication. (40). Yet the ability to communicate clearly and concisely in writing seems to be a skill that eludes many, often

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because people are in too much of a hurry to dash off that message. With personal emails, the slap and dash approach can work just fine. But for business communication, a hastily composed email can cause anything from a minor misunderstanding to outright disaster. In lieu of a face-to-face meeting, email correspondence may very well be the first impression a business contact receives, and as we've all heard so many times, we only have one chance to make a first impression.

On the internet word travels fast. On average It takes 3 minutes to send email to 50-100 people . Therefore companies can lose 100 current or potential customers with just one single brash email and this can happen in a matter of minutes.

"I find that it is most helpful to search newsgroups for my company name to see if good or bad things are being said about me. Try searching for Microsoft, Netscape or AOL in DejaNews (<http://www.dejanews.com>) and see what results are presented to you." (Chris McClean) Newsgroups are simply meeting places on the Internet where people exchange information. . Most people know that the best business comes from word of mouth or "word of email."

When writing and sending email, a few guidelines and precautions are all it takes to prevent a potentially serious misunderstanding. First, using all capital letters is almost never appropriate, UNLESS YOU WANT THE RECIPIENT TO THINK YOU ARE YELLING AT THEM. It is very difficult to interpret the emotional mood of an email message, so font features such as upper case letters often end up as substitutes for facial expression and body language.

Because of the lack of vocal inflection, gestures, and shared environment, email is not as rich a communication method as a face-to-face or telephone conversation. Your correspondent may have difficulty telling if you are serious or kidding, happy or sad, frustrated or euphoric. Sarcasm is particularly dangerous to use in email. Avoid sending email that might trigger an upsetting response from the recipient. (42)

As moods, personalities and emotions are difficult to convey when using email, symbols, referred to as "emoticons," (Tapp, 2000). have been developed to help communicate

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feelings and show some personality when appropriate. For those not blessed with literary flair, they can be an amusing way for even the wordsmith wary to add warmth to their emails.

Symbol Translation

: -)	smiley face/happy
8-)	eye-glasses
:-	Indifference
:-e	Disappointment
:-P	wry smile
:-!	foot in mouth
:-&	tongue tied
;-)	Wink
:-O	Yell
:-/	Perplexed
:->	devilish grin
:-Q	Smoker
:-{	Mustache
:-	Male
:-(frown/sad
:-@	Scream
;-}	Leer
:-D	shock or surprise
C=:-)	Chef
d:-)	baseball smiley
>-	Female

Some extra thought should be put into creating a subject line that provides a meaningful synopsis of your message, especially if you're sending business-related email or email to a stranger. (Sterne 2001; Morris 2000).

Email's Subject Heading is one of the first things that the recipient will see. This is extremely important when contacting journalists and industry analysts. Because they may receive hundreds of emails daily, they may decide to read or delete a message solely

based on the information in the subject line. That means one quick chance to deliver a brief but descriptive heading that will cause messages to be read instead of trashed.

When forwarding a message, it's helpful to the recipient if one can take a moment to delete extra lines, headers and text that aren't relevant to the message. (43). This is especially important if a message has been forwarded several times; the body of the email may contain row after row of useless header information requiring the recipient to scroll down over and over, impatiently searching for the real content of the message.

One should be extra careful with "Reply to All" feature of email program. Sending a response to multiple recipients may be appropriate if everyone is collaborating on a project, but often people get carried away using the "Reply to All" feature to send out off-the-cuff comments, criticisms, or accolades. (44). To people who are copied on the original message, but who are not the main recipient, this can be annoying, at the least. There is also the danger that a personal comment to the main recipient might accidentally be sent out to everyone who received the original message. This blunder has caused more people to eat crow than one might imagine. (45)

Always check your own email for readability and spelling. It's terribly easy to overlook typos and grammatical glitches when you're in a hurry, and you never know how these simple little mistakes may be misinterpreted. Some recipients will be in just as big a hurry to read your message as you were to send it, and typos may not matter. In the worst case scenario however, your misspellings and bad grammar could be viewed as ignorance, lack of education, carelessness, or even apathy. This is a dangerous risk to take in business just to save a few minutes.

Everyone makes mistakes. If one receives a carelessly- or sloppily-composed email, let it go, as long as you are sure you understand the content. Don't use email to negatively criticize or chastise others.

Finally, before you hit the send button, ask yourself, "Do I really need to send this message?" If you are feeling particularly emotional about an issue, save your message as a draft until you have a couple of hours to cool off. Then read it again and decide if it's

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really necessary. Once you hit the “Send” button, your fate is sealed (although there are companies working on software that will allow you to retract a message, don’t count on this to save you from an embarrassing display!)

Email has become an indispensable tool for businesses today. When used with care, email facilitates our day-to-day communications and encourages collaboration and openness. Spending a few extra minutes on our emails is a quick and easy way to make things run more smoothly in both our business and personal communications!

2.1.1.1.1 Online Practices of leading Luxury Brands:

Online marketing especially using Emails is becomes strategic tool in communication plans of luxury brands. Internet marketing is gaining momentum as a critical tool in a company's marketing-communication plan as witnessed by the trend of leading luxury brands that are turning towards the Internet to boost their products.



United Arab Emirates: Monday, June 17 - 2002 at 12:18 GMT+4

Davidoff Cool Water.

Increasing Internet penetration has led to the incorporation of the World Wide Web into a global media strategy alongside print and audiovisual media.

'The online marketing industry is still in its infancy and did not meet our expectations in

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the first semester of 2002. This was mainly due to lack of awareness, as marketing professionals were still relatively unsure about the various methodologies available to use the Internet as a major communication tool,' said Christel Whelan, Managing Director of 121 Strategies.com FZ-LLC, an Interactive Marketing Communication agency based in the UAE. However 'Current market feedback indicates that the market will gradually pick up during the latter half of 2002 or the beginning of 2003 with visible signs that Internet marketing will soon become an integral part of a full-fledged communication plan. It is estimated that currently 4.5 - 5 million Middle East residents have access to the Internet, which in the UAE only accounts for more than 30 per cent of the population. In an endeavor to create enhanced awareness about the industry, 121 Strategies.com has developed a specific industry portal www.interactivemarketing.info, which is a source of free information about internet marketing for marketing professionals,' she added.

Internet marketing is a brand new tool that comprises a host of specific features and characteristics that go a long way in giving it a unique and individual perspective. With strong one-to-one properties, it allows an extensive degree of targeting as well as provides tremendous amount of interactivity with customers and allows a greater degree of tracking and monitoring.

A recent example of how companies exploit Internet marketing has been provided by 121 Strategies.com, who has recently developed and implemented a comprehensive marketing campaign via the Internet using emails for the prestigious perfume brand Davidoff Cool Water. The campaign that started on May 1st 2002 and is ending on June 30th 2002, has integrated the Internet with a general communication plan aimed at promoting a major marketing operation. The campaign comprised of advertising on Maktoob and Yahoo with links to a micro-site specifically designed for the campaign. It also included an email announcement to the members of the Davidoff Cool Water own e-mail list.

The objective of the campaign was to communicate on a market promotion '*Win a jet ski with Davidoff Cool Water*' and to drive traffic to the points of sale. Five countries namely

KSA, UAE, Kuwait, Lebanon and Bahrain were specifically targeted during the campaign, which recorded in excess of 15,000 unique visitors to the website over the initial 4-week period. Radio commercials, street billboards, magazines, advertisements in the media have also been utilized to support the operation, develop awareness and increase the level of participation

'The success of a first campaign run last year in December 2001 only reiterated the power of the Internet and encouraged us to move on to a second campaign,' (Berengere Luciani, Davidoff Fragrances Middle East Brand Manager at Sogedimo LTD). *'We ensured that the Internet was fully integrated into the global media strategy. This campaign's objectives were to reach our young target audience between the ages of 15 and 25, who are more techno savvy and cannot be reached easily by traditional advertising. We also aimed to build a comprehensive database and to further establish Cool Water as a trend-setting brand,'* she added.

'I am pleased to announce that the Davidoff Cool Water campaign has been a major success on Maktoob with click through rates reaching up to 15 per cent in countries such as the UAE,' said Husni Al Khuffash, Regional Advertising Sales Manager, Maktoob.com.

'The success of the campaign may be explained by the use of rich media adverts as no traditional top-of-the-page banners were displayed, but instead flash ads in large rectangle and monster formats on Yahoo Mail as well as top layer ads on each email send,' concluded Christel Whelan.

2.1.2 Free Email Providers

Email is widely used as an online marketing communication tool .This marketing tool, not only seems very effective but it is also cost saving. Some online line companies charge their customers for sending emails but most of the emails providing companies offer this services for free (46) In most of the cases the cost attached with sending the

email is for the additional free services offered by the services provider to its consumers. Some of the very famous free online email providers are given below:

2.1.2.1 Web-based email

Web-based email services enable you to access your email via your web browser. You log into your email account via the Web to send and retrieve email. Free services usually feature banner ads, and often pop-ups as well.

PROS:

You can easily log in and collect your email from any web browser; you don't need to configure a program to read your email.

CONS:

Many web-based services take advantage of advanced functions such as Java in order to provide an attractive interface. You will therefore need to have a current web browser in order to keep your options open; Netscape Navigator 4.x or Internet Explorer 4.x will be sufficient to access your email. Most web-based services do not match (yet!) the functionality of good email software. You are limited to a relatively small amount of storage space (typically a few megabytes) so you won't be able to keep your old messages for very long before you run out of room! Web-based email services generally show you banner advertisements while you are collecting your mail; many also add a short "tag line" to each message you send, identifying the service you used.

List of free Web-Based E-mail provider is given below:

2.1.2.1.1 Adress.com

@address.com

Free email service with the ability to specify signatures, a junk mail blocker, collection of email from existing external accounts, the ability to

schedule emails for future delivery, 4 language interface (English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese) and more.

2.1.2.1.2 AOL Webmail

AOL Webmail is a free service for AOL and Netscape users. It enables them to access their mail via any web browser, and to compose and send new messages without using the AOL connectivity software.

2.1.2.1.3 Aussiemail

@aussiemail.com.au

Free Australian web-based email service, powered by Everyone.net.

2.1.2.1.4 Bluebottle

@bluebottle.com

Free spam-protected email with 250MB of storage, webmail, POP3/IMAP access and outgoing SMTP. Bluebottle can be used to consolidate and spam-protect up to 3 external email accounts (including Hotmail accounts). One key feature of Bluebottle, which makes it stand out from most email services, is that it will only accept emails from trusted senders. Senders can be flagged as trusted manually inside the Bluebottle interface, or they can complete a verification step to prove that they are mailing from a real email address.

2.1.2.1.5 BoarderMail

@boardermail.com

Free email powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.1.6 Bolt

@bolt.com

Free email, free webspace, chat, discussion boards and more on this youth-oriented site. If dial up connections are used it takes a little while.

2.1.2.1.7 Canada.com

@canada.com

Free email accounts with 3.5MB of storage. Note that accounts will be deactivated after 30 days of inactivity.

2.1.2.1.8 CANOEmail

@canoemail.com

2.1.2.1.9 Care2

@animail.net, @moose-mail.com, @snail-mail.net, @whale-mail.com,
@wildmail.com

Free web-based email service with 6MB of storage, spam filtering, spell checkers in 12 languages, a secure login option and more. In a novel and commendable twist, 5% of all revenue generated by the Care2 service is donated to charity. You can also send free E-cards (including musical ones!), and you can schedule cards months in advance so that you never forget an important occasion.

2.1.2.1.10 Cashette

@cashette.com

Email; An Effective Communication Tool

Free web-based and POP3 email service with 100MB of storage and the ability to consolidate external AOL mail, POP3, Hotmail and Yahoo! Mail accounts. Includes a challenge/response anti-spam system that requires senders to validate themselves unless they're on an "approved" list of people you will accept email from. Also incorporates a micro-payment system whereby user can set price for "accepting" spam, and companies can pay to reach users so long as they are willing to meet the asking price.

2.1.2.1.11 Catcha Mail

@catchamail.com

Free email with 5MB of storage and the ability to check multiple accounts.

2.1.2.1.12 Central Pets

@centralpets.com

Free email service with 4MB of storage and a variety of features, including collection of mail from up to 5 external POP boxes, address books, filters, auto responders. The service provides auto notification of new messages via ICQ, pager and email.

2.1.2.1.13 CollegeClub

Free paging to notify when you receive email, and can retrieve email via a free 800-telephone number. Customers can also build a free web page via an online interface. There's lots more stuff to do for free at this site. The CollegeClub membership is limited to college students.

2.1.2.1.14 CoolGoose

Email; An Effective Communication Tool

Free email service with 10MB of storage space and a built-in Contact Manager.

2.1.2.1.15 DBZMail

@dbzmail.com

Free email powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.1.16 DC Email

@dcemail.com

Free email powered by Everyone.net

2.1.2.1.17 DidaMail

@didamail.com

Free email service with a bilingual English/Arabic interface, built-in reminders, an address book, anti-spam filtering and the ability to collect email from external POP3 accounts.

2.1.2.1.18 DonEasy

@doneasy.com

Free email service with 2MB of storage space, an address book, email filters, a built-in spellchecker and the ability to retrieve email from external POP3 accounts. DonEasy's email service is part of an integrated suite of tools, which also include a calendar, message boards, chat, a bookmark manager, diary and a notepad area for jotting down notes.

2.1.2.1.19 Doramail

@doramail.com

Free email for fans of Doraemon, powered by Outblaze.

2.1.2.1.20 DOMAINS

@emailaccount.com

Free email service with a memorable domain name, 6MB of storage, a fast and uncluttered web interface, the option to forward emails automatically to an external account, a sophisticated address book, email collection from external POP3 mailboxes, filters, an autoresponder, stationery, support for text/HTML format messages and multiple attachments, and more.

2.1.2.1.21 Fastmail.com

DOMAINS: @fastermail.com

Free email service powered by Outblaze.

2.1.2.1.22 Flashmail

DOMAINS: @flashmail.com

Free email service with 5MB of storage space, plus spam filtering.

2.1.2.1.23 Gawab

DOMAINS: @gawab.com

Free web-based email service with 1,001MB of storage and support for 10MB attachments. The service is offered in 12 languages, and offers a choice of themes for your mailbox, message filtering, plus spam and virus protection.

2.1.2.1.24 GO Mail

DOMAINS: @go.com

Free email with an extremely easy-to-remember domain name, from Disney's Go portal. Each mailbox comes with 6MB of storage. The signup process is a bit involved as you are actually signing up for personalization, including free email. You need an email address to complete the signup process, and if you don't have one GO will let you register a free email address so that you can then finish the registration process.

2.1.2.1.25 Griffiti

DOMAINS: @graffiti.net
Free email service powered by Outblaze.

2.1.2.1.26 Hotmail

DOMAINS: @hotmail.com
As the granddaddy of free email services and the one that started the whole business, HotMail deserves a special nod for being first. But that was then and this is now - times have changed, and you get a mere 2MB of storage space for email. If you go over the 2MB storage limit, you receive a warning email indicating that in 5 days HotMail will delete some messages

2.1.2.1.27 HushMail

DOMAINS: @hushmail.com, @hush.com, @hush.ai
You can use Hushmail as a normal free email service and send messages to anyone, but if you send messages to another HushMail user they are encrypted with a powerful cypher. As well as encryption, HushMail also offers folders and an address book. The free service offers 2MB of storage, and you can upgrade to 32MB, 64MB, 96MB or 128MB of storage space. Note that you must log into your free account at least once every 3 weeks to keep it activated.

2.1.2.1.28 ICQMail

@icqmail.com
This service is fully integrated with the ICQ package, with a "new mail" indication appearing inside ICQ when you receive messages in ICQMail. The service offers 5MB of storage space, spellcheckers in 7 different languages, external POP3 email retrieval, folders, filtering and an address book. You must be an active ICQ user to sign up for this service

2.1.2.1.29 IncaMail.com

@incamail.com
Free email service integrating a web-based account with 6MB of storage and a disposable email address system (supporting up to 25 aliases) for spam protection. You can create disposable email addresses at any time for specific purposes, then discard them if they become filled up with spam, all while preserving the integrity of your main email account.

2.1.2.1.30 IndiaTimes

@indiatimes.com

Email; An Effective Communication Tool

Free email with 6MB of email storage, the ability to email in 11 Indian languages as well as English, a calendar and reminder service and 60MB of file storage space.

2.1.2.1.31 KittyMail

@kittymail.com
Free email powered by Outblaze.

2.1.2.1.32 LinuxMail

@linuxmail.org
Free email powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.1.33 LPEmail

DOMAINS: lpemail.com
SUPPORTS: POP3 WEB
Free POP3 and web-based email service with 10MB of storage and sophisticated anti-spam protection, including whitelist, blacklist and keyphrase options. Note that you will receive a "daily devotional" email in your LPEmail account.

2.1.2.1.34 Lycos Communications

@lycos.com
Free email with 5MB of storage, spam protection, address book and the ability to download email from external accounts.

2.1.2.1.35 Mail2world

@mail2world.com and over 2,000 other domains of the form @mail2*SOMETHING*
Powerful web-based free email offering with 5MB of storage space, built-in email translation tools to translate messages between over 40 languages, including those with non-western character sets, autoresponders, a calendar, email reminders, spell checking, spam protection and many other features. For a fee, you can add options such as POP3 access, extra storage space and pager notification.

2.1.2.1.36 Mailblocks

@mailblocks.com

Free web-based email service with 5MB of storage and sophisticated anti-spam features including a challenge/response system for authenticating valid senders, and 5 disposable tracker email addresses for use with newsletters and mailing lists. Several premium service plans are also available.

