



# **VIRAL MARKETING TECHNIQUES AND THEIR IMPACT ON PURCHASING DECISION MAKING, "AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE OPINIONS OF A SAMPLE OF STUDENTS IN THE COLLEGE OF ADMINISTRATION AND ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF TIKRIT"**

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<b>Received:</b> April 26 <sup>th</sup> 2023 <b>Accepted:</b> May 26 <sup>th</sup> 2023 <b>Published:</b> June 26 <sup>th</sup> 2023	This study aims to identify the extent of the impact of viral marketing techniques on making a purchase decision for students of the Faculty of Administration and Economics at the University of Tikrit, where viral marketing was considered an independent variable through its dimensions (social networking sites, e-mail service, viral advertising campaigns and free offers) and the extent of the impact of these dimensions on the dependent variable represented by the purchase decision. Information was collected by means of an electronic form that was distributed to a random sample consisting of (317) students of both sexes. The statistical program was used (Spss), For the purposes of analysis, the study reached a set of conclusions, including that the use of viral marketing techniques by business organizations will enable them to achieve differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage. In light of these results, the study recommended a set of recommendations, the most important of which are: Business organizations should pay increased attention to viral marketing techniques because of their effective role in enhancing the dimensions of a successful, purchase decision

**Keywords:** Viral Marketing, The Buying Decision.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Throughout history, organizations have used marketing to obtain a larger share in the market in one way or another traditionally, and due to the tremendous technological developments in the business environment and the intensification of competition in all fields, especially in the field of commercial work, marketers have begun to think about finding the best ways that enable them to exploit these developments through Develop different strategies to advertise their products by searching for low-cost and fast-spreading means, and among these means is the Internet, which is an effective tool for implementing sales activities between the organization and its customers. The Internet has become one of the most modern means in circulation at all private and public levels. As a result, viral marketing emerged as one of the most important contemporary strategies that are based on the concept of the spoken word in the implementation of marketing activities for business organizations that they must rely on in marketing their products. This type of marketing is important in times of crisis for organizations in order to maintain their continuity in providing their products.

Viral content can reach millions of people in a very short time, and it is very clear that it can become a very powerful tool for organizations that use it correctly in promoting certain viable operations such as viral marketing campaigns in relation to a particular product. It drives to a specific site because it reflects the strength the social relationship between the organization and its customers. This study was divided into four main axes, where the first axis included the research methodology, while the second axis included research in the theoretical aspect of the study variables, while the third axis included the practical side of the study, and the study concluded with the axis Fourth, which included a set of conclusions and proposals.

## **The first axis: research methodology;**

Through this axis, we will explain how the questions of the research problem were formulated, as well as an explanation of its importance and objectives, in addition to an explanation of the limits of the research, a sample, and data collection tools.



**First: the research problem;**

As a result of the increasing interest of business organizations in technological technologies, the intensification of competition between organizations, as well as the continuous changes in the needs and desires of customers, who have become more slow in making purchasing decisions, the organizations are looking for everything new in the business world and applying it in order to achieve their goals. As a result of all this appeared A modern concept in marketing called the term viral marketing, whose idea is based on , Sending promotional advertisements about the organizations' products to a group of individuals, and then these same individuals transfer and send the information to others so that the advertisements spread widely and quickly, and because the viral marketing strategy focuses on social relations, most organizations have resorted to using social networks due to the high demand of people on them Which helped these organizations to reach the largest possible number of customers and display their products at the lowest possible costs and in the fastest way in order to attract customers and work , To persuade them to make the purchase by establishing positive ideas among customers about these products. Based on the foregoing, the study question can be formulated as follows: What is the extent of the impact of viral marketing techniques on the purchasing decision

of the students of the College of Administration and Economics, University of Tikrit?

**Second: the importance of research:**

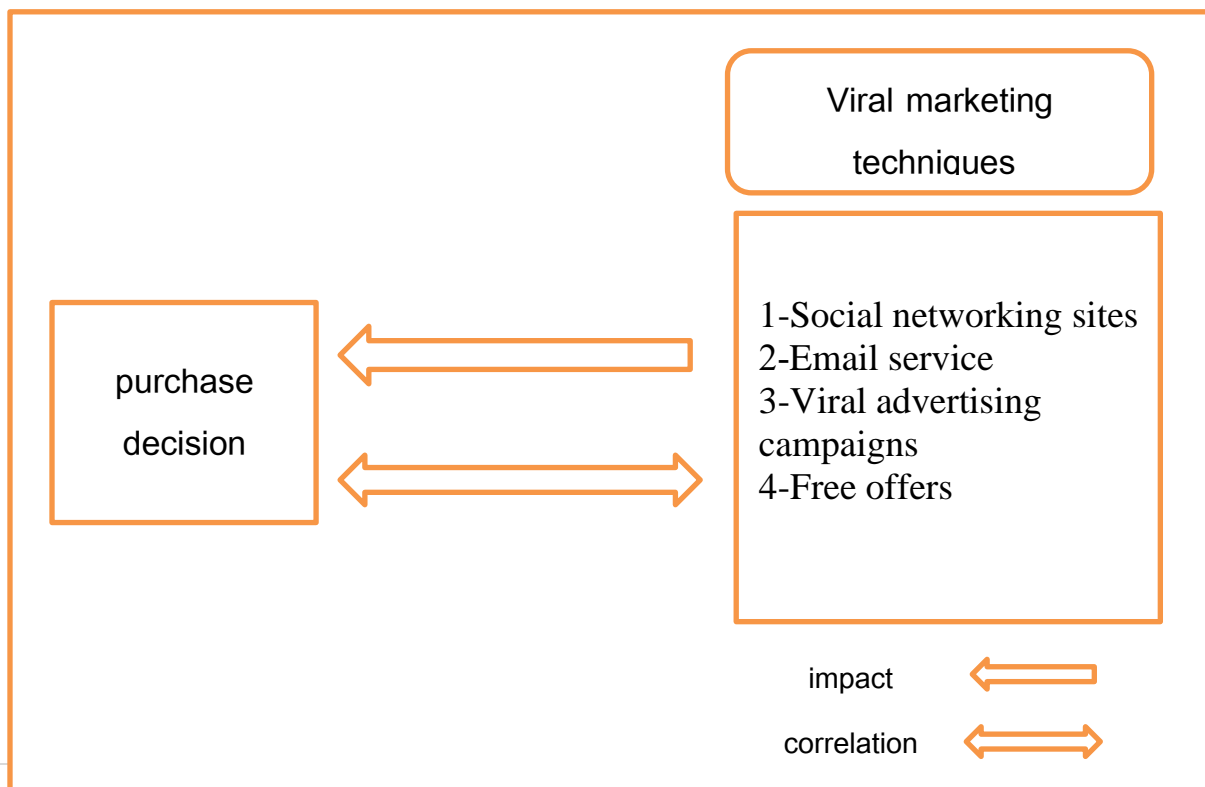
This research gains its importance through the boom achieved by viral marketing in the world of marketing today and the high profit rates compared to traditional marketing and its clarification of many terms and concepts related to research variables such as viral marketing and the purchase decision. The purchase decision of customers by obtaining a large amount of information related to their needs and desires.

**Third: Research Objectives:**

This research aims to provide a theoretical framework on the philosophy of viral marketing and to know what is the extent of the impact of viral marketing techniques on the purchase decision of the customers of the research sample, as well as to know the validity and accuracy of the information sent to those customers and the extent of reliance on that information in making the purchase decision.

**Fourth: The temporal limits of the research:** during the academic year (2022/2023).

**Fifth: Hypothetical Research Model:**





**Figure (1)**  
**Sixth: the sample and the study population:**

The study population is represented by all Internet users, while the study sample included an intentional sample of (317) students of both sexes from the Faculty of Administration and Economics, Tikrit University, who use the Internet in the field of regular business, research and study.

**Seventh: Study Hypotheses:**

For the purpose of achieving the objectives of the research and to answer its questions and test its plan, the research hypotheses were formulated as follows:

- 1-There is a significant correlation between viral marketing techniques and its dimensions (dimensions) and making the purchase decision.
- 2-There is an effect relationship of viral marketing tools with its exclusion (distances) in making the purchase decision.