2.1.2.1.37 MailPanda

@mailpanda.com, 138mail.com, asiamail.com, koreanmail.com, mailasia.com Free email with a choice of domain names, powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.1.38 MantraMail

@mantramail.com

Free web-based email service in India, with 6MB of storage, an integrated calendar, planner and to-do list. Note that the site asks *a lot* of demographic questions during the signup process.

2.1.2.1.39 MarchMail

@marchmail.com

Free email powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.1.40 MerseyMail

A free email service offered by the University of Liverpool, MerseyMail does not put advertising in email messages. This is a community service site, and a list is provided of access points in the area (libraries, etc.)

where people without Internet access at home can check their messages.
NOTE: MerseyMail is only available to people working or living near Merseyside in the UK!

2.1.2.1.41 MyOwnEmail

Over 200 domain names to choose from.

Free web-based mail, plus mail forwarding services at \$11.95 per year.
Service includes unlimited signatures, an address book, spell checker, autoreponder, spam filtering and more.

2.1.2.1.42 MyPersonalEmail

@mypersonalemail.com

Free email service with 20MB of storage for messages.

2.1.2.1.43 MyWay

@myway.com

MyWay offers a fast, elegant email service with 6MB of storage and a clean, uncluttered interface. In keeping with the general MyWay philosophy, the only ads presented during the use of the service are text-based ads, meaning that page loading times stay very fast. MyWay includes safe lists and block lists for preventing spam, mail filters, a vacation reply function, the ability to download email from external POP3 accounts, a calendar, address book and a notepad area. You can customize your mailbox by selecting from a variety of colour schemes and themes.

2.1.2.1.44 Netster

@netster.com

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Netster offers free web-based email with 4MB of storage space, plus built-in anti-spam and anti-virus protection. A premium version of the service is also available.

@online.ie

Web-based free email service with POP3 and IMAP access, as well as outgoing SMTP mail support. Comes with 20MB of storage space for emails.

2.1.2.1.45 OperaMail

@operamail.com

Free email powered by Outblaze, with 3MB of storage and supports for attachments up to 2MB in size.

2.1.2.1.46 Orcon

@orcon.net.nz

New Zealand-based free email service with POP3/web-based access and 10MB of storage space. Signup limited to those living in New Zealand.

2.1.2.1.47 Outgun

@outgun.com

Free email powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.1.48 Postmark

@postmark.net

Offers web-based and POP3 email with 10MB of storage space. Additional features include spellchecking, spam filters, attachments etc. You need a valid current email address to sign up. Accounts will generally

be activated within 48 hours after new account requests have been manually verified.

2.1.2.1.49 Postmaster

@postmaster.co.uk

Email accounts with 3MB of storage, anti-spam measures, external POP3 email collection, an address book and other features. Two enhanced premium service levels are also on offer.

2.1.2.1.50 ProntoMail

@prontomail.com

Free email service with 3MB of storage and support for attachments up to 2MB in size, an autoresponder, calendar and contact book, plus various anti-spam measures. Incoming messages must be 2MB or less in order to be accepted.

2.1.2.1.51 Recipemail

Free email service with 5MB of storage space and an innovative windows-style interface for the latest browsers (various other interfaces into the service are available, including a simple interface for old web browsers and a basic interface for access via hand-held devices). Service includes a contact manager, a sophisticated search tool to let you locate specific emails, and the ability to block emails from certain senders.

2.1.2.1.52 Recycler

@recyclermail.com

2.1.2.1.53 Rediff Mail

@rediffmail.com

Web-based email offered by a massive India-related English-language site. Their free service offers a very generous 1GB of email storage (individual messages can be up to 10MB in size) and support for 11 different Indian languages. A fee option is also available, giving access to further storage, POP3 and SMS support, and more.

2.1.2.1.54 RomyMichele

@romymichele.com

Free email service with selective signup policy. Each application will be reviewed individually (this may take up to 2 weeks). The service itself comes with many extras, such as forwarding, vacation facility, address book and autoresponder services.

2.1.2.1.55 SacMail

DOMAINS: sacmail.com

Free webmail service with 15MB of storage and a 3.5MB transfer limit.
Anti-virus filtering.

2.1.2.1.56 SanDiego.com

@sandiego.com

Free webmail service with 50MB of storage plus spam blocking and anti-virus protection. A premium service is also available offering more storage space and POP3 access.

2.1.2.1.57 Shadango

@shadango.com

Free web-based email service with a generous 20MB of storage. Features include an address book, folders, a calendar and notepad area, and built-in file storage (10MB quota and 8MB maximum file size). Shadango supports email collection from external POP3, Hotmail and Yahoo! Mail accounts, AOL and Email.com accounts, and any IMAP-enabled account. Shadango also offers a "disposable email address" generator to protect your email from spam.

2.1.2.1.58 SAFe-mail

DOMAINS: @safe-mail.net

SAFe-mail offers a free email service with 3MB of storage space and powerful encryption that can be used to send highly secure email messages between any two SAFe-mail accounts. This secure email facility also protects the integrity of any email attachments. Features include IMAP/POP3 support as well as web-based access to email accounts and outgoing SMTP support, address books with secure sharing facility (to transmit address books between SAFe-mail users), folders and sub-folders for sorting email, secure message boards and online document storage space. Premium versions of the SAFe-mail service extend the available storage space.

2.1.2.1.59 Stalag13

@stalag13.com

Free email for Hogan's Heroes fans, powered by Everyone.net.

2.1.2.1.60 Surfy.net

@surfy.net

Free email powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.1.61 TheMail

@themail.com

TheMail integrates a 3MB web-based email account with a calendar and address book, external POP3 email collection and an autoresponder. Outgoing messages are limited to 5MB or less per message.

2.1.2.1.62 Tmicha

DOMAINS: @tmicha.net

Free web-based and POP3 email service with 15MB of storage and various built-in anti-spam features, including the use of various blacklist services. You must log in at least once every 45 days to keep your account active.

2.1.2.1.63 Ureach uOrganize.Limited

@ureach.com

The free version of Ureach's flagship uOrganize service, uOrganize Limited offers web-based email with 3MB of storage, account aggregation, an address book, a calendar and more. You can also choose to upgrade to the premium uOrganize service or to other service offerings.

2.1.2.1.64 Urusei Yasura Mail

@uymail.com

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Web-based email with 5MB storage per account. You can centralize your email by setting up UYMail to collect email from up to 5 existing POP3 email accounts. You can set up 3 separate signatures that you can choose to add automatically to outgoing mail. Two types of filters can be implemented: a blocked sender's list, which will filter email from specified senders straight to "trash" and up to a dozen filters that can be triggered by text in the "From:" and "Subject:" lines to file emails automatically into specific folders. There's an autoresponder function, various tags that can be used to colour and label email from specific senders, and an address book for personal and group contacts.

2.1.2.1.65 VFEmail

DOMAINS: @vfemail.net

Free email service with web-based access, POP3 and IMAP support, plus SMTP service for outgoing email. The storage and monthly bandwidth quotas are both fixed at 15MB for free users, though premium upgrades are available. Other features include built in virus scanning and spam protection, and an address book that will hold up to 100 entries.

2.1.2.1.66 VirtualMail

@virtual-mail.com

Free email powered by CommTouch

2.1.2.1.67 Vorras

@vorras.net

Free email service with 5MB of storage, an address book, email filters, and support for external email retrieval from POP3 and IMAP accounts.

2.1.2.1.68 Wapicode

@wapicode.com

Integrated free email service with 5MB of storage space (and 25MB of bandwidth a month), shared between the email account and an online photo album and document storage facility. Service also includes an appointment calendar and contact manager. Accounts are free if the username is 10+ characters long; shorter usernames and upgraded features are available for a fee.

2.1.2.1.69 webMail

Free web-based email service in South Africa

2.1.2.1.70 WeekOnline

@weekonline.com

Free email service with 5MB of storage space, multilingual interface, spellchecker, calendar and appointment scheduler tools.

2.1.2.1.71 X-Mail

@x-mail.net

Free email accounts with 4MB of storage and a limit of 2MB per message (unless you're sending to other X-Mail users, in which case the limit is 4MB). Other features include 4MB of free personal web space, a Contact Manager (with NetMeeting integration), a calendar, online bookmark manager, multi-lingual web interface and more.

2.1.2.1.72 Yahoo! Canada Mail

@yahoo.ca

Free web-based email service with a generous 100MB of storage, email collection from external POP3 accounts, virus scanning and anti-spam protection, a built-in file viewer to preview attachments without fully opening them, and new message notifications integrated with Yahoo! Messenger.

2.1.2.1.73 Yahoo Mail

@yahoo.com

Free email with generous 100MB of storage space, anti-spam protection. You can open attachments that include audio and video clips, or scripts. Offers a built-in spellchecker. You can use your Yahoo! Mail login to access various games on Yahoo! You can also check an existing email account via Yahoo! Mail. You can also configure your outgoing email address.

2.1.2.1.74 YYHMail

@yyhmail.com

Free email powered by Outblaze

2.1.2.2 Pop3 mail

POP mail services store your email on a remote server. You can connect to the server at any time and download your mail into your email software package. Generally, with POP3 mail, you download all new messages in one operation onto your local computer.

PROS

You can compose and read messages offline, and connect just to send messages and download your new mail. You can also use powerful email software, with spell checking, filters etc. You can keep an almost unlimited number of messages (as long as you keep downloading them regularly) since they are stored on your hard disk. This also means that you can re-read old messages without connecting to the Internet.

CONS

Until recently, the big disadvantage of POP mail was that you could not access your email while "on the road" since you needed special email software, configured "just so". Now however, many companies offer simple web based solution for reading POP mail. With free POP mail, the only viable business model is advertising messages. If you sign up with a free POP mail service, you can generally expect to receive ads in your mailbox a minimum of a few times a month. Many free POP mail services have disabled support for sending messages (to prevent spam), so you may not be able to send and receive messages through the same company!

List of free Pop3 mail providers are given below:

2.1.2.2.1 Bluebottle

DOMAINS: bluebottle.com

SUPPORTS: IMAP POP3 SMTP WEB

Free spam-protected email with 250MB of storage, webmail, POP3/IMAP access and outgoing SMTP. Bluebottle can be used to consolidate and spam-protect up to 3 external email accounts (including Hotmail accounts). One key feature of Bluebottle which makes it stand out from most email services is that it will only accept emails from trusted senders. Senders can be flagged as trusted manually inside the Bluebottle interface, or they can complete a verification step to prove that they are mailing from a real email address.

2.1.2.2 .2 Cashed

DOMAINS: cashette.com

SUPPORTS: POP3 WEB

Free web-based and POP3 email service with 100MB of storage and the ability to consolidate external AOL mail, POP3, Hotmail and Yahoo! Mail accounts. Includes a challenge/response anti-spam system that requires senders to validate themselves unless they're on an "approved" list of people you will accept email from. Also incorporates a micro-payment system whereby you can set your price for "accepting" spam, and companies can pay to reach you so long as they are willing to meet your asking price.

2.1.2.2.3 Cwazy Mail

DOMAINS: cwazy.co.uk, redwhitearmy.com, caths.co.uk, marketweighton.com

SUPPORTS: IMAP POP3 WEB

Free POP3/IMAP and web-based email service with 30MB of storage space, spam protection and email filtering. Also includes remote POP3 mail collection facility and secure POP3/IMAP access.

2.1.2.2.4 Gawab

DOMAINS: gawab.com

SUPPORTS: POP3 SMTP

Free POP3 email service with a generous 15MB of storage and a 15MB per-email limit, in 12 different languages. Offers a choice of themes for your mailbox, message filtering, plus spam and virus protection.

2.1.2.2.5 HotPop

DOMAINS: hotpop.com, toughguy.net, bonbon.net, phreaker.net

SUPPORTS: FORWARDING POP3 SMTP WEB

HotPop offers a combined POP3/forwarding and web-based email service. At the free level, HotPop includes 10MB of storage for email messages, and the ability to specify up to 3 destination addresses to forward messages to. There is a limit of 500KB per email, and 1,000 incoming email messages per day.

HotPop's service includes free outgoing SMTP, with a limit of 500 messages per day. The free service is supported by separate advertisements that HotPop distributes to user mailboxes on behalf of "selected" advertisers. HotPop also offers no less than 5 premium service tiers, which are ad-free and introduce higher limits on mail traffic and the size of individual messages, as well as other features.

2.1.2.2.6 LpEmail

DOMAINS: lpemail.com

SUPPORTS: POP3 WEB

Free POP3 and web-based email service with 10MB of storage and sophisticated anti-spam protection, including whitelist, blacklist and keyphrase options. Note that you will receive a "daily devotional" email in your LPEmail account.

2.1.2.2.7 MailShack

DOMAINS: mailshack.com, nerdshack.com

SUPPORTS: POP3

Free POP3 email service with a 100MB storage quota, outgoing SMTP, and support for email messages up to 10MB each. Service includes encrypted authentication, encrypted sending and receiving. There is currently no webmail interface to mailboxes, so you will need to configure your email client in order to access your new account.

2.1.2.2.8 Orcon

DOMAINS: orcon.net.nz

SUPPORTS: POP3 WEB

New Zealand-based free email service with POP3/web-based access and 10MB of storage space. Signup limited to those living in New Zealand.

2.1.2.2.9 Postmark

DOMAINS: postmark.net

SUPPORTS: POP3 WEB

Offers web-based and POP3 email with 5MB of storage space. Additional features include spellchecking, spam filters, attachments etc. You need a valid current email address to sign up. Accounts will generally be activated within 48 hours after new account requests have been manually verified.

2.1.2.2.10 SAFe-mail

DOMAINS: safe-mail.net

SUPPORTS: IMAP POP3 SMTP WEB

SAFe-mail offers a free email service with 3MB of storage space and powerful encryption that can be used to send highly secure email messages between any two SAFe-mail accounts. This secure email facility

also protects the integrity of any email attachments. Features include IMAP/POP3 support as well as web-based access to email accounts and outgoing SMTP support, address books with secure sharing facility (to transmit address books between SAFE-mail users), folders and sub-folders for sorting email, secure message boards and online document storage space. Premium versions of the SAFE-mail service extend the available storage space.

2.1.2.2.11 SoftHome

DOMAINS: softhome.net

SUPPORTS: POP3 SMTP WEB

Free POP email service with a 6MB/150 message storage quota. Messages stored in the system for a period of time may expire and be deleted. SoftHome restricts incoming message bandwidth to a maximum of 10MB per month. Messages can be sent via SoftHome's SMTP service to at most 10 recipients per email. Web access is also available, as are various premium service levels with additional bandwidth and storage space.

2.1.2.2.12 VFEmail

DOMAINS: vfemail.net

SUPPORTS: IMAP POP3 SMTP WEB

Free email service with web-based access, POP3 and IMAP support, plus SMTP service for outgoing email. The storage and monthly bandwidth quotas are both fixed at 15MB for free users, though premium upgrades are available. Other features include built in virus scanning and spam protection, and an address book that will hold up to 100 entries.

2.1.2.3 Imap mail

IMAP mail services offer extremely powerful control over your email. Like POP3 mail IMAP works with your email client to retrieve email from a remote server. Unlike POP3, IMAP lets you have granular control over your email, since you can view message subjects before downloading them, and choose which emails to download on a case-by-case basis. IMAP will also allow you to synchronize your mail folders between your local computer and the IMAP server of your email provider, so that you will see the same folders and messages wherever you happen to log into your mailbox. List of free Imap mail providers is given below:

2.1.2.3.1 Bluebottle

DOMAINS: bluebottle.com

SUPPORTS: IMAP POP3 SMTP WEB

Free spam-protected email with 250MB of storage, webmail, POP3/IMAP access and outgoing SMTP. Bluebottle can be used to consolidate and spam-protect up to 3 external email accounts (including Hotmail accounts). One key feature of Bluebottle which makes it stand out from most email services is that it will only accept emails from trusted senders. Senders can be flagged as trusted manually inside the Bluebottle interface, or they can complete a verification step to prove that they are mailing from a real email address.

2.1.2.3.2 Cwazy Mail

DOMAINS: @cwazy.co.uk, redwhitearmy.com, caths.co.uk,
marketweighton.com

SUPPORTS: POP3 IMAP WEB

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Free POP3/IMAP and web-based email service with 30MB of storage space, spam protection and email filtering. Also includes remote POP3 mail collection facility and secure POP3/IMAP access.

2.1.2.3.3 EZRS

DOMAINS: ezrs.com, yapost.com, yebox.com

Free email accounts with 20MB of storage quota, accessible via web interface and via POP3/IMAP and secure IMAP. Service also supports outgoing SMTP mail, and includes anti-spam and anti-virus filtering. You will need an alternate email address as you have to specify it during the signup process in order to receive your account activation password.

2.1.2.3.4 SAFe-mail

DOMAINS: safe-mail.net

SUPPORTS: IMAP POP3 SMTP WEB

SAFe-mail offers a free email service with 3MB of storage space and powerful encryption that can be used to send highly secure email messages between any two SAFe-mail accounts. This secure email facility also protects the integrity of any email attachments. Features include IMAP/POP3 support as well as web-based access to email accounts and outgoing SMTP support, address books with secure sharing facility (to transmit address books between SAFe-mail users), folders and sub-folders for sorting email, secure message boards and online document storage space. Premium versions of the SAFe-mail service extend the available storage space.

2.1.2.3.5 VFEmail

DOMAINS: vfemail.net

SUPPORTS: IMAP POP3 SMTP WEB

Free email service with web-based access, POP3 and IMAP support, plus SMTP service for outgoing email. The storage and monthly bandwidth quotas are both fixed at 15MB for free users, though premium upgrades are available. Other features include built in virus scanning and spam protection, and an address book that will hold up to 100 entries.

2.1.2.4 Mail forwarding

Mail forwarding services automatically redirect all email sent to your new email forwarding address to an existing email address that you specify, in essence passing the messages on instantly to their destination. Because forwarding services don't store your email, you'll need to have an alternate email address to act as the receiver account.