**The second axis: the theoretical side.**

The first requirement: viral marketing (concept, importance and objectives)

**First: The Genesis of Viral Marketing:**

The origin of the term viral marketing takes us back in time to the early 1990s. This is the time when companies first started to get a glimpse of the huge potential that this concept would later bring (Kirby and Marsden, (2006) In essence, viral marketing is a marketing message designed for the purpose of spreading from person to person. This is done by encouraging or rewarding people who comply by sharing it with their peers , (De Bruyn & Lillien,2008). It has been used to explain the phenomenon when a person is more willing to do something after someone else does it. Viral marketing has become popular as a highly effective, low-cost marketing strategy for mass market targeting. By using viral marketing, the contents of a marketing campaign will be easier to remember and easier to accept as the marketing objective.( Ernawaty,2020,2), However, it was only after the success of the free email services Hotmail.com that the term gained popularity. Back then people needed to pay for emails and could only send them in a certain service area, so Hotmail gave them a chance to send their emails. for free and from anywhere in the world, and the campaign allows it only if the consumer puts a small message at the end of their message "Get your free Hotmail email This campaign became very popular with customers and brought Hotmail an incredible success, they spent(50000)

Dollars only and gained (12) million subscriptions in just eighteen months. The success achieved by the free Hotmail site, in addition to the growth of its participants, has encouraged marketers to adopt the concept of viral marketing to spread their products and penetrate markets at the local and global levels (Marsden, 2006).

The media critic Douglas Ruch Roff was one of the pioneers in writing about viral marketing. She published an article on the Internet entitled (Media Viral) in the year 1996, in which it was emphasized that the advertisement that reaches the user through the Internet has a rapid effect, which drives him To transfer the advertising message to other users in order to convince them to transfer the same message to friends, family and acquaintances to meet , Obtaining a specific reward or incentive, and that the transmission of that message is like the speed of transmission of the virus (Abdul Monsef, 2017, 33). The recent boom in the World Wide Web, which no one had dreamed of before other than the means of television advertising, had a major role in the spread of the "viral marketing" philosophy, as it is used by visitors to the network and the forum of personal blogs to talk about a specific commercial product. (Zahra, 2021),

**Second: the concept of viral marketing:**

The concept of viral marketing is one of the concepts of recent origin, and it is one of the latest techniques of electronic marketing, which made it among the interests of many writers, researchers, and workers in the marketing field. Therefore, many definitions appeared that tried to define the conceptual framework, specifically viral marketing, which is through social networking sites. Makhlof defined it as a strategy that encourages individuals to transmit and market a message virally to other people and create the possibility of growth at an increasing rate in displaying the message and influencing people. others. (Makhlof, 121:2020). This term has been used to denote a great idea entitled the rapid spread of information among the target audience, as it is similar to a virus that spreads quickly between humans without the ability to control it (Goyette, & etal, 2010:6). It was also known as one of the types of marketing that is based on communication networks represented by the Internet, in which a specific commodity is promoted by sending several messages and spreading them among thousands of social network users (Friday, 2021:19). While Arafa (Trivedi, 2017:84) Marketing method based on the use of the Internet and social networks and other means , Technologies for the purpose of encouraging people to engage in word of mouth generating huge growth potential in dissemination of electronic messages



Viral marketing campaigns are a way to create a low-cost campaign as an effective complement to expensive traditional campaigns. The expression viral marketing was created because it is similar to a real virus. If someone catches a cold and sneezes, bacteria travels through the air, making friends and family sick as well. The result of this will be that the network of friends will spread the virus and then the virus will spread. Viral marketing campaigns work the same way, If a person watches a funny or interesting video or hears something interesting then that person tells his/her network and then the network spreads it to other networks but no matter how cheap and easy word of mouth is, it is a hard phenomenon to control. It is also difficult to know whether or not it will be a successful campaign (Shoeb and Khalid, 2014:56).

**Third: Types of viral marketing:**

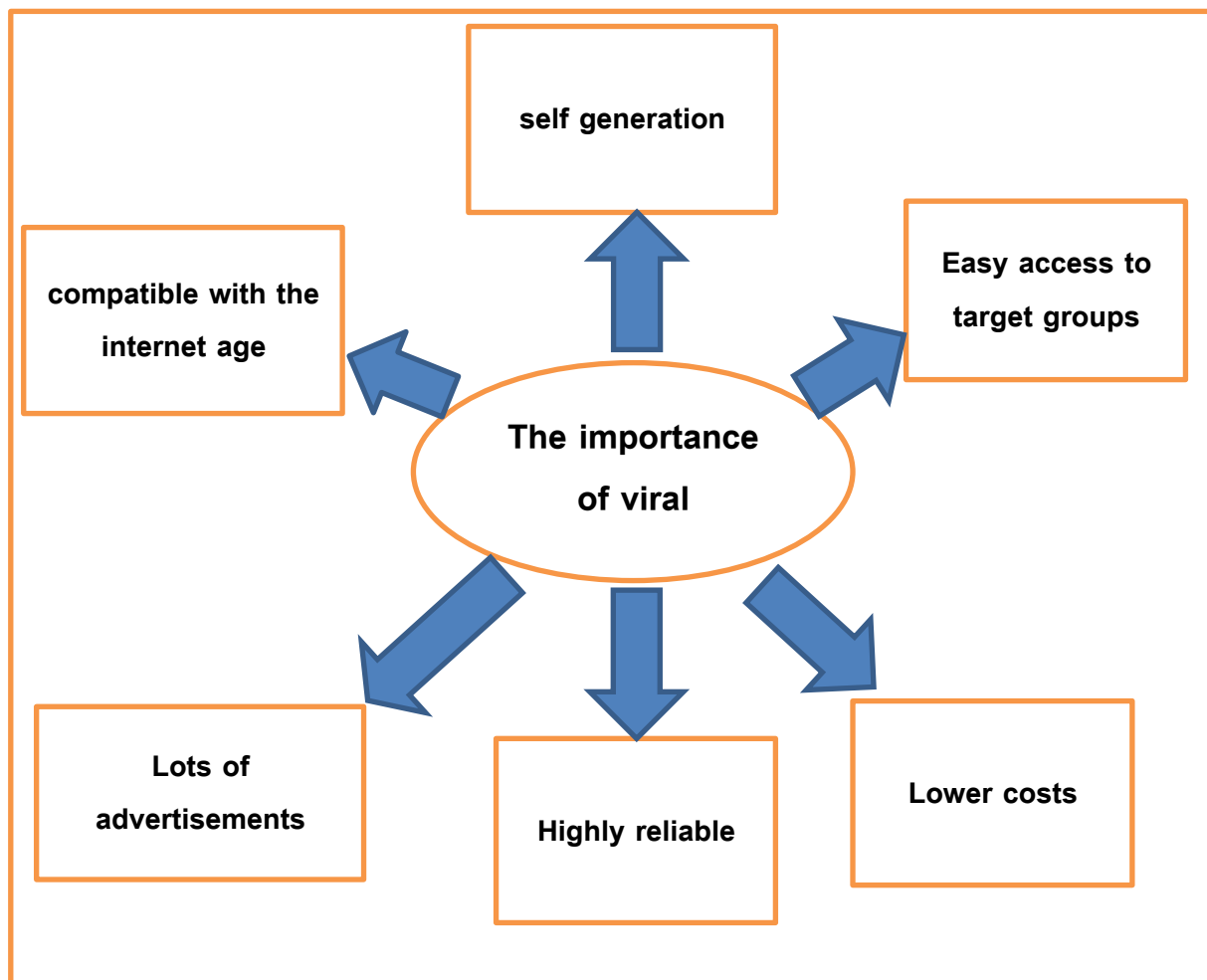
There are two main types of viral marketing: active viral marketing and passive viral marketing (Zahra, 2021, 19)

1. Active viral marketing: It is an unsupervised marketing campaign that spreads among people (mostly verbally) without the help of the marketer. The responsibility of seeding the electronic message lies with the customer for the purpose of delivering it to the largest possible segment of customers on the Internet. This type of Marketing is low cost and can greatly increase brand awareness, because it stems from consumer communication and this type of marketing works, Marketing is to actively encourage friends, acquaintances and individuals to use the company's products and directs them at the same time to the company's website where this service is free of charge. . The negative effects are not far away when using this type of marketing campaign as people can easily change their opinion about the product.

2-Passive viral marketing: This type is a strategically planned marketing campaign, which can be controlled by the marketer by tracking the results, and this viral tag can use social networks to implement and track promotion, for example companies can create websites or videos to advertise their products.

**Fourth: The importance of viral marketing:**

The main importance of viral marketing is embodied in the fact that it is commensurate with the era in which we live, which is the era of the Internet and technology, as it is one of the most important advertising and promotional means that are commensurate with this era. (Farhatia et al., 2021: 55).



**Figure 2: The importance of viral marketing**

Source: Farahatih, Al-Eid, Zalaqi, Wahiba and Boutoura, Fadila, (2021), The Impact of Viral Marketing on Developing Customer Loyalty to the Brand, Studying a Sample of Mobilis Brand Customers, North African Economics Journal, Algeria, Volume (17), Issue (25), p. 554 .