PROS

The best thing about email forwarding services is they let you continue to use your existing email account given to you by your ISP. If you change ISPs at any time, just change the email address your email is forwarded to, and it will automatically be redirected to your new address. Forwarding services let you choose a memorable, fun, distinctive name.

CONS

With an email forwarding service, you are putting another layer between the sender and your email account. This means that you are twice as exposed to network or other problems; if either the forwarding service OR your email account is down, the email will not get through. This also means that your email may be delayed getting to you. Generally, mail-forwarding services make money by adding a small advertisement to the top or bottom of each email message they forward.

List of free forwarding mails is given below:

2.1.2.4.1 Ad Valvas

This service allows you to create 5 mailboxes, of up to 5MB each. It also enables you to set up your mail to be forwarded to a different email address. The service is limited to people resident in Belgium.

2.1.2.4.2 AG Internet

DOMAINS: @aggies.org

Free email forwarding for students and clubs, \$5 a year for anyone else.

2.1.2.4.3 American Radio Relay League

DOMAINS: @arrl.net

Free email for members of the American Radio Relay League (in a sense, it's not free, since you have to pay to be a member of the ARRL - but you might not know about this particular benefit of membership.)

2.1.2.4.4 Bigfoot

DOMAINS: @bigfoot.com

Bigfoot allows you to forward emails to an existing account. The free service has a limit of 50 forwarded messages per day, and 3MB per message. BigFoot filters forwarded emails against several anti-spam blacklists. Note that by signing up for the free service, you're automatically opting in to receive marketing emails from Bigfoot partner companies. BigFoot also offers several paid service levels which add POP3/IMAP access and other features.

Bigfoot offers two premium service levels, from US\$9.95 a quarter and up, that greatly increase the number of emails that can be forwarded each

day, and that introduce additional features such as consolidation of multiple email accounts, email filtering and autoresponders.

2.1.2.4.5 Bonnag

DOMAINS: @bonnag.com

Free POP3, email forwarding and web-based email service with no preset quota. New user applications will generally be processed within 48 hours.

2.1.2.4.6 Broadcast.Net

Service limited to people working in the broadcast industry

2.1.2.4.7 CallSign.Net

Service limited to Radio Ham. There is a limit of 10MB per forwarded message.

2.1.2.4.8 Dragon.com

DOMAINS: @dragoncon.net

Free email service with an unpronounceable name (Dragon-star-con? Dragon-asterisk-con?), aimed at SciFi and fantasy fans. Part of the promotion effort surrounding Dragon*Con 1999. Once you sign up for their forwarding service, you can send mail via a form on the site.

2.1.2.4.9 Fanmail

DOMAINS: @aggies.com, army.com, bulldogs.com, deacons.com, devils.com, buffaloes.com and over 40 other team-related domains.

Straightforward free email forwarding service.

2.1.2.4.10 HotPop

DOMAINS: @hotpop.com, @toughguy.net, @bonbon.net, @phreaker.net and others.

HotPop offers a combined POP3/forwarding and web-based email service. At the free level, HotPop includes 10MB of storage for email messages, and the ability to specify up to 3 destination addresses to forward messages to. There is a limit of 500KB per email, and 1,000 incoming email messages per day.

HotPop's service includes free outgoing SMTP, with a limit of 500 messages per day. The free service is supported by separate advertisements that HotPop distributes to user mailboxes on behalf of "selected" advertisers. HotPop also offers no less than 5 premium service tiers, which are ad-free and introduce higher limits on mail traffic and the size of individual messages, as well as other features.

2.1.2.4.11 Popbox

Email forwarding service with 3+ email aliases. The free service is limited to a 30-day trial period.

2.1.2.4.12 QSL.Net

Service provided to Licensed Amateur Radio Operators only

2.1.2.4.13 ScoutNet

You must be a youth or adult member of the Scout Association in South Australia

2.1.2.4.14 SkyDive World

You can get a free email forwarding address and free web space (up to 2MB) from this site, on the condition that you will host pages relating to skydiving. You must mail in a request to the contact address on the site in order to get set up.

2.2 Advantages & Disadvantages of Email Marketing

In order to understand the power of this marketing tool more thoroughly, at this point an analysis of email marketing's advantages and disadvantages will be presented.

2.2.1 Instant and Large Amount of Information at Low Cost and Free Services

A general feature of email communication usage is its minimal cost (Haig 2000; Lewis 2001; Sterne 2001). Since the cost is minimal, an email can be sent to many consumers simultaneously, instantly, and at any time, 24 hours a day. This timing flexibility gives the opportunity for more updated information to be sent faster, at any time (Lewis 2001; Middleberg 2001; Briones 1999). Compared to direct mail post, email transportation time is obviously faster and is not limited to the morning post delivery. It can also deliver large amounts of information, in numerous formats such as text or multimedia applications, in a simple, convenient way just through 'clicking' (Lewis 2001). For example, large amount of text, photographs and possibly rich media can be sent electronically. Even undeliverable email is instantly identified (Sterne, 2001). This can not be done with such ease in the offline environment. Another great advantage that is linked with online marketing communication is the additional free services that it provides along side the traditional services and information. Following are the free services provided by online marketing communication:

2.2.1.1 FollowingUp

This service allows you to specify up to 7 follow-up marketing or information emails that will be sent at intervals on demand. One of the providers of this service is auto responder.

2.2.1.2 FreeAutoBot

This free auto responder service lets you send out one or many automatic follow-up messages at intervals you specify. Best of all, there are no ads added to your outgoing messages. Instead, the site makes its money off banner ads on the main site, and through sending registered users occasional messages.

2.2.1.3 Get Response

This services offers unlimited auto responders, no maximum mail length, automatic multiple messages sent over a period of time and much more. It's all-free, but you'll have to put up with a small advertising message at the top of every message you send out. This can be removed for a fee.

2.2.1.4 Responders.net

Free autoresponder and form for collecting information on your site. You can set up an information request form very easily, then specify what message you would like to send automatically to people who fill in the form.

2.2.1.5 Send Free

Autoresponder service with an interesting twist: SendFree also acts like an advertising exchange service. How it works: you sign up for a SendFree account

and set up your autoresponder service. At the top of every automatic reply your autoresponder sends out is a short text advertisement. Half of these are for other members' sites. The other half are reserved for SendFree's advertisers. In turn, your advertisement will appear at the top of messages sent out by other members. http://www.emailaddresses.com/email_auto.htm

2.2.2 High Interactivity

The interactivity that email marketing provides is one of its key features. It is gradually becoming one of the most popular vehicles through which consumers interact with organizations (47). It can provide a two-way instant communication between them (48). That means that companies have the opportunity to communicate more efficiently with customers. This has more than one aspect.

First of all, the measurability of the marketing tool is very high and can be achieved through click-through, response rates and messages much faster (49). Secondly, communication is possible to be achieved efficiently on a one-to-one basis (50). This personalization as will be mentioned in section 2.3.2 later on can be achieved through electronically stored databases that include behavioral data and demographics, and through dialogue based communication that email provides to a great extent (51). The personal information is stored; kept up-to-date and integrated quickly from software systems in order to create better profiles of consumers so marketing strategies can be improved. This is because added value can be increased since more targeted messages are sent, and dialogue that improves the quality of the product and services can be achieved. Therefore, long-term relationships can potentially be achieved making customer loyalty potential higher (52). This is quite important considering the large amount of product information seeking online consumers (53) difficulties for email users, and “tune them off” for using email as a channel of communication with companies. Moreover it must be added that email, just with a 'click', can be deleted without ever been seen. This is a disadvantage compared with direct marketing offline for example (54).

2.2.5 Automated Response

The dialogue that emails can provide as a communication tool can also create problems. For example, automated response to emails is operated, when there are many responses to be given. This is because it is costly for business to reply manually to a large number of emails (55). Automated response as will be explained in section 2.6 of the chapter can sometimes make mistakes by sending irrelevant replies. Online consumers are getting much more demanding since they have the power in the Internet marketplace (56). Hence, an online consumer might have demands for one-to-one communication, which a company might not handle properly due to the big number of consumers. An unhappy customer is more dangerous for a company online, since the negative word-of-mouth spreads fast than the positive one, and much faster than in the offline environment (57).

2.2.6 Privacy and Trust Concerns

Trust as will explore later one is one of the important constraints a customer has, when communicating online with a company This can concern security of online transactions (58) or it can concern privacy issues. The latter means that consumers are worried about what happens to their personal information they give to companies (59). This personal data can be shared rented or sold from one company to another for vast amounts of money.

2.3 Permission to Email

Emails sent by companies to consumers can be divided into two categories. They can be permission based, where frequency and types of email sent can be based on interactive communication between the company and the recipient (60)

Email; An Effective Communication Tool

Permission based email marketing is when the recipient has given his or her consent to receive the messages. This can be done in two different ways. First of all, permission for receiving email can be given directly from the customer to the company online or offline. The other way is the consumer can give his or her consent to a company to receive email from third parties or partners (Data Protection Act 1998 cited in Tapp, 2000). This means that the third party can sell or rent (this means to allow access to email lists for opt-in messages without giving the addresses) email lists since the permission is granted from the user .

They can also be unsolicited commercial emails (UCE). These emails are generally known as spam or junk email and companies use them in order to send a marketing message and most often in order to promote a product or service (61). Spam or junk email messages, are sent to a large number of people without their permission, usually by acquiring email lists, hoping that a percentage of recipients will respond to them (62). This is can be done easily since the cost of sending the messages is minimal and millions of email addresses can be acquired for just dozens of pounds from sites such as www.theemailtools.com.

However, the recipient of spam email may not have opportunity to opt-out, that is to remove his or her address from the sender's list. Other times the recipient may have the choice to opt-out. Or the email itself can be an invitation to opt-in, to subscribe to the company's list. If the user unsubscribes or does not subscribe, the company will not send another email. In all of the above cases the email sent from a firm is considered as spam since the email is sent without the recipient's permission.

2.3.1 Permission Analysis

Research has shown that response rates of permission based opt-in emails are quite high and much higher than the rates of spam which seem to be getting lower as time passes (63).

Permission based email seems to be more effective than spam basically because consumers consider junk email as a “waste of time”, which is bringing email saturation (64). But the advantage of the minimal cost of sending the message makes many companies still use it (65).

Moreover, spam emails are 'dangerous' and 'risky' to use for several other reasons. Many believe that it is a vital mistake approaching the consumer with an unsolicited email (66). The reputation of the company can be damaged. In addition, the Internet community is starting to resist by replying with high numbers of 'flaming replies' in order to overload the sender. Also, lot of Internet service providers are now making efforts to block the users that send spam, since client complaints are numerous.

Governments are also trying to fight spam because of the monetary cost of 'wasted time' and the invasion of personal data (67). In most countries the legislation is not clear about this matter, so spam messages are sent. But many governments are planning regulations for the restriction of junk email and many predict that regulations are probably going to get even stricter (68). Hence, one can assume that repeated unsolicited email would possibly be history in a few years.

2.3.2. Successful Emails

The agreement of permission must be clearly defined and presented. It is said that successful email must be as specific and as limited as possible in amount and size (or according to the number agreed between the company and consumer) (69). In the beginning the personal information given should not be too much because it will be

discouraging for the person to opt-in to the company's email list. Every email message must state clearly how the address has been acquired in order to avoid spam complaints (70). The message sent should be very carefully structured in order to provide useful information for the recipient. Sales promotion must work together with direct marketing to provide a good incentive for getting 'hand-raisers' when it comes to customer acquisition objectives. Also the company's public relations operations must work in synergy (71). This can mean dialogue with consumers for complaints or enquires or newsletters (72). For example if the message is a free e-newsletter, the promotion of corporate identity can be combined.

As time passes, from databases, direct marketing can be practiced much more targeted. This is the first step towards personalization and one-to-one marketing. The one-to-one relationship opt-in email has certain benefits if marketers exploit it. Behavioral data, demographics and purchase history as mentioned in a previous section can become available from electronic databases and software. For example, cookies that are pieces of information acquired and stored about a user, when he/she browses a Web site. Companies store and combine consumer general purchased information and 'click-through' data. This data should be carefully studied and integrated with offline data if available. In this way, an email can be more relevant. Also the incentive for giving permission and for purchasing can be stronger since the message is more targeted. Highly targeted incentive and relevance are one of the key factors for success in direct marketing . This means that through personal information and through the previous purchase database (existing software can identify preferences and product life cycle (73) the right message at the right time can be more easily sent. For example, Amazon.com can predict the types of books customers may buy, based upon the customers' own traits and upon other buyers with similar traits. Then the firm informs customers through email about new titles of interest to them (74). This knowledge that the online bookstore has can increase their sales revenue from each customer. One-to-one marketing has the potential of generating more effective marketing efforts (75) and can result in a long-term profitable relationship . It is said that it is four to six times more costly to acquire a new customer than to retain an existing one Also happy customers tend to buy more as time

passes and can become advocates for the company. Added value and trust, as the relationship evolves in time, are keys for building profitable long-term relationships with customers.

Added value can be defined as manipulating the components of customer value, which means increasing benefits or reducing sacrifices that the customer has to make . With dialogue and databases, which make targeting higher, added value can be increased. For example a targeted offer via email can reduce the sacrifice component of time required to find a product of interest with a 'good price'.

Furthermore, Anderson and Narus (1984) define trust as a customers' belief that a company will perform actions that will result in positive outcomes for them. By increasing targeting, again email added value can become higher as well. Hence, as added value increases, trust can be created; therefore, profitable long-term relationships can be formed. Adding to this, it must be noted that the importance of relationship marketing seems greater in interactive environments where competition is 'just a click away' (76).

2.4 Trust & Privacy

Most consumers consider trust as the most important issue when interacting with companies online (77). Privacy issues are a key for trust online (78). This has to do with the handling of acquired personal data of individuals. The data can vary from just an email address or an age to names or even to credit card details. The available technology that has the ability of storing and integrating vast amounts of data and the Internet's ability to distribute it instantly and globally have increased the concern of privacy in online environments .

Sensitive and clear privacy issue handing can create trust that enables the two-way communication model online for all customer acquisition or retention objectives (78). Trust has always been an important element that influences consumer behavior and since the Internet has further heightened the importance of trust in B2C e-commerce, companies should reduce risk and establish a level of trust between consumers and online businesses . *“Trust in a Web retailer is viewed as a salient behavioral belief that directly*

influences consumer attitude, and indirectly affecting intentions for online transactions with Web retailers” (79).

2.4.1 Personal Data Handling

The Data Protection Act cited in Tapp 2000, states that personal information should not be stored longer than necessary. Therefore, a question arises about the data of a user who unsubscribed from the company's list. Should the company store this data for potential future communication? Moreover should, it still be provided (if it has been up to then) to third parties?

Some say that the transfer of personal information from one organization to another should not be done at all (80). This is mainly for ethical reasons since it is considered as an exploitation of users when private personal data is bought and sold for marketing reasons. As Aaker (1996: p165) states *just as a persons behavior affects others perceptions of his or her personally, so does a company 's actions affect its perceived personality'*. Therefore, sharing personal information could affect a company's image in a negative manner. The privacy policy and the handling of personal data must be clear and specific' in order to avoid transaction of personal data without consumers' consent (81). Answering to the issue of trust and privacy a lot of software are designed some of them are mentioned below:

2.4.1.1 BeHidden

BeHidden lets you surf the web anonymously. The service conceals your IP address from the sites you visit, and encrypts all communications with them. It also blocks cookies and disables JavaScript. The free service is limited to 70MB of transfer per day.

2.4.1.2 Guardster

Guardster offers a free anonymous proxy for surfing the web, as well as a premium service that includes encrypted email, instant messaging and USENET access.

2.4.1.3 IDZap

You can surf the web anonymously via the IDZap gateway service. Optionally, you can decide to block cookies and Javascript. There is a premium service level available as well.

2.4.1.4 Stealth Message

This service enables you to send a free encrypted message to anyone. Individual messages can be up to 20,000 characters long. The service uses 156-bit encryption and SSL-based secure browser access to protect communications, and you can even (laboriously) type out your message on a "virtual keyboard" by clicking on individual key buttons inside your browser if you're worried about somebody logging every keystroke you enter.

You don't need to install any software to use Stealth Message, since the recipient is sent a URL and keyword combination that they then use to access your message via the Web. For the truly paranoid, you can even specify a time delay after which the message will "self-destruct" and no longer be accessible to the recipient.

2.4.1.5 The Cloak

Free anonymous web browsing service, with an encrypted connection. Users can configure the behavior of the anonymous proxy to for example delete cookies and Javascript automatically. (http://www.emailaddresses.com/email_anonymity.htm)

2.5 Consistency

Consistency in the marketing of a product is a key element for creating and increasing brand familiarity and brand value that lead to brand liking (81). Aaker (1996), states that consistency provides functional and emotional benefits that are important for adding value. Therefore, it can assist to the direction of forming a profitable long-term relationship. Trust of a consumer to a company can also be increased with it. Being consistent is a key point for awareness and familiarity, which are important for customer acquisition objectives (82). Hence, one can say that it is a key element for email marketing for both customer acquisition and retention objectives. Companies that communicate through email should be consistent and always reflect a company's standards and image, which differ from one to another (83).

2.5.1 Landing

Consistency must also be achieved in the 'landing' of an email that is usually the company's Web-site after clicking on a link within the email sent out (84). As stated above, emails must be specific and simple. This means that the Web-page that a consumer visits with intention of purchasing a product that is on offer in the email sent, must be consistent with the email. The landing page should use 'the same language' with the offer or message sent in the email (85). The information the user is seeking must be simply and easily found.

2.5.2 Subject Lines

Consistency also must be achieved in subject lines of emails. The subject lines should be chosen carefully and it should be kept similar each time a message is sent (86). This is in order to avoid the confusion of the message being considered as spam. Also, the general

layout of the email must remain consistent for reasons of familiarity (87).

2.5.3 Response

Enquiries and complaints should be responded and dealt in a consistent manner as well. The timing and quality of response must be as promised from the company. This can help mutual understanding rise, and therefore create emotional benefits for consumers from the two-way communication.

2.6 Enquiries and Complaints

It is believed that marketing on the Internet is better achieved with dialogue and mutual understanding (88). Email is an easy and effective tool that can be used in order to reply to consumers' enquiries and complaints. Replies to complaints or to general enquiries must be as fast as possible, so that consumers feel they are getting value from it and that is worth using this communication tool. Generally, companies should not promise the time in which the enquiry is replied if it is not 100% a feasible task (89: 90). In addition, the nature of enquiries and complaints according to Harrison-Walker (2001) should be stored in the personal databases so that employees can respond faster to consumers with the same enquiries or complaints.

2.6.1 Quality of Communication & Automated Response

Automated response (software programmers that reply automatically without human intervention) must be as limited as possible and sent only when it is relevant to the enquiry. The e Gain system, for instance, looks for certain phrases or key words and then taps into a knowledge base to generate a response (Turban et al, 2002). However, automated response systems, depending how 'intelligent' they are, often make mistakes by sending irrelevant or useless answers. Of course the more personal responses are made the more costly it is for the company. The degree to which automated response should be used and to whom is not specified when reviewing the literature. If the

objectives, that must be set before an email-marketing program, are retaining customers, then a higher investment in automated response software is recommended .

Generally, a balance is suggested regarding automated or manual response, and one could assume that testing the automated response system frequently could be quite helpful. A good and helpful 'Frequently Asked Questions' on the company's Web site could also help in dealing effectively with enquiries (91). Following steps should be followed in order to have a better response management:

- Answer common questions without human intervention
- Suggest answers to support agents
- Route incoming emails automatically
- Record complete customer history
- Report results to ensure quality

2.6.2 Enhancing the Quality of Email Dialogue

The explosion of email, and the consequent attention overload for any one individual, can only increase -- probably exponentially. Currently the main techniques for managing this are:

- Ignoring messages or deleting
- Providing courtesy or automated responses
- Unsubscribing from list servers, or not subscribing in the first place
- Use of filters to file messages for possible later perusal
- Use of "unlisted" email addresses to avoid involvement
- Dependence on human list moderators and gatekeepers

The challenge for the future is to devise software techniques to enhance the quality of e-dialogue within the increasingly dense pattern of communications. An associated challenge of considerable importance is the tendency of list server dialogues to decay into

exchanges amongst a small subset of participants, possibly with silent observers, possibly with progressive loss of subscribers. The question is what criteria to use in determining when this pattern is healthy rather than dysfunctional -- and what whoever might do about it, if anything.

Design challenge

A preliminary difficulty is giving some operational form to the notion of dialogue quality -- that lends itself to software solutions to handle the many lists held by a list server. One approach is to rely on qualitative judgments by respected human moderators -- of which there are insufficient to take on this thankless task. These would determine participants and processes, which sustain "good energy". This practice is already used in various closed groups. It is to be expected that the role will in future be increasingly professionalized as an analogue, or extension, to that of relatively costly facilitation in face-to-face situations.

Unfortunately this approach does not immediately lend itself to software "gateway" solutions to help manage the boundaries of multitudes of email groups -- -- selecting fruitful participants/communications in and designing unfruitful participants/communications out. The gateway role is a somewhat thankless task with its own problems in the case of those attached to this role. The difficulty with relying on any "good energy" definition is that -- as with restaurants or discos -- one person's "good" is another person's source of boredom, irritation or distaste. This is especially unsatisfactory where the objective is sustainable, mutually nourishing, dialogue.

There is a further difficulty in that this approach can easily end up as a replication of the elitist "club" pattern, which continues to be attacked as symptomatic of discrimination. Irrespective of this reservation, the pattern is itself no guarantee that the quality of dialogue will be fruitful in any absolute sense -- however club members appreciate it. Such clubs tend to accumulate their own bores whom it is difficult to discourage or

dislodge. The clubs may play on their elitism in pursuit of other agendas and therefore invite constant harassment by others endeavoring to enter.

Design possibilities

Rather than relying on a universal definition of "good energy", and the apparatus to manage its definition and determine unsatisfactory deviation from it, a more practical and interesting approach may be to endeavor to build in processes of self-organization supported by artificial intelligence. These could lead to the emergence of an array of list servers that might have a degree of emergent order.

Level 1 ("Paradise"):

For maximum convenience, software procedures should effectively filter people and communications into distinct clusters. Each cluster would be a "good energy" cluster to those participating within it. To maximize the quality of dialogue to those participating within a given cluster, the filtration process would exclude:

- Any communications that exhibited detectable opposition to any other communication in the cluster
- Any communication that exhibited any form of negativity -- relatively easy to determine by software (as is done with spelling and grammar checkers)
- And, ultimately, any participant whose communications were frequently excluded for the previous reasons

At this level dialogue would emphasize agreement and mutual support. It raises issues; well-known in traditional organizations, of how new people are to be co-opted to sustain the favored style. There is also the challenge of groupthink. In religious terms, this is best described as "paradise" -- or the palace in which the Buddha was sequestered in his youth

and protected from the realities of the outside world. In relationship terms this is the image of "happy every after" -- otherwise known as the "honeymoon period".

Level 2 ("Heavenly Choirs"):

Some participants in clusters at Level 1 may be challenged by the existence of perceptions that are automatically excluded from their dialogue in order to maintain its quality. These differences may, from a different perspective, be understood as part of a larger pattern of views in "harmony" with the favored view within any Level 1 cluster. A difference of this kind may be seen as that of a different "voice", possibly that of a partner or potential ally in a larger pattern of dialogue through which interest and fruitfulness can be sustained.

The software problem here is to distinguish between fruitful and unfruitful difference, perhaps with criteria such as:

- a communication of a different perspective that is cited by others and evokes new harmonies as a result
- a communication from a different perspective that reinforces the value of those from which it differs
-

In musical terms this level corresponds to that of sacred music in which no unwelcome chords emerge. In religious terms, the notion of angelic "heavenly choirs" perhaps best captures this form of dialogue. In relationship terms this corresponds to recognition of legitimate differences within, and contributing to, marital harmony. In inter-group terms it might be understood as ideal collaborative relationships and partnerships -- with an emphasis on complementarity of function. Academically these might take the form of mutual citation networks within a thematic comfort zone.

Level 3 ("Knowledge of Good and Evil"):

Some participants in clusters at Level 1 or Level 2 may be challenged by the existence of perceptions that are automatically excluded by software from their dialogue as intrinsically disruptive of their quality. These exclusions might be:

- Recognition of the existence of alternative perceptions in strong disagreement with those of their cluster (perhaps in another Level 1 cluster).
- Recognition that other people are not persuaded of their particular "universal" definition of "good energy"
- Recognition of challenging and problematic conditions in the wider world that cannot be addressed within the rules of their cluster, especially in the eyes of those affected.
- A different type of dialogue cluster may then be created, by software, to handle communications and participants acknowledging these dimensions. Such clusters would have a somewhat different kind of definition of "good energy". This might include:
 - Recognition of the existence other ways of thinking, however regrettable they may be considered
 - Recognition of the problems experienced by others (because they have failed to subscribe to a universal definition through which some problems are reframed into non-existence)
 - Recognition of the need to persuade others of the merits of a particular universal definition of "good energy"
 -

Clusters at this level would be concerned by the challenge posed by the existence of other clusters -- of "otherness" in general. Their communications would be concerned with why all clusters at Levels 1 or 2 did not subscribe to a particular universal definition or framework that would reconcile their misguided differences. There is a sense in which Levels 1 and 2 do not allow for alternative orientations -- as would be modeled on a globe, rather than on a flat surface where all disagreeable features can be pushed to the margins (as in early maps). However clusters at Level 3, whilst allowing sensitivity to such dimensions, would not incorporate communications or participants reflecting disruptive alternative views.

From a software perspective, emergence of Level 3 clusters might result from the evolution of a Level 2 cluster. However it should be clear that, in the dynamic communication environment envisaged, clustering of any kind would be determined by: each communication would tend to pull a participant into, or out of, a given cluster a "cluster" would be a notional boundary rather than a fixed boundary it would be just as appropriate to understand a cluster as pulling away from a person, as a person pulling away from a cluster

Level 4 ("Mission"):

Following from the recognition of "otherness" by clusters at Level 3, another level of clusters would emerge with the mission to persuade those outside their cluster of the merits of their particular definition of "good energy" and the inappropriateness of the views they currently hold that deny it. Clusters at Level 4 would derive part of their energy and identity from their commitment to persuade others of the power of their insights to resolve their problems and difficulties -- if only they would join them in their enterprise and cease to engage in dysfunctional activities and patterns of thought.

From a software perspective, Level 4 communications would be characterized by:

- Exhortations to follow injunctions defined by the Level 4 cluster
- Condemnation of alternatives disruptive of the harmony to which the Level 4 cluster subscribes.
- Unilateral assertion of truth, and an emphasis on educating others (rather than absorbing insights from others)
- A resistance to understanding, or valuing, alternative perspectives as in some way complementary
- Refinement of a sense of mission to proselytize the world to ensure dominance of the "good energy"

Impelled by their missionary role, Level 4 clusters would seek to engage in some way with "unbelievers", possibly by involving them conditionally in their dialogue. Indicative

of its religious origins, the notion of "mission" is reflected in the many "commissions" created to implement a particular goal -- in the interests of others but often with minimal consultation of them or respect for their concerns. Software techniques would be required to solicit and involve conditionally participants who might be targeted for this form of persuasive communication. In relationship terms this form of dialogue is best understood in terms of courtship and the presentation of positive attributes. In its commitment to the one truth, aspects of the interactions with those who oppose the mission may be framed as legitimately crushing them. In movie terms this is exemplified by the *Highlander* and the "power of the one".

Level 5 ("Doubt"):

The engagement with others characteristic of Level 4, leads to situations in which the merits of alternative perspectives become apparent -- usually in the light of disastrous or tragic missions in which the costs of pursuing a particular value at any cost are recognized to be possibly too unacceptable. In Level 5 clusters questions are asked about the previously unquestioned merit of the universal applicability of the favored definition of "good energy" -- and the possible relevance of quite different understandings and initiatives under certain circumstances. However, although recognizing possible merit in others, clusters at Level 5 do not willingly seek the involvement of others to exacerbate that doubt. This level is characterized by "internal" doubt and questioning. In religious terms it is described as a "crisis of faith".

From a software perspective, Level 5 communications would be characterized by:

Questions rather than answers

- Citation of alternative approaches that are apparently successful, surprisingly, beyond the pale of the accepted "good energy" orthodoxy
- Cross-boundary sensitivity

- Expressions of anxiety concerning the appropriateness of Level 4 type missions under certain circumstances
- A degree of self-criticism

There is extensive religious literature on crisis of faith. In relationship terms this form of dialogue is associated with the fundamental anxieties of "does s/he love me?". For activists of any kind this takes the form of "burnout". In collaborative relationships this is associated with the emergence of self-doubting by partners and doubt concerning the functionality of the partnership.

Level 6 ("Encounter"):

From Level 5 clusters may emerge another form of dialogue, at Level 6, which is characterized by deliberate efforts to encounter otherness and difference on its own terms. Communications at this level are concerned with how to handle views that are strongly at variance with each other.

From a software perspective, Level 6 communications and participants would be characterized by:

- Listening to alternative views in the light of the challenge that they fruitfully bring
- Reference to alternative views as supportive of valid alternatives
- Translation between alternative views to facilitate comprehension
- Characteristic absence of assertiveness
- Concern with whether communication is effectively occurring and potentials for misunderstanding
- Use of illustrative communication tools (stories, parables, metaphors, visual aids, etc) to circumvent difficulties with words

Many efforts at inter-faith dialogue struggle to work at this level, despite the pull of the missionary tradition associated with Level 4 -- and ultimately incumbent upon followers of certain religions in dealing with "unbelievers" for their "salvation". In relationship

terms this form of dialogue is a goal of marriage counselors in endeavoring to reconcile couples in despair. In musical terms this might be associated with certain phenomena in the "encounter" between different instruments during jam sessions. The democratic deficit is forcing many bodies convinced of the merits of their own policies to at least appear to engage in consultative encounter with those who may hold alternative views -- whether or not any weight is subsequently attached to their insights.

Level 7 ("Complementarity's"):

Communications at Level 6 tend to be most successful as a succession of bilateral interactions. The pattern of such bilateral interactions may push some participants and communications to see the pattern as a kind of ecology of dialogues -- a pattern of connectedness, which becomes the sustaining force of Level 7 dialogue.

From a software perspective, Level 7 communications and participants might then be characterized by:

- Statements stressing complementarity and pattern between a diversity of perspectives
- Recognition of the (ir) relevance of particular perspectives under particular circumstances
- Efforts to identify the particular functions of each perspective within the knowledge ecology and their contributions to each other
- Efforts to set radical opposition within the knowledge ecology

Such forms of dialogue are typically characterized in religious terms as victims of the error of "relativism" by those favoring forms of dialogue based on absolute and unwavering confidence in a particular perspective claimed to be of universal validity. Within the Catholic tradition, however, this is somewhat ironic given the several hundred religious orders, which supposedly have complementary psychosocial and religious functions. In musical terms, beyond the "diabolus in musica" crisis of pre-polyphonic music, this form of dialogue is exemplified by the riches embedded in the theory of

harmony and orchestration. In relationship terms this is exemplified by the diversity of complementary types appreciated as appropriate to a mature community. In inter-group terms this is the domain of extended networks and networking typically free of any mutual constraint.

Level 8 ("Integrity"):

The limits of sustainable appreciation of complementarity may be recognized through responding to the challenge of "relativism" and tolerance in the face of disruptive or dysfunctional experience. This may encourage emergence of a new level of dialogue concerned with the nature of the integrity of the pattern of complementarity in response to that which challenges it. Here the communications might be characterized by:

- Statements stressing the configuration of the set of polarities or complementaries recognized in Level 7 dialogue
- Ensuring integrated understanding of patterns of diversity; the challenge of coherence
- Relationship between integrity and the sense of identity that it sustains
- Learning pathways interrelating the diversity of perspectives
- Legitimizing of apparently divergent perspectives
- Paradoxical relationships between incommensurable perspectives that must necessarily be integrated within a common frame
- Notions of integrative framework beyond mechanistic structures

A particular challenge to dialogue at this level is the manner in which attempts are made to co-opt it by those strongly focused on Level 1 dialogue --necessarily associated with a particular understanding of integrity (to which all alternative perspectives are declared to be erroneous or irrelevant). Recognizing differences, at this level there are efforts to identify underlying invariance or patterns of principle through which such differences can be framed. This may be seen in struggles to frame global ethical frameworks -- which may possibly be understood by Level 1 clusters as a minimal, if unsatisfactory response

to the coherence of their own belief structure. It is evident in the push for codes of conduct and principles of collective self-regulation.

Level 9 ("Transformation"):

Any particular solution to the articulation of integrity and coherence at Level 7 will tend to suggest other insights into integrity. The question will tend to arise of how any comprehensive pattern of understanding may evolve or transform in response to future challenges or changing conditions. This may be related to the challenge for any individual or community in maturing.

From a software perspective, Level 9 communications and participants might then be characterized by:

- Concern with transformations between different patterns of integrity
- Invariance under transformation
- The nature of transformation processes

Periodic array of levels

As noted with respect to inter-faith dialogue (Judge,1993):

Feminist scholars have criticized the level approach, notably Carol Gilligan (1982, 1990), for being gender biased in its uni-directionality. It is argued that women are less concerned with rules and more with relationships, with where actions might lead and with the history behind moral dilemmas. Emphasis on levels de-emphasizes the degree of connectedness experienced by women. Cognitively, levels may thus be seen as a metaphorical trap. The need to see different "levels" as each providing its own valid framework, between which it is important to be able to shift flexibly, is stressed by another female scholar J Hemenway (1984) in her description of four complementary faith frameworks. Jacobs endorses this principle although pointing to resemblances between such frameworks and the kinds of stage distinguished above. He stresses that her approach is not developmental in nature. There is no sense in which someone moves 'back' or 'forward' between stages that would imply a value judgment that one framework

is more 'healthy' than another.... For Jacobs (1993), *"if the wish for order draws us toward linear models, it is important to emphasize that at whatever stage a person is, especially in terms of their psychology of belief, none is any 'better' or 'worse' than another. The only qualification to this is that within each stage some forms of belief appear to be more positive for psychological health than others."*

It is therefore important to avoid "demonization" of one or other level, whether or not some form of "demonization" is characteristic of the dynamics from within any level -- as a consequence of dualistic, polarized thinking (which presumably has its place). The "levels" might therefore be better-termed "clusters" or "groups".

In reviewing the levels/groups there are implications that from Level 8 or 9 there is a tendency to repeat functionality associated with Level 1. It is therefore intriguing to consider the possibility that Levels 1-9 may form, in musical terms, a kind of "octave" that may be repeated -- at a "higher" or "lower" level -- to form an array as explored with respect to inter-faith dialogue (Judge,1993). In this sense, Level 1 is repeated at different rows in the array -- corresponding to different understandings of the "paradise" it metaphorically represents. The same might be said of Level 8, with respect to "integrity". Part of the challenge in dialogue is to distinguish in communications between "Integrity 8" and "Integrity 8h", especially since the latter carries embedded within it insights from dialogue styles corresponding to the many intervening rows and columns.

1h	2h	3h	4h	5h	6h	7h	8h	9h
1g	2g	3g	4g	5g	6g	7g	8g	9g
1f	2f	3f	4f	5f	6f	7f	8f	9f
1e	2e	3e	4e	5e	6e	7e	8e	9e
1d	2d	3d	4d	5d	6d	7d	8d	9d
1c	2c	3c	4c	5c	6c	7c	8c	9c
1b	2b	3b	4b	5b	6b	7b	8b	9b
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

The pattern of the periodic table of chemical elements suggests the possibility of organizing forms of dialogue into columnar "groups" and row "levels" which effectively

identify cellular "elements" with particular qualities. It thus highlights the possibility of development from "lighter" to "heavier" elements, as well as the emergence of the electrochemically "positive" and "negative". Such terms are of course used to distinguish different kinds of dialogue, but more might be learnt of such distinctions from chemistry. Of special interest is the implication that suitably distant positions might "strongly" or "weakly" interact to form more or less stable configurations based on strong or weak "bonds". Physicists and chemists have long pursued the possibilities of very heavy elements, whilst appreciating the role of the lightest in the sustenance of life and the generation of solar energy. Some of the social implications of such an ordering have been tentatively explored by Ed Haskell (1972).

The software design objective would be to allocate communications (and possibly their originators) into email dialogues mapped into such an array. This would help to clarify the function of different kinds of dialogue. It may only be in terms of such an array that discussion can take place about the characteristic interactions between different styles of dialogue when confronted with each other through email messages of different style. The study of chemical elements illustrates that juxtaposition of certain elements may be explosively dangerous or toxic -- whatever their value in particular circumstances for the creation of new structures. Other juxtapositions are essential to life and nourishment.

Policy implications

Without a sense of the varieties of dialogue essential to sustainable community, there is a danger of effectively becoming victims of our own "chemistry" rather than using it to enhance the quality of life. In mechanistic terms there is a need to be able to "shift gears" in dialogue -- moving over the array according to circumstances. It is as inappropriate to use Level 8 dialogue when Level 1 dialogue is called for -- as it is inappropriate to use "5th gear", when "1st" is called for (see Judge, 1980).

It is interesting that each form of dialogue presumably has its strengths and weaknesses -- its "virtues" and "sins" in classical religious terms

Excessive consumption of resources, especially energy

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Collective anger, especially expressed in violence

Collective greed, especially in the accumulation of resources

Collective envy, especially for resources controlled by others

Collective pride, typically as arrogance and triumphalism

Collective lust for power, typically as expansionism

Collective apathy, typically in response to emerging problems

Collective despair, typically in acknowledging current impotence and in recollecting past failures

Hope, which is expressed both individually and collectively

Will (or Courage), especially in frequent appeals for the "generation of the political will to change"

Purpose (or Dedication), increasingly evident in the formulation of "mission statements" and implicit in "resolutions"

Competence (or Discipline), increasingly stressed as vital for effective management

Fidelity or Loyalty, increasingly a concern of corporate human relations programmers and security procedures

Love, increasingly explicit in "green" approaches to the environment and traditionally implicit in recognition of the "brotherhood of mankind"

Care, especially evident in relief programmers

Wisdom, occasionally acknowledged in calls for collective wisdom and statesmanship

But it is possibly more interesting that each form of dialogue has its policy implications.

Each level or form of dialogue would tend to give rise to a particular style of policy.

There is an evident tendency to formulate policy in terms of Level 1 styles ("one plan thinking"; "one policy fits all"; "silver bullets"). There are many mission-oriented policies ("indoctrinating the ignorant of other cultures that they may be saved"). There are policies emphasizing "encounter" -- possibly as a prelude to more effective "mission".

Design considerations, such as those above, may be vital to democratic communication in a highly connected, issue-aware society -- in which many people and groups want "access" to the policy process and many policy makers need to have access to voters. In relationship to the many efforts to articulate the nature of online democracy in the future, there is relatively little attention given to the varieties of dialogue -- and how they are to

be distinguished and supported by software -- that will be vital to policy-making in a complex global society. These questions are also important to reflection on the nature of cyber-parliaments (Judge, 1998)-- which may be a precursor for any meaningful "world parliament".

Software considerations

The design possibilities above already lend themselves to some form of online implementation through text and citation analysis.

At the simplest level filtering software can already be used by any individual to allocate messages to specific folders. However here the suggestion is that many of these functions be delegated to a pre-filtering procedure on the server managing an array of list servers. The server would effectively redefine the subject line to provide a standard pattern of triggers to which the user could adjust standard email filters. The server sends particular subject-coded messages to a given participant or redirects them in any way -- or even deletes them. Also intriguing is the possibility that the server automatically passes the communication on to another list server array as being of "possible relevance" to some list within that array.

Missing from current email exchanges is any standardized practice for citing other messages. This may be done to some degree in hierarchically threaded discussions. Messages held in this way may provide for links across threads within the same list or to other communications in the threads of other list servers.

It is unfortunately the case that few messages cite other messages. Most list server messages are effectively lost after a few days -- in a continuing a historical celebration of the "rolling present" in which newcomers repeatedly "rediscover America" in the best of learning traditions. Algorithms are required to identify patterns of implicit citation and configurations of significance, perhaps indicated with various levels of probability -- as well as any patterns of explicit conclusion. This needs to be done independently of the marginalizing judgments of groups adhering to one or another style of dialogue.

There is currently, within an email dialogue, no build up of collective insight -- in fact collective memory is systematically eroded by the nature of email exchanges. Global society needs access to a vast pool of potential insights configured into whatever patterns people choose to find credible for their needs. Web technology does not yet facilitate this. Neural network techniques may be especially relevant.

2.7 Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is the online equivalent to the word of mouth. The positive word of mouth should be the aim of all marketing communication tools (offline and online). The difference with offline is that it spreads much easier online since forwarding an email to a friend, for example, takes almost no time or effort. Viral marketing is very powerful since the email is usually sent by a friend to a friend, which probably means that it is of interest to the recipient. Jupiter Communications reports that most people would visit a Web-site recommended by a friend. For instance, a Singapore auction site known as, Coshopper.com, allows users to type in friends' email addresses and Coshopper then emails those friends with details about its service.

In 1997, Draper Fisher Jurvetson's first coined the term "viral marketing" in Netscape newsletter to illustrate the phenomenon, without defining it more precisely than "network-enhanced word of mouth." Its original inspiration came from the pattern of adoption of Hotmail beginning with its launch in 1996. Tim Draper persuaded the company to include a promotional pitch for its Web-based email with a clickable URL in every outbound message sent by a Hotmail user. Therein lay one of the critical elements of viral marketing: every customer becomes an involuntary salesperson simply by using the product.

"Viral marketing describes any strategy that encourages individuals to pass on a marketing message to others, creating the potential for exponential growth in the

message's exposure and influence." (R. F. Wilson, 2000) Like viruses, such strategies take advantage of rapid multiplication to explode the message to thousands, to millions. Off the Internet, viral marketing has been referred to as "word-of-mouth," "creating a buzz," "leveraging the media," "network marketing." But on the Internet, for better or worse, it's called "viral marketing".

Viral marketing is more powerful than third-party advertising because it conveys an implied endorsement from a friend. (R. F. Wilson, 2000) Although clearly delineated as an advertisement, the spillover marketing benefits are powerful-much like the efficacy of radio commercials read by the favorite DJ. The recipients of a Hotmail message learn that the product works and that their friend is a user. A key element of consumer branding is usage affiliation

2.7.1 The Classic Hotmail.com Example:

The classic example of viral marketing is Hotmail.com, one of the first free Web-based e-mail services. The strategy is simple:

Give away free e-mail addresses and services,

Attach a simple tag at the bottom of every free message sent out: "Get your private, free email at <http://www.hotmail.com>" and, then stand back while people e-mail to their own network of friends and associates, who see the message,

Sign up for their own free e-mail service.

Propel the message still wider to their own ever-increasing circles of friends and associates.

Like tiny waves spreading ever farther from a single pebble dropped into a pond, a carefully designed viral marketing strategy ripples outward extremely rapidly. Hotmail grew its subscriber base from zero to 12 million users in 18 months, more rapidly than

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any company in any media in the history of the world. Fair enough, this is the Internet after all. But it did so with an advertising budget of \$50,000-enough for some college newspaper ads and a billboard. Nonviral competitors like Juno spent \$20 million on traditional marketing in the same time period with less effect. What's more, Hotmail became the largest email provider in several countries, like Sweden and India, where it had done no marketing whatsoever.

Hotmail is not an isolated incident. Hotmail and the instant messenger service ICQ had close to the same number of subscribers at their 6-, 9-, 12-, and 18-month stages. What do they have in common? Hotmail was typically used as a secondary or personal account for communication to a close coterie of friends-much like ICQ's buddy lists. There appeared to be a mathematical elegance to their smooth exponential growth curves.

A first-order model for viral spread is this:

$$\text{cumulative users} = (1 + \text{fanout})^{\text{cycles}}$$

In this model, the exponent cycles is the number of times the product is used in the time period since launch (or frequency x time). In the early days, Hotmail and ICQ fanned out to about two new users every month, and they each told two friends, and so on, and so on. By the simple model, one seed user grew to 3 users at the end of the first cycle, 9 by the second, 27 by the third, and so on. Companies with much larger fanouts, such as the free email list managers, have grown more quickly than Hotmail. Those that have provided an economic incentive to spam large groups, like AllAdvantage which pays users view advertising, have grown faster still, going from zero to 750,000 users in two weeks. The same formula would apply to traditional word-of-mouth marketing (like MCI Friends & Family discount plans and Tupperware parties), but lacking the involuntary coupling to patterns of communication; the average fanout and frequency are much lower.

For a bit more accuracy, we can factor in the variables that describe the success of the recruiting message and the retention rate as percentages:

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Cumulative users = $[(1 + \text{fanout} \times \text{conversion rate}) \times \text{retention rate}]^{\text{frequency}} \times \text{time}$

Working through the variables, the ideal viral product will be used to communicate with many people, will convert a high percentage of them to new users, and will retain a high percentage of them. It will also be used quite frequently.

A more accurate, second-order model would include decay functions on each of the variables, reflecting novelty and saturation effects. For example, Hotmail's variables are tapering as it reaches population saturation. Hotmail has blown through 100 million active users, so that there is a Hotmail account for one out of every four people on the Web worldwide.

"Given our excitement about the power of viral marketing, we have funded several companies that are pushing viral marketing in new directions, and we have suggested the addition of a viral element to an otherwise noncommunicative product." For example, NetZero's email vector of spread is very similar to Hotmail's, but it has higher retention and conversion rates. Free Internet access is a more compelling proposition than free email, and so NetZero has grown faster than Hotmail in the U.S. It has also grown ten times faster than America Online, becoming the second largest Internet service provider in America. In group event RSVP management, evite and SeeUthere.com has a much higher fanout, reaching many invitees but with a lower frequency-the rate at which events and parties are held.

Companies as diverse as Keen/Inforocket (a marketplace for questions and answers), Skype (a free telephony service) and Homestead (personal Web pages) have found ways to amplify their growth through viral spread. (92) Inforocket encourages users to forward a question to a friend who is likely to know the answer, and in return, the forwarder gets a cut of the lifetime economics of the new recruit. Homestead facilitates the recruitment of coauthors to a family or group Web site, eventually bringing the community of users to Homestead.

In the e-commerce world, online retailers have gained some viral effects through gift packaging and "refer a friend" programs. Mimeo.com has taken it a step further by applying viral marketing to every package it delivers. Mimeo offers Web-initiated printing, copying, binding and delivery-a substitute for waiting in line at Kinko's. Each sender is a Mimeo user, but the multiple recipients are not. So the FedEx-like package is covered with Mimeo evangelism. (93).

And this is just the beginning. NetMind/Palm offers a free Web-site update notification service as a presales pilot for enterprise server sales. The free voicemail, fax, and telephony companies use aural marketing to recruit new users. Even Palm users are beaming viral applications like ePocrates over their infrared ports.

From a memetic engineering perspective, the idea of viral marketing spreads like an adaptive virus. The idea itself evolves as it is retold in society.

2.7.2 Elements of a Viral Marketing Strategy

Accept this fact. Some viral marketing strategies work better than others, and few work as well as the simple Hotmail.com strategy. But below are the six basic elements for internet strategy. A viral marketing strategy need not contain ALL these elements, but the more elements it embraces, the more powerful the results are likely to be. (94) An effective viral marketing strategy:

1. Gives away products or services
2. Provides for effortless transfer to others
3. Scales easily from small to very large
4. Exploits common motivations and behaviors
5. Utilizes existing communication networks
6. Takes advantage of others' resources

Let's examine at each of these elements briefly.

2.7.2.1. Gives away valuable products or services

"Free" is the most powerful word in a marketer's vocabulary. Most viral marketing programs give away valuable products or services to attract attention. Free e-mail services, free information, free "cool" buttons, free software programs that perform powerful functions but not as much as you get in the "pro" version. Wilson's Second Law of Web Marketing is "The Law of Giving and Selling"

(<http://www.wilsonweb.com/wmta/basic-principles.htm>). "Cheap" or "inexpensive" may generate a wave of interest, but "free" will usually do it much faster. Viral marketers practice delayed gratification. (95). They may not profit today, or tomorrow, but if they can generate a groundswell of interest from something free, they know they will profit "soon and for the rest of their lives" (with apologies to "Casablanca"). Free attracts eyeballs. Eyeballs then see other desirable things that you are selling. Eyeballs bring valuable e-mail addresses, advertising revenue, and e-commerce sales opportunities. Give away something, sell something.

2.7.2.2. Provides for effortless transfer to others

Public health nurses offer sage advice at flu season: stay away from people who cough, wash your hands often, and don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Viruses only spread when they're easy to transmit. The medium that carries your marketing message must be easy to transfer and replicate: e-mail, website, graphic, software download. Viral marketing works famously on the Internet because instant communication has become so easy and inexpensive. (95) Digital format make copying simple. From a marketing standpoint, you must simplify your marketing message so it can be transmitted easily and without degradation. Short is better. The classic is: "Get your private, free email at <http://www.hotmail.com>." The message is compelling, compressed, and copied at the bottom of every free e-mail message.

2.7.2.3. Scales easily from small to very large

To spread like wildfire the transmission method must be rapidly scalable from small to very large. The weakness of the Hotmail model is that a free e-mail service requires its own mailservers to transmit the message. If the strategy is wildly successful, mailservers must be added very quickly or the rapid growth will bog down and die. (Turban et ai, 2002). If the virus multiplies only to kill the host before spreading, nothing is accomplished. So long as you have planned ahead of time how you can add mailservers rapidly you're okay. You must build in scalability to your viral model.

2.7.2.4. Exploits common motivations and behaviors

Clever viral marketing plans take advantage of common human motivations. What proliferated "Netscape Now" buttons in the early days of the Web? The desire to be cool. Greed drives people. (96). So does the hunger to be popular, loved, and understood. The resulting urge to communicate produces millions of websites and billions of e-mail messages. Design a marketing strategy that builds on common motivations and behaviors for its transmission.

2.7.2.5. Utilizes existing communication networks

Most people are social. Nerdy, basement-dwelling computer science grad students are the exception. Social scientists tell us that each person has a network of 8 to 12 people in their close network of friends, family, and associates. A person's broader network may consist of scores, hundreds, or thousands of people, depending upon her position in society. (Turban et ai, 2002). A waitress, for

example, may communicate regularly with hundreds of customers in a given week. Network marketers have long understood the power of these human networks, both the strong, close networks as well as the weaker networked relationships. People on the Internet develop networks of relationships, too. They collect e-mail addresses and favorite website URLs. Affiliate programs exploit such networks, as do permission e-mail lists. Learn to place your message into existing communications between people, and you rapidly multiply its dispersion.

2.7.2.6. Takes advantage of others' resources

The most creative viral marketing plans use others' resources to get the word out. Affiliate programs, (97). for example, place text or graphic links on others' websites. Authors who give away free articles, seek to position their articles on others' webpages. A news release can be picked up by hundreds of periodicals and form the basis of articles seen by hundreds of thousands of readers. Now someone else's newsprint or webpage is relaying your marketing message. Someone else's resources are depleted rather than your own. (Turban et ai, 2002).

Viral marketing must be carefully planned so that it does not backfire and create a negative online word-of-mouth situation for the company. It is said that it should be based on differentiation A company must create something really good that will make the people get behind it. A viral marketing campaign for example can be an email containing a small game program or contest with prizes which is embedded with a sponsor's email that is easy to forward (98). By releasing a few thousand copies of the game, vendors aim to reach hundreds of thousands of consumers . Or marketers may follow the approach used by the promoters of Lee Jeans, who posted fictitious home pages ~of three dorky people on its site, hoping that people would forward the funny pictures to others . The company also used the same characters in its printed ads (99).

Turban et al (2002) argue that this innovative approach, known as “advocacy marketing” if properly used, can be both effective and efficient. However, one of the downsides of this strategy is that several email hoaxes have been spread in this way. Another danger of viral advertisement is that a destructive virus can be added to an innocent advertisement related game or message .

2.8 Summary of the Chapter

Acquisition objectives, according to literature, can be better achieved, with permission based emails and subscription forms requesting permission to email for special offers or for providing a free e-newsletter. In this way the user provides personal information, which as time passes, can help direct marketing and can lead to long-term profitable relationships that achieve customer retention and even create loyal customers. Moreover, frequency of communication can lead to familiarity and trust as stated before, can lead to long-term profitable relationships. Privacy issues are also a key for trust online and that is why firms that manage to handle privacy issues successfully and to secure customer information are more likely lead to high profits.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

After having reviewed the literature, the project focuses on the research methodology. This chapter will show how, by applying the theory to the topic, one or more hypotheses can be stated. The chosen instrument for gathering the necessary data, the design of the instrument and the method of selection of the sample will be presented and discussed. After identifying the population from which we intend to sample, the project will then conduct a small empirical data sample known as pilot study in order to assess the face validity and reliability of the chosen instrument. Finally, this chapter will examine which tests are most appropriate to analyze the collected data and the results revealed from this research will be discussed in chapter 4, Analysis of the Findings.

3.1 Research Hypothesis

An important step in a research is the process of the hypothesis testing, where hypothesis is the first formal assertion about the result of the study. The hypothesis to be tested is often referred to as the null hypothesis and it is denoted to be H_0 . When a hypothesis H_0 is set forth, one must always state the alternative hypothesis, for instance the hypothesis we think is true if H_0 is not true (H_1).

By focusing on the theory section we are able to identify the hypotheses that should be tested. Based on the theory the question raised is whether email can be used as a marketing communication tool. Therefore the hypotheses chosen are as follows:

H_0 : There is no relationship between email and marketing communication tools.

H_1 : There is a relationship between email and marketing communication tools

Where the hypothesis to be tested is H_0 , the null hypothesis, and H_1 is the alternative hypothesis, which we will infer to be true if H_0 proves wrong. Finally the dependent variable is email and the independent is the marketing communication tool. The dependent variable is

the one that is being affected while the independent is the one that is doing the influencing (101). The sub-variables that are going to be used are shown in table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: SUB-VARIABLES

The Sub-Variables for the hypotheses are:

	Permission to Email
	Trust & Privacy
	Consistency
	Enquiries & Complaints
	Viral Marketing

3.2 Research Method

The collection of data represents a prerequisite for carrying out a research and can be derived from a number of different sources. These sources are classified into secondary and primary data (102). Secondary data is information that have been already collected by others for purposes which might different from ours while primary data is data originally collected by us in order to completely solve a research problem (103). Secondary data rarely solves a research problem completely that is why it was consider suitable to gather secondary and primary data.

In this research project secondary data was needed in order to examine the theoretical background of our topic and identify the hypotheses to be tested. The sources of secondary

data that were used while reviewing the theory associated with our topic are books, journals, articles and Internet resources.

As mentioned above, primary data was used in order to completely solve the research problem. According to Clarke and Dawson (1999) there are several methods that researchers can use to collect primary data and some of them are personal interviews, telephone interviews, questionnaires, mail surveys electronic mail surveys and discussion groups.

3.2.1 Research Instrument

Since questionnaires are commonly used, people are familiar with this method of collection and they generally do not make people apprehensive (104), we decided to use self-administered questionnaires to collect the necessary data. There also some other reasons that lead us to use questionnaires as our instrument. These include:

Low cost: Questionnaires are considered as the cheapest way since they are not expensive to produce, neither to duplicate nor to distribute (105).

Reduce bias: Respondents are not being influence by the person who is conducting the research since there is no visual or verbal communication (106).

Anonymity: Respondents are not required to input their names, which make them to honestly answer the questionnaire (107).

Less Intrusive: Questionnaires are less intrusive compare to telephone or face-to-face surveys. When a respondent receives a questionnaire, he/she is free to complete the questionnaire on his/her own timetable (108).

3.2.2 Questionnaire Design

A good questionnaire is the one that accomplishes the research objectives and thus is planned,

formatted and structured in an efficient way (109). In designing a questionnaire, the researcher should avoid questions on sexuality, politics, and religion. Moreover, the researcher should be careful not to have too many questions, be ambiguous and the questions must be asked in very simple and concise language (110).

Hair (2000) argues that questionnaires can consist of two types of questions based on the degree of freedom that is given to the respondents in answering the questions. These two types are known as fixed or closed (structured) questions, and open-ended (unstructured) questions (111).

Structured questions require the respondent to choose from a predetermined set of responses or scale points, while unstructured questions are formatted to allow respondents to reply in their own words (112). According to Pallant (2002) researchers can obtain correct answers with open-ended questions since respondents do not have to limit their answers. However, close-ended questions offer more advantages because they are easier to answer, respondents take less time to answer them, and there is less potential error due to differences in the way questions are asked and responses are recorded. For that reason, close ended questions were used for the construction of the questionnaire with the aim to avoid these variations of answering that would lead to difficult categorization (113).

The scales of measurement used in this questionnaire are the nominal and ordinal. In the nominal level objects are assigned to mutually exclusive, labelled categories, but that does not mean that there are necessary relationships among the categories (114). The ordinal scale allows rank order and can be obtained by ranking objects or by arranging them in order with regard to some common variable (115).

The nominal scale was used in the first part of the questionnaire since answers are 'collapsed' into different categories, while the ordinal scale was used in the second part of the questionnaire. In fact, answers in the second part of the questionnaire, were expressed with the six-point Likert scale, which belongs to the category of ordinal scale. Aaker and Day (1990) believe that the Likert scale is one of the most reliable measurement methods, designed to

measure attitude preferences expressed in a wide range of answers. For instance, ‘strongly disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘slightly disagree’, ‘slightly agree’, ‘agree’, and ‘strongly agree’ (116). In this series of possible answers, weights of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are assigned, while the direction of weighting is being determined by the favorableness or un-favorableness of the items . It should also be noted that this range of answers does not provide to the respondent an escape route. An answer such as ‘neither agree nor disagree’ might be a middle choice but is also an escape route for respondents, which have the opportunity not to take a position. According to Ghauri and Uronhaug (2002), responses received for questionnaires with or without an escape route differ by up to 20-25%.

3.2.3 Questionnaire Description

The questionnaire constructed for this research consists of seventeen questions divided into two sections (See Appendix I). Seven of those questions are in the first section and mainly ask for the respondent’s personal information. In order to keep the anonymity of the respondent the researcher purposely does not ask the respondent’s name.

The second part of the questionnaire attempts to measure the influence email marketing has on consumers in terms of permission, trust and privacy, consistency, enquiries and complaints and finally viral marketing. As explained in section 3.1 these are the five sub variables formulated for the hypotheses of the project. Having in mind these sub variables the researcher decided to classify them in the questionnaire through the following questions shown by the table 3.2.

Questions	Variables
1-2	Permission to Email
3-4	Trust & Privacy
5-6	Consistency
7-8	Enquiries and Complaints
9-10	Viral Marketing

In addition, the researcher tried to construct questions that would be simple and easy to understand by all the respondents. A cover letter was also included before the questionnaire with the aim to describe to the respondents the purpose of the research.

Finally, in order to assess that the instrument of this research is suitable the results obtained from the pilot study will also be considered (See section 3.4)

3.3 Sampling

Having specified the research hypotheses and developed an appropriate data collection instrument, the next step according to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002), is to select the elements from which the information will be collected. The ideal situation would be to survey the whole population of the Pakistan but this is impossible, and due to limited resources and time researcher decided to collect information from a portion of the population and survey that sample. The whole process of collecting results is called sampling, and it examines the sample instead of the whole population in order to save both money and time . Taking a sample of elements from the larger group, the researcher as Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002) suggested, will try to infer something about the larger group. A typical example of this is an election poll; researchers survey a small sample of ah voters with the aim to infer the voting

3.3.1 Population and Sample Frame

Ghuri and Gronhaug (2002) argue that the term population does not only refer to people, but also to products, firms and so on. Therefore, deciding on the relevant population is not always easy. However, knowing whom or what one wants information about the difficulty can be overcome (117).

In this research problem the researcher is interested in the relationship between email and marketing communication tools. In particular, the aim of the research is to examine how email marketing should be practiced successfully from a company to a consumer. As a result, it could be argued that this project tries to examine the relationship that exists between firms and customers in terms of email and marketing communication tools. In order to answer the research problem, consumers should be asked what and which strategies and techniques would attract them as a customer to a company through email. Thus, the population of this study from which the information can be collected, are those consumers that frequently use email to communicate with companies, who want to learn about new products or even for enquiries and complaints. However, it seemed impractical and mainly impossible to draw a sample that would be truly representative from such a population.

For the purposes of this study the version of defined target population used consisted of those people that were specifically identified for investigation (118). The target population for the research was people all over 18 years of age who have used email before.

3.3.2 Sampling Procedure

The next step is to choose a sampling method for drawing the sample. Sampling methods can be divided into two broad categories, probability and non-probability methods (119). In probability samples every element of the population has a known non-zero probability to be selected, while non-probability samples are mainly not representative and they are only valid within certain limits (1200).

For this research researcher chose the probability sampling method because with this method each unit has a known non-zero chance of being included in the sample (121). There are several types of probability samples and in this study we decided to use the simple random sampling. With this

sampling procedure all people have the same probability or chance of being included (122). This method will be used for deriving the sample size for the main study as well as for the pilot study.

Sampling procedures involves how and where the respondents were chosen (123). Since all of the Pakistan population cannot be examined, the researcher decided to attract heterogeneous groups of people that would probably reduce bias (124). Therefore, Blue Area, Islamabad was the chosen area where the survey will be conducted, as it is one of the most commercial used area in the Islamabad, Pakistan. The researcher standing in the street, approaching each person coming by, will distribute questionnaires. In an effort to take an unbiased sample as possible, the procedure will take place two consecutive days, 4 hours each day, at a different time of the day, until the necessary number of questionnaires will be gathered.

In order to ensure the random selection of the sample required for the main study, a certain procedure will be followed. Before personally approaching respondents, a number to each questionnaire will be assigned. Then, consumers will answer questionnaires and finally with the use of **SPSS software**, the necessary number of answered questionnaires will be selected. From the sample size estimation (see section 3.4.2), it was derived that the sample size is 75 people. By using the SPSS simple random sampling function, 75 out of the 115 questionnaires were selected randomly. The reason for giving out 115 questionnaires was so that we could randomly select with SPSS 75 of them. With the help of SPSS we will manage to draw our sample based on simple random sampling as the package includes a function that can randomly select the required sample size. Sampling in SPSS is performed without replacement, so the same case cannot be selected more than once (125). The sample size for the main study will be estimated in the following section.

3.4 Pilot Study

Piloting is essential for having valid and reliable results , thus researchers should conduct a pilot study, which is actually a pre-test. Questionnaires will be given to fifteen people and will be asked to answer the questionnaire honestly and give feedback concerning the style, the structure of the instrument, as well as the understanding and level of difficulty of the questions.

From the pilot study researcher aims to understand whether we are measuring what we are supposed to

measure. That is why it is argued that pilot study is essential for obtaining validity and reliability.

Apart from obtaining valid and reliable results, the pilot study is useful for estimating a sample size required for the main study.

3.4.1 Reliability and Validity

According to Pallant (2002) it is essential to include scales that are reliable. The reliability of a scale indicates how free it is from random error. A frequently used indicator of a scale's reliability is internal consistency. This is the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute.

Internal consistency can be measured by a number of ways. However, the most commonly used statistic is Cronbach's coefficient alpha and can be performed by using SPSS software (126). This test provides the average correlation of all the items that make up the scale. In order to have a reliable scale we need to have a Cronbach alpha coefficient above 0.7 (127).

A reliable measure is not always valid and because of this, during the pilot study the author will conduct validity assessment using convergent and divergent validity framework. According to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002) convergent and divergent validity are both subcategories of construct validity. Construct validity can be defined as "...the extent to which an operationalisation measures the concept which it purports to measure" Zaitman et al cited in Ghauri, Gronhaug, 2002:p70. Having demonstrated evidence for convergent and divergent validity, it is also demonstrated that there is evidence for construct validity .

According to Trochim (2004) convergent validity tells us that similar constructs should be highly Interco-related while divergent validity tells us that different constructs should not highly correlate with each other.

How "high" or how "low" do correlations need to be to provide evidence for convergence and discrimination respectively, has not been defined but it is argued that the convergent correlations

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should always be higher than the discriminate ones

Having performed the test the results obtained are as follows:

Table 3.3: RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS		Mean	Std Dev	Cases		
2.	Q2					
3.	Q3					
4.	Q4					
5.	Q5					
6.	Q7					
7.	Q8					
8.	Q9					
9.	Q10					
10.						
		5.2667	5.3333			
		4.8667				
		5.0000				
4.4667						
4.3333						
4.6667						
4.6000						
4.6667						
4.7333						
		.7237	.7988			
		Correlation Matrix				
		1	1255			
		1.0000				
		1.1872				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	
Q1	1.0000					.8165
	.9472					.9103
	.5846					.9759
	.6908					1.0328
	.7204				1.0000	15.0
	.6916				.9581	15.0
	.4432				.4667	15.0
	.5421				.4494	15.0
	.6742				.7603	15.0
	.7008				.7495	15.0
					Q10	15.0
Q6	1.0000					15.0
Q7	.5573	1.0000				15.0
Q8	.5249	.9611	1.0000			15.0
Q9	.7460	.3884	.4020	1.0000		
Q10	.7490	.4800	.4863	.9685	1.0000	

To establish convergent validity according to Trochim (2004) we need to show that measures, which should be related, are in reality related. As explained in section 3.2.3 a group of questions represents a way of measuring one of the variables we want to test (see table 3.2). For instance, the first and second questions support to reflect the construct of Permission to Email. As seen from the table 3.3 the correlation for these two items is very high (.9472) and this is the evidence that these two items converge on the same construct. Similarly, from the correlation matrix above (see table 3.3) we can observe that the correlations for items that purport to reflect the same construct are very high, which provides evidence for convergent validity (see table 3.4).

Table 3.4: CONVERGENT VALIDITY

Variables	Questions	Correlations
Permission to E-mail	1-2	.9472
Trust & Privacy	3-4	.9520
Consistency	5-6	.9581
Enquiries & Complaints	7-8	.9611
Viral Marketing	9-10	.9685

Furthermore, to establish divergent validity according to Trochim (2004) we need to show that measures, which should not be related, are in reality not related. For instance, question 2 and 3 should not be related, as they do not reflect the same construct. As seen from table 3.3 the correlation of these two items is high (.5985) but not as high as convergent correlations. As explained above, “there are no rules for how high or low the correlations need to be to provide evidence for either type of validity” (128). However, the convergent correlations should always be higher than the discriminate ones (129). The correlation matrix (see table 3.3) provides evidence for both convergent and divergent validity because the convergent correlations are always higher than the discriminate ones.

As argued above, since there is evidence for convergent and divergent validity there is also evidence for construct validity (130).

Finally, the pilot study indicated that the structure, level of difficulty and understanding of the questionnaire are as we wish since respondents did not report any difficulties.

3.4.2 Estimating Sample Size

Conducting a pilot study is an opportunity for estimating the sample size for our main study. The output generated by the Cronbach statistic includes the standard deviation of the sample size $n=15$ which is 7.8692. We can use this standard deviation and incorporate it into the below formula in order to estimate the sample size.

Where n = the minimum sample

z = the degree of confidence required

Value of Z	Area in the interval
1.65	0.90
1.96	0.95
2.58	0.99

SD the standard deviation of the population

E =the plus or minus error factor allowed

$$n = \frac{(z * SD)^2}{(E)^2}$$

If we accept an error of plus or minus 10 with a 90% confidence interval, the sample required becomes:

$$= \frac{(1.65 * 7.8964)^2}{(15 \times 0.10)^2} = 75$$

Thus, the main research will be conducted to 75 consumers of Pakistan.

3.5 Tests

In order to decide which statistical tests are appropriate for the collected data, whether parametric or non-parametric techniques are suitable for this project, we need to consider the sample method and the scale of measurement used in the project.

As mentioned in section 3.3, the sampling method used is the probability sampling method and particularly the simple random sampling. Also the scales of measurement used are the nominal and ordinal. According to Pallant (2002) when we have data that is measured on nominal and ordinal scales and when the method used is the random sampling, non-parametric techniques are more appropriate. Moreover we want to value the relationship among variables that is why we need to use techniques that explore relationships among variables Based on all of the above arguments we conclude that the statistical test that is going to be used for this research is the Chi-square Test for Independence.

The Chi-Square test will examine the relationship between our dependent and independent variable. It will examine the relationship between email and marketing communication tools. More specifically the main value that we are interested in from the output is the significance value of the Pearson Shi-Square. To be significant the Sig. value needs to be equal or less than .05, otherwise is not significant (131). This means that if we obtain a significance value equal or less than

.05 then we will accept the alternative hypothesis, which states that there is a relationship between email marketing and marketing communication tools. Otherwise we will accept the null hypothesis,

which states that there is no relationship between email marketing and marketing communication tools.

3.6 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, by applying the theory to the topic, we formulated a set of hypothesis containing five variables. For gathering the data, questionnaires were chosen as the most appropriate method and the reliability and validity of the questions were assessed through the pilot study. The pilot study also help us to estimate the sample size of the research which is 75 consumers and having in mind the sample method and the scale of measurement used in the project we choose the statistical test that will be used to analyze the collected data. The results from this methodology are revealed and discussed in chapter 4, Analysis of Findings.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Findings

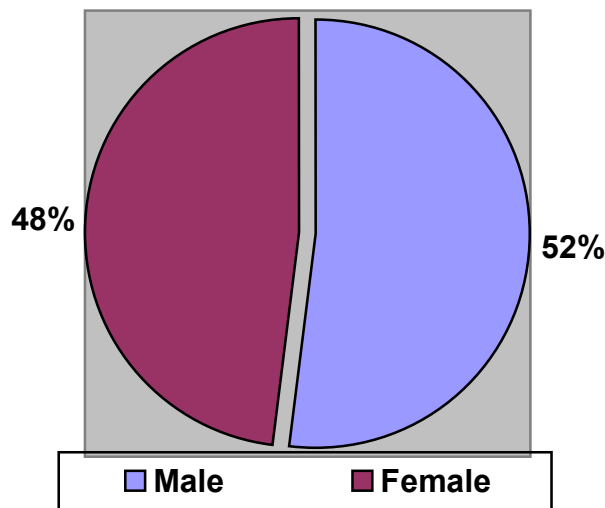
Having established what is to be investigated, the next step is the analysis of findings. The purpose of this chapter is to present to readers a general presentation of the data that has been collected through the sampling procedure. The sample size of this research as mentioned in the previous chapter is 75 consumers.

Furthermore, in order to analyse the collected data we divided the chapter into two parts. The first part analyses the respondent's characteristics while the second part focuses on the hypothesis testing that will reveal the relationship between email and marketing communication tools as seen by our sample. Apart from the Chi-square Test, charts, descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations were used to get a better view of the consumer's responses.

4.1 Analysis of Demographics

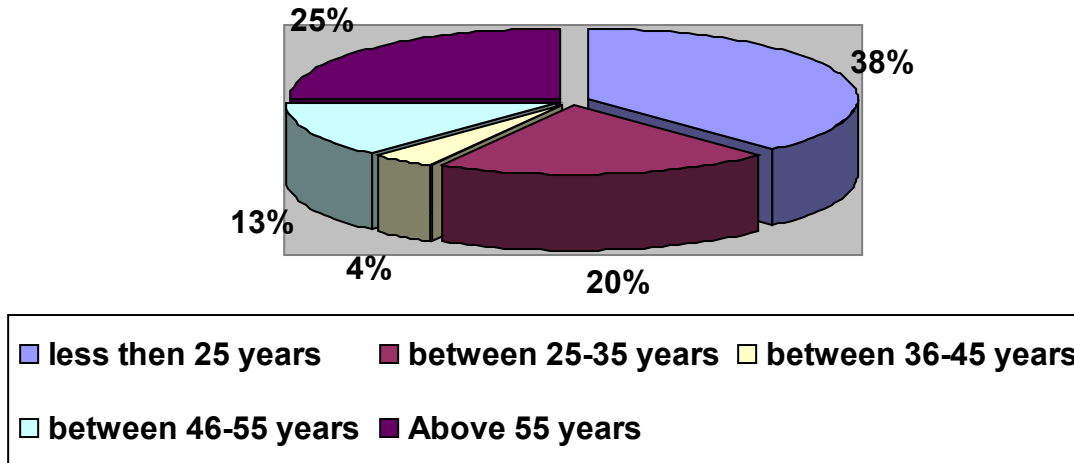
Firstly, more than half of the respondents (52% were female and the remaining (48%) were males (see Appendix B, Table B1). This is illustrated by the following figure:

FIGURE 4.1: GENDER



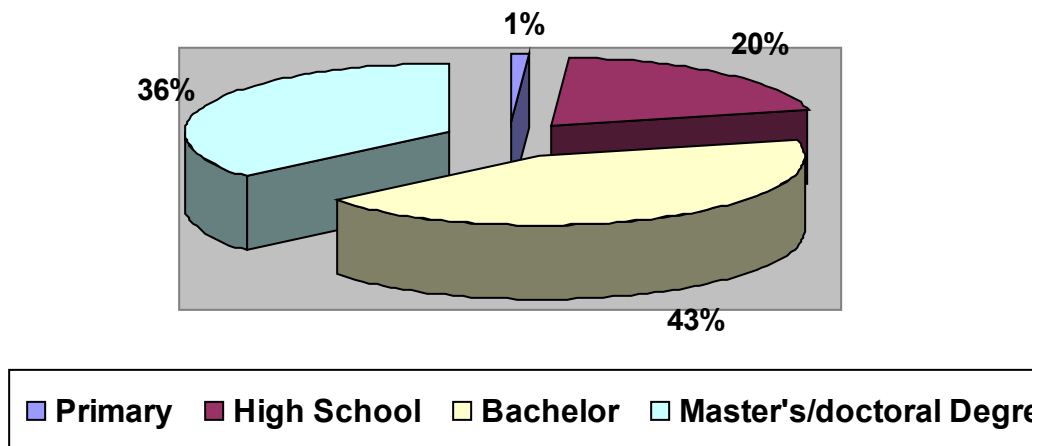
As illustrated by the following figure, the respondents ages were ranged under 25 and over 55, with the majority being in the 36-45 age group and the minority being within the over 55 age group.

FIGURE 4.2: AGE



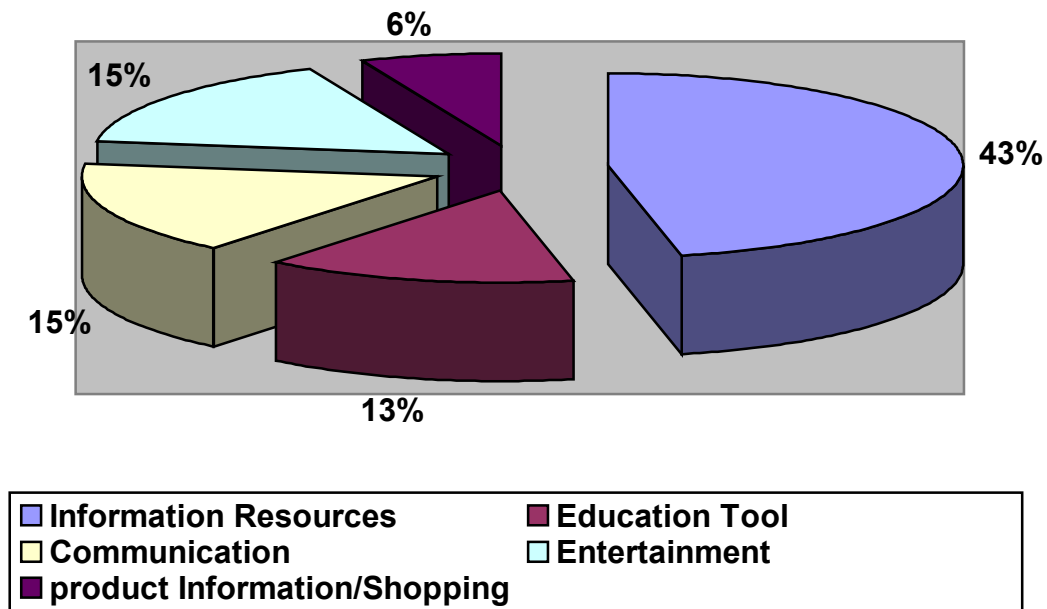
The educational background of the respondents in this survey is surprisingly high as the figure below illustrates. The majority of the respondents 43% hold Bachelor degrees while 36% of them have pursued graduate studies (see Appendix B. Table B2).

Figure 4.3: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND



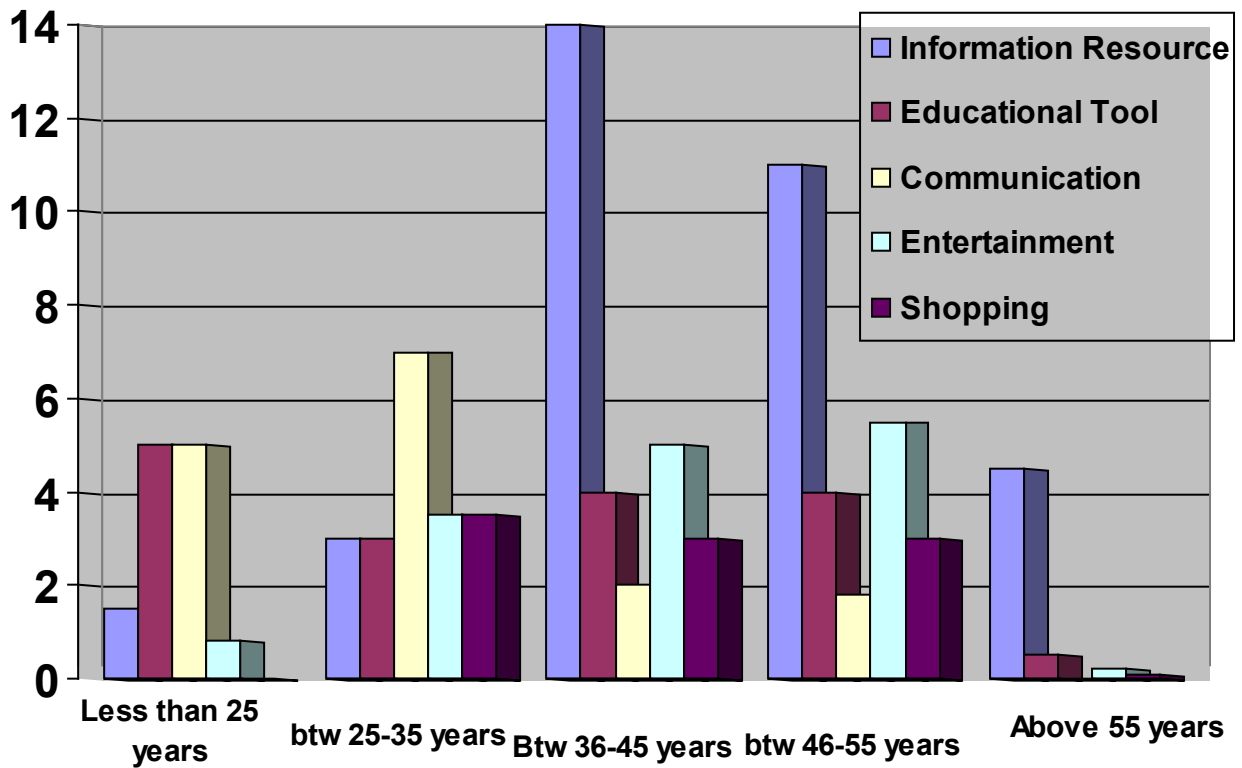
When questioned on their reason for using Internet, the majority of the respondents (43%) answered that they use it as an information Resource tool. According to the respondent's answers. Communication and Entertainment are in the second position with 15% and the minority (16%) uses the Internet for Gathering Product Information. (See Appendix B Table B4). This is illustrated by the following figure:

FIGURE .4.4: REASONS FOR USING THE INTERNET



As seen from the figure below, the majority of the respondents who use the Internet as an Information Resource tool are above 36 years old. Based on the collected data respondents between the ages 25-35 mostly use Internet for Communication (mostly email). The same results occurred for Entertainment (see Appendix B. Table B5). These results are reasonable and can be partly explained if we consider the older people are more likely to use the Internet as Information Resource rather for Entertainment and Communication.

FIGURE 4.5: AGE-REASONS FOR USING THE INTERNET

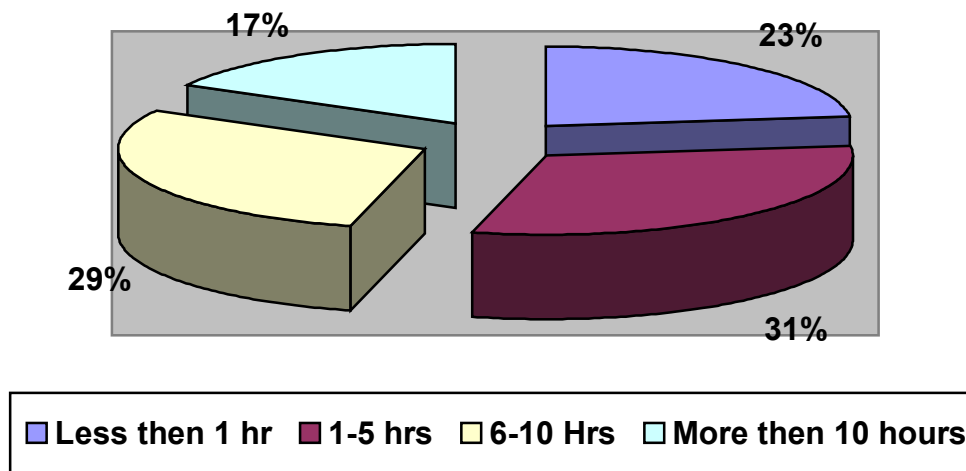


Respondents were also asked how long they had been using the Internet for. Only 1% answered that they had been using the Internet for less than 6 months, while the majority (30%) answered between 1-3 years. We should also note that 50% of the respondents had been using the Internet for over 4 years (see Appendix B, Table B6). Moreover, some of the respondents who answered that they had been using the Internet for less than 6 months did not believe that unsolicited emails were a waste of time and they might even respond to them. The opinions of the people who are using Internet for 6-12 months are split between slightly disagree and strongly agree. In contrast, the majority of respondents who are using the Internet for over 1 year agree and strongly agree that junk email is a waste of time and that they were more likely to respond to emails for which they had given their consent (see Appendix B, Table B7). This is partly explained if we consider that people who are using the Internet for a longer time are more aware of spam emails

and they are not willing to spend their time on them, while as new users of the Internet are presumably more excited and they want to learn new things, receiving non permission based emails is not useless. Moreover, as new users have not yet experienced the negative effects of unsolicited emails, they are more willing to either embrace them or adopt the views of older users.

Finally respondents were asked how many hours on average they spent per week on the Internet and the majority of them answered between 1-10 hours (see Figure 4.7). 23% and 17% of the respondents were spending less then 1 hour and more then 10 hours weekly on the Internet respectively (see Appendix B Table B8).

FIGURE 4.6: AVERAGE TIME ON THE INTERNET



From the 13 people who were spending more then 10 hours per week 9 were women. Therefore, we could agree that women are spending on average more time on the Internet. This fact can also be supported by our social setup were women are not encourage to go out a lot for entertainment purposes. So getting entertainment while sitting at home though Internet is an unproblematic approach.

TABLE 4.1 CHI-SQUARE TEST MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Chi-Square Tests			
	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.060	2	0.018
Likelihood Ratio	9.050	2	0.011
Linear-by-Linear Association			
N of Valid Cases	7.479	1	.006
	75		

a. 0 cells(0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.52

Do you Frequently use email? * Mkt Communication Tool Cross-tabulation

			Mkt Communication Tools			Total
			Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Do you Frequently use email?	Yes	Count	27	16	14	57
		Expected Count	22	17.5	17.5	57.0
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	47.4%	28.1%	24.6%	100%
		% within Mkt Communication Tools	93.1%	69.6%	60.9%	76%
		% of Total	36%	21.3%	18.7%	76%
	No	Count	2	7	9	18
		Expected Count	7	5.5	5.5	18
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	11.1%	38.9%	50%	100%
		% within Mkt Communication Tools	6.9%	30.4%	39.1%	24%
		% of Total	2.7%	9.3%	12%	24%
Total		Count	29	23	23	75
		Expected Count	29	23	23	75
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	38.7%	30.7%	30.7%	100%
		% within Mkt Communication Tools	100%	100%	100%	100%
		% of Total	38.7%	30.7%	30.7%	100%

As mentioned in chapter 3 the sub-variables of the hypothesis measures the affects e-commerce on consumer behavior. It has been accepted that there is a relationship

between email and marketing communication tools, so the following step of testing the hypothesis is to examine if permission to email, trust & privacy, consistency, enquiries & complaints and viral marketing can affect email and its operations as a marketing tool.

More specifically, as described in chapter 3 the variables are classified into 10 questions and for instance the variable “Permission to Email” is represented by question 1 and 2 of section B. by calculating the average of these two questions the values for the sub-variable “Permission to Email” will be provided. The same procedure will be also followed for the rest sub-variables.

4.2.1 Testing of Sub-Variable “Permission to Email”

Here, we want to investigate whether permission to email affects email to operate as an effective marketing communication tool. By observing Table 4.2 it can be seen that Sig. Value is 0.004. which is much smaller the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, it is accepted that permission affects email and its operations as a marketing communication tool. This result also indicates that companies which use permission based email are using the email as marketing communication tool rather than communication tool only.

TABLE 4.2: CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR PERMISSION TO EMAIL

	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.074	2	.004
Likelihood Ratio	11.488	2	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association			
N of Valid Cases	10.815	1	.001
	75		

a. 0 cells(0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.04

Do you frequently use email? * Permission to Email cross-tabulation

			Permission to email			Total
			Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Do you Frequently use email?	Yes	Count	11	19	27	57
		Expected Count	16	19.0	22.0	57.0
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	19.3%	33.3%	47.4%	100%
		% within Permission to email	52.4%	76.0%	93.1%	76%
		% of Total	14.7%	25.3%	36.0%	76%
	No	Count	10	6	2	18
		Expected Count	5.0	6.0	7.0	18
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%	100%
		% within Permission to email	47.6%	24.0%	6.9%	24%
		% of Total	13.3%	8.0%	27%	24%
Total		Count	21	25	29	75
		Expected Count	21.0	25	29.0	75
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	28.0%	33.3%	38.7%	100%
		% within Permission to email	100%	100%	100%	100%
		% of Total	28.0%	30.3%	30.7%	100%

4.2.2 testing of Sub-Variable “Trust & Privacy”

This test examines weather trust and privacy are issues that can affect email to operate as a marketing communication tool. After the performance of the chi-square test we obtain a Sig. Value equal to 0.22 (see table 4.3), which is smaller than .05 so we accept that result trust, and privacy affects e-mail’s operations. For that reasons companies that wishes to use email a marketing communication tool need to be aware of the recipients concerns on trust and privacy and create clear privacy handling.

TABLE 4.3 CHI-SQUARE TESTS

	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	7626	2	.022
Likelihood Ratio	7538	2	.023
Linear-by-Linear Association			
N of Valid Cases	7.179	1	.007
	75		

a. 0 cells(0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.52

Do you frequently use email? * Trust & Privacy cross-tabulation

			Trust & Privacy			Total
			Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Do you Frequently use email?	Yes	Count	13	19	25	57
		Expected Count	17.5	18.2	21.3	57.0
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	22.8%	33.3%	43.9%	100%
		% within Trust & Privacy	56.5%	79.2%	89.3%	76%
		% of Total	17.3%	25.3%	33.3%	76%
	No	Count	10	5	3	18
		Expected Count	5.5	5.8	6.7	18
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	55.6%	27.8%	16.7%	100%
		% within Trust & Privacy	43.5%	20.8%	10.7%	24%
		% of Total	13.3%	6.7%	4.0%	24%
Total		Count	23	24	28	75
		Expected Count	23.0	24	28	75
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	30.7.%	32.0%	37.3%	100%
		% within Trust & Privacy	100%	100%	100%	100%
		% of Total	30.7%	32.0%	37.3%	100%

4.2.3 Testing of Sub-variable “Consistency”

With the intention of examining whether consistency in an email can affect e-mail’s operations as a marketing communication tool, the Chi-square test was performed again. With a Sig. Value 0.008 (see table 4.4) we can conclude that there is a relationship

between consistency and email as a marketing communication tool. Please note that when we have a 2 by 2 table then we use the value in the second row (Continuity) (Pallant 2002)

TABLE 4.4: CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR CONSISTENCY

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (1-Sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.564	1	.003		
Continuity Correction	7052	-	.008		
Likelihood Ratio	9.261	-	.002		
Fisher's Exact Test				.006	.003
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.450	!	.004		
N of Valid Cases	75				

- a. Computed only for 2 X 2 table
- b. 0 cells (0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.40

Do you frequently use email? * Consistency cross-tabulation

			Consistency		Total
			Agree	Strongly Agree	
Do you Frequently use email?	Yes	Count	32	25	57
		Expected Count	26.6	30.4	57.0
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	51.6%	43.9%	100%
	No	Count	3	15	18
		Expected Count	8.4	9.6	18
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	16.7%	83.3%	100%
		% within Consistency	91.4%	62.5%	76%
		% of Total	42.7%	33.3%	76%
Total			35	40	75
			Expected Count	40.0	75
			% within Do you Frequently use email?	53.3%	100%
			% within Consistency	100%	100%
			% of Total	53.3%	100%

4.2.4 Testing of Sub-Variable “Enquires & Complaints”

This Chi-square aims to investigate whether there is a relationship between enquiries & complaints and email as a marketing communication tool. The Sig. Value obtained from this test is 0.001 (see table 4.5), which is much smaller than alpha value of 0.05; therefore we accept that there is a relationship between these two variables. This means that companies can use email as a tool for consumer’s enquire and complaints.

TABLE 4.5 CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

CHI-SQUARE TESTS			
	VALUE	DF	ASYMP. SIG. (2-SIDED)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.515	2	.001
Likelihood Ratio	15.328	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association			
N of Valid Cases	7.289	1	.007
	75		

a. 0 cells(0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.76

Do you frequently use email? * Enquiries & Complaints Cross-tabulation

			Enquiries & Complaints			Total
			Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Do you Frequently use email?	Yes	Count	14	23	20	57
		Expected Count	20.5	18.2	18.2	57.0
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	24.6%	40.4%	35.1%	100%
		% within Enquiries & Complaints	51.9%	95.8%	83.3%	76%
		% of Total	18.7%	30.7%	26.7%	76%
	No	Count	13	1	4	18
		Expected Count	6.5	5.8	5.8	18
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	72.2%	5.6%	22.2%	100%
		% within Enquiries & Complaints	48.1%	4.2%	16.7%	24%
		% of Total	17.3%	1.3%	53%	24%
Total		Count	27	24	24	75
		Expected Count	27.0	24	24	75
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	36.0%	32.0%	32.0%	100%
		% within Enquiries & Complaints	100%	100%	100%	100%
		% of Total	36%	32.0%	32.0%	100%

4.2.5 testing of Sub-Variable “Viral marketing”

Finally the last variable to be tested is viral marketing. Here, we want to examine whether there is a relationship between viral marketing and email as a marketing communication tool. The outcome from the Chi-Square test gives a Sig. Value equal to 0.037(see table 4.6), which is smaller than 0.05, thus we accept that there is a relationship. In other words this means that email can be used as a tool for viral marketing and for spreading fast the positive word of mouth.

TABLE 4.6: CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR VIRAL MARKETING

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (2-Sided)	Exact Sig. (1-Sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.577	1	.018		
Continuity Correction	4.361	1	.037		
Likelihood Ratio	5.5568	1	.018		
Fisher's Exact Test				.028	.019
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.502	1	.019		
N of Valid Cases	75				

- a. Computed only for 2 X 2 table
- b. 0 cells (0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.68

c. Do you Frequently use email? * Viral Marketing Cross-tabulation

			Viral Marketing		Total
			Agree	Strongly Agree	
Do you Frequently use email?	Yes	Count	20	37	57
		Expected Count	24.3	32.7	57.0
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	35.1%	64.9%	100%
	No	% within Viral Mkt	62.5%	86.0%	76%
		% of Total	26.7%	49.3%	76%
		Count	12	6	18
Total	Yes	Expected Count	7.7	10.3	18
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	66.7%	33.3%	100%
		% within Viral Mkt	37.5%	14.0%	24%
	No	% of Total	16.0%	8.0%	24%
		Count	32	43	75
		Expected Count	32.0	43.0	75
		% within Do you Frequently use email?	42.7%	57.3%	100%
		% within Viral Mkt	100%	100%	100%
		% of Total	42.7%	57.3%	100%

4.3 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, the analysis of the data gathered from the questionnaires was presented. This chapter firstly analyses the demographics of the 75 respondents through pie charts, bar charts and cross-tabulations.

The next section was devoted to the testing of the proposed hypothesis. The results from the tests were found as expressed and discussed in the literature review. There is a relationship between email and marketing communication tools and more specifically, permission to email, trust and privacy, consistency, enquiries and complaints, and viral marketing can affect email and its operations as a marketing communication tool.

Chapter 5 : Conclusion

The final stage of this study is to discuss the results from the research, highlight a number of limitations and suggest areas that need further research.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The objective of this research was **to** investigate how email marketing should be practiced successfully from a company to a consumer. Companies need **to first** understand if and how the new reality of email as a marketing communication tool can attract and retain consumer as to plan their strategies accordingly. Therefore, this research tries to examine how certain factors affect email to operate effectively as a marketing communication tool.

Even though this section and the section concerning managerial implications -section 5.2-constantly reveal the same ideas and strategies discussed in literature review, the following findings can not be generalized to the whole population of the Pakistan. As explained in one of the following sections -5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research-, the sampling procedure fell short of a rigorous probability-based sample procedure and the sample size was so small that it can successfully be argued that it is not representative of Pakistan population. As a result, findings may be inaccurate, inefficient, and thus cannot be generalized. Despite difficulties, the author will try to discuss the findings of the tests based on the collected data without generalizing the findings beyond the sample that has been drawn.

The study, by testing the set of hypothesis formulated in section 3.1., came to the conclusion that that there is a relationship between email and marketing communication tools. In other words, that means that email can be used from companies as a marketing communication tool, as a tool to attract and retain customers and that email marketing

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can be used for successfully fulfilling customer acquisition and retention marketing objectives. The five sub-variables of the study, derived from the literature review, were also tested and the study came to the conclusion that email is being affected by each of the sub-variables.

Permission to email was the first sub-variable we tested and the results revealed that permission affects email and its operations as a marketing communication tool. Permission-based marketing, as in theory, is considered to be an important rule for email marketing. As reveal in literature review, consumers consider junk email as a “waist of time” that is why it is a vital mistake approaching the consumer with an unsolicited email.

Moreover, the results for the test of the sub-variable consistency revealed a relationship between email and consistency. In other words that means that companies that communicate through email should be consistent and always reflect a company’s standards and image, which differ from one to another. Similarly to the theory, correspondents stated the importance of consistency, of the landing of the email, of providing added value from targeting and of the image of the company with the email message.

When the sub-variable trust & privacy was tested, the results revealed that the majority of respondents hesitate in providing their personal information over the Internet. Consumers consider trust and privacy the most important issues when interacting with companies online. This result justifies the literature review that highlighted that a major concern of consumers is the security and privacy of their information and that this barrier can only overcome with high levels of trust between consumer and company.

The results for the test of the sub-variable enquiries and complaints accept that there is relationship between the two variables, email and enquires and complaints. As discussed in the literature review, email is an easy and effective tool that can be used in order to reply to consumers’ enquiries and complaints, but manual response to enquiries, is a practice that must be achieved for effective email marketing.

Finally, the last sub-variable viral marketing tested whether email can be used as tool for viral marketing. Even though some respondents may not open a forwarded message because a destructive virus may be added to it, the majority have agreed that they are willing to forward to friends interesting emails. This result justifies the literature review that highlighted that the positive word of mouth online should be the aim of all marketing communication tools including email.

5.2 Managerial Implications

The findings of this research have brought to view several issues that managers wishing to use email as a marketing communication tool, should take into consideration. The managerial implications that arise from this study are associated with strategies that can be employed in order to effectively and successfully use email as a marketing communication tool. Companies should think from the perspectives of consumers and develop strategies to retain and attract them, as well as add real value to their needs.

The results from this study highlight the fact that permission based email seems to be more effective than spam basically because consumers consider junk email as a “waist of time”. Based on the results, managers should allow the recipient to give his/her consent in order to receive messages and have the choice to opt-out when he /she wants to. The results also suggest that consistency can also play an important role and can help recipients from avoiding considering messages as spam. Therefore, as discussed in the literature review, consistency must also be achieved in the ‘landing’ of an email and with this strategy firms may also increase the brand familiarity and brand value of their company.

Companies should be aware of consumers’ fears regarding the privacy of their personal information and for that reason they should employed the policy of clear privacy handling. Sensitive and clear privacy issue handling can create trust that enables the two-way communication model online for the customer acquisition or retention

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objectives. As revealed in the literature review, being a trustworthy company can result in long-term success and a large number of loyal customers.

Based on the results email is an easy and effective tool that can be used by companies in order to reply to consumers' enquiries and complaints. What companies need to be aware when using email for enquiries and complaints is that automated response often makes mistakes by sending irrelevant replies and that is why manual response to enquiries, is a practice that must be achieved for effective email marketing. With this strategy, consumers will feel that they are getting value from it and that is worth using this communication tool.

Finally, the results revealed that email could be used as tool for viral marketing. Therefore managers need to create something really good, which will be carefully planned, with the aim to make people get behind it. In this way the message will be forwarded to thousands of people.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

It is important to recognize the limitations and the weaknesses of this study since they can prejudice the findings and as a consequence make it rather difficult to generalize them to the whole of the Pakistan population. The author tried to think critically about the results and to report them after careful reflection.

The limited time and money available for the research is the first limitation for this project. Due to these constraints, the sample size was very small which made it impossible for the sample size to be considered as representative of the whole of the Pakistan population. As explained in chapter 3 Research Methodology, by taking a sample of elements from the larger **group**, the researcher as Ghauri and Gronhaug (2002) suggested, will try to infer something about the larger group. However, the sample size was **so** small against the millions of people who live in the Pakistan. In addition the survey was conducted in Islamabad and not in any other region, therefore

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the results cannot be generalized beyond the small sample that has been drawn. They cannot be generalized, as they may be considered inefficient.

For instance, the fact that the educational background of the respondents is high may skew the results of the research. Therefore, future research may want to target population with different educational backgrounds in order to get a meaningful sample from both low and high-educated people. Most importantly, future research could test using much larger samples of consumers that will be more representative of Pakistani population in order to get more reliable results. Larger samples should provide the appropriate data to increase generalisability of the findings. Such efforts will result in a better understanding of email as a marketing communication tool to the benefit of both consumer and management practice.

Moreover, the sampling procedure, explained and described in section 3.3.2, failed to meet the theoretical requirements of simple random sampling, which also can bias the findings and make it rather difficult to generalize them . In an effort to ensure the random selection of the sample, the researcher followed a certain procedure, described in section 3.3.2. Unfortunately, the sampling procedure fell short of a rigorous probability-based sampling procedure. A key characteristic of simple random sampling is that all units in the population have the same chance of being included (Ghauri, Gronhaug, 2002). Following the certain procedure has violated this key characteristic. Therefore, one important task that should be included in the future research would be to draw a probability-based sample. The researcher should choose in the future a sample procedure that would not violate any of the characteristics of the simple random sampling.

Furthermore, the author's limited survey-research experience can raise issues whether the questionnaire is measuring accurately the variables defined for this study. The chosen time and place for giving the questionnaires and gathering the data for this research may also be a limitation. The questionnaires were distributed in the street where people might answer them in a hurry which might have affected their answers and the overall results of this research.

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APPENDIX B

Table B1: Gender

GENDER

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	36	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Female	39	52.0	52.0	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Table B2: AGE

AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 25	10	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Between 25-35	19	25.3	25.3	38.7
	Between 36-45	28	37.3	37.3	76.0
	Between 46-55	15	20.0	20.0	96.0
	Above 55	3	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Table B3: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Educational Background

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	High School	15	20.0	20.0	21.3
	Bachelor	32	42.7	42.7	64.0
	Master's Degree/Doctoral Degree	27	36.0	36.0	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Table B4: REASONS FOR SING THE INTERNET

What do you primarily use the Web for?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Information Resources	31	41.3	41.3	41.3
Education Tool	12	16.0	16.0	57.3
Communication	14	18.7	18.7	76.0
Entertainment	31	16.0	16.0	92.0
Shopping/Gathering Product Information	6	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Table B5 AGE-REASONS FOR USING THE INTERNET

Age* What do you primarily use the Web for? Cross tabulation

		What do you primarily use the Web for?					Total	
		Information Resources	Education Tool	Communication	Entertainment	Shopping/Gathering Product Information		
Age	Less than 25	Count	0	1	5	4	0	10
	Expected Count	4.1	1.6	1.9	1.6	.8	10.0	
	Between 25-35	Count	3	3	7	3	3	19
	Expected Count	7.9	3.0	3.5	3.0	1.5	19.0	
	Between 36-45	Count	14	4	2	5	3	28
	Expected Count	11.6	4.5	5.2	4.5	2.2	28.0	
	Between 46-55	Count	11	4	0	0	0	15
	Expected Count	6.2	2.4	2.8	2.4	1.2	15.0	
	Above 55	Count	3	0	0	0	0	3
	Expected Count	1.2	.5	.6	.5	.2	3.0	
Total	Count	31	12	14	12	6	75	
	Expected Count	31.0	12.0	14.0	12.0	6.0	75.0	

Table B6: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN USING THE INTERNET?

How long have you been using the Internet (including using email)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than 6 months	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
6-12 months	13	17.3	17.3	18.7
1-3 years	23	30.7	30.7	49.3
4-6 years	19	25.3	25.3	74.7
7 years or more	19	25.3	25.3	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Table B7: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN USING THE INTERNET-PERMISSION

How long have you been using Internet (including using email)* Permission to email
Cross tabulation

			Permission to email			Total
			Slightly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
How long have you been using the Internet (including using email)	Less than 6 months	Count	0	0	1	1
		Expected Count	.3	.3	4	1.0
	6-12 months	Count	5	3	5	13
		Expected Count	3.6	4.3	5.0	13.0
	1-3 years	Count	7	6	10	23
		Expected Count	6.4	7.7	8.9	23.0
	4-6 years	Count	5	7	7	19
		Expected Count	5.3	6.3	7.3	19.0
	7 years or more	Count	4	9	6	19
		Expected Count	5.3	6.3	7.3	19.0
Total	Count	21	25	29	75	
	Expected Count	21.0	25.0	29.0	75.0	

Table B8: AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON THE INTERNET

What is the average time you spend per week on the Internet?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than 1 hour	17	22.7	22.7	22.7
1-5 hours	23	30.7	30.7	53.3
6-10 hours	22	29.3	29.3	82.7
More than 10 hours	13	17.3	17.3	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Table B9: GENDER-AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON THE INTERNET

Gender* what is the average time you spend per week on the Internet? Cross tabulation.

			What is the average time you spend per week on the Internet?				Total
			Less than 1 hour	1-5 hours	6-10 hours	More than 10 hours	
Gender	Male	Count	11	10	11	4	36
		Expected Count	8.2	11.0	10.6	6.2	36.0
	Female	Count	6	13	11	9	39
		Expected Count	8.8	12.0	11.4	6.8	39.0
Total	Count		17	23	22	13	75
	Expected Count		17.0	23.0	22.0	13.0	75.0

Table B10: AGE-AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON THE INTERNET

Age* What is the average time you spend per week on the Internet? Cross tabulation

		What is the average time you spend per week on the Internet?				Total
		Less than 1 hour	1-5 hours	6-10 hours	More than 10 hours	
Less than 25	Count	1	0	3	6	10
	Expected Count	2.3	3.1	2.9	1.7	10.0
Between 25-35	Count	2	2	10	5	19
	Expected Count	4.3	5.8	5.6	3.3	19.0
Between 36-45	Count	4	16	6	2	28
	Expected Count	6.3	8.6	8.2	4.9	28.0
Between 46-55	Count	7	5	3	0	15
	Expected Count	3.4	4.6	4.4	2.6	15.0
Above 55	Count	3	0	0	0	3
	Expected Count	.7	.9	.9	.5	3.0
Count		17	23	22	13	75
Expected Count		17.0	23.0	22.0	13.0	75.0

APPENDIX A

Section A: Personal Information

Please TICK on the appropriate answer that applies to you

A. Sex:

- Male Female

B. Age:

- Less than 25 years
 Between 25-35 years
 Between 36- 45 years
 Between 46- 55 years
 Above 55 years

C. Please indicate the highest level of education completed.

- Primary
 High School
 Bachelor
 Master's Degree/ Doctoral Degree (PhD)

D. What do you primarily use the Web for? (Please choose on one the following).

- Information Resource
 Educational Tool
 Entertainment
 Communication (mostly email)
 Shopping/Gathering Product Information

E. Do you frequently use email?

- Yes
- No

F. How long have you been using the Internet (including using email)?

- Less than 6 months
- 6-12 months
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7 years or more

G. What is the average time you spend per week on the Internet?

- Less than 1 hour
- 1-5 hours
- 6-10 hours
- More than 10 hours