**Fifth: Viral Marketing Objectives:**

One of the most important goals of viral marketing is to reach the largest possible segment of potential customers as quickly as possible and at the lowest costs. This goal can only be achieved through the use of the spoken word and the exponential spread of the viral message without any cost to the marketer in such cases. There are two main goals of marketing. The virus is represented by economic and other non-economic goals, despite the fact that non-economic goals play the most important role at the beginning of the marketing campaign, and one of the most important of these goals

(Nasser, 2020: 132).

1. Get customers .
2. Gain customer satisfaction
3. Customer loyalty .
4. Fame and reputation .

Other goals of viral marketing (Siham, 21:2020) are:

- 1- Achieving an increase in the revenues of the company's products, as it does not bear costs for distributing these products because the data and information related to these products reach customers for free.
- 2- Increasing the company's economic gains through the wide spread of its own trademark.
3. Take advantage of social networking sites and the Internet in order to reach the target segment accurately.

**Sixth: Advantages and disadvantages of viral marketing:**



Before starting to present the advantages and disadvantages, every marketer must first examine all potential risks and issues before implementing viral marketing. The most important advantages and disadvantages of this type of marketing are as follows. (Maulen, 2015:14)

### **1-Advantages**

A: Viral marketing requires less funding to reach more consumers, which can reduce costs and increase profits.

B: It is a good opportunity for companies that have a normal product without any special features, that viral marketing takes less time while providing brand awareness.

### **Defects:**

Despite the advantages that characterize the viral marketing philosophy, this does not preclude the existence of some disadvantages and disadvantages, among the most important of which are.

a. The main disadvantage of viral marketing is the lack of control. Many messages may end up outside the target audience. When a campaign is presented, the marketer has little power to control where it is distributed or the perception of meaning by consumers. This specifically indicates that images Or texts that users can change in a negative way

B. It is difficult to get people's attention and marketers sometimes face difficulties in targeting a specific audience on the web so the campaign must be more interesting and more creative than others.

### **Seventh: Viral Marketing Techniques:**

**1. Social networking sites:** The spread of social networking sites among Internet users has become one of the most important means and tools of modern marketing, and the term social networking sites refers to the use of the Internet, technology and mobile phones through their various applications for the purpose of transforming communications into a joint dialogue (Mahmoud and Khalaf, 2017: 155) . Social networking sites also indicate that it is a service that allows its users to create and organize their personal files, communicate with other individuals, and express their opinions in different languages, as it provides its users with the opportunity to dialogue and exchange opinions and information on the Internet through chat rooms, pictures, personal files, and others. (Al-Mustafa and Samer, 25:2021). The effectiveness of viral marketing through social networking sites comes for several reasons, including (Patankar, 2012):

-That a lot of customers use these sites.

-That these sites support gaining the trust of customers.

-If one of these sites fails, more than one site will appear.

-And it's in a continuous growth phase.

-These sites are very versatile.

**2-E-mail service:** It is considered one of the latest means of communication, and it is an electronic intersection between phone calls, messages and fax messages, so it is an important tool for promoting products via the Internet, and this service allows the exchange of information in a semi-simultaneous manner between individuals regardless of the distances between them, and this is considered The service is one of the most important viral tools that companies use in marketing. For example, when a certain company resorts to sending a message to an e-mail to one of its customers related to its product and service offers, and then, Those customers redirect that message to other customers in their contacts, which will lead to the spread of the message as quickly as a viral infection and without incurring any cost (Sharma & Kaur, 2019, 43).

**3-Viral advertising campaigns:** They are the efforts of a paid and valuable organization to help promote a specific good or service during a specific period of time, as well as a series or group of ads that are similar and identical in terms of the goals for which they were created and appear on social media during certain periods of time. The campaigns in its creation are as follows: 25 (Caffey, 2017).

-Determine the advertising message to the parties that we want to deliver that message to.

-Determine the site where we want to publish.

-Appropriate design of the advertising message.

### **Examples of such advertising campaigns are:**

-US President Obama's election campaign.

-Amazon ads.

-Chevrolet company campaign in 2012.

**4- Free offers:** It is considered one of the most important tools that business companies rely on in the success of viral marketing campaigns to entice customers to visit the company's website and encourage them to transfer the electronic



message to the largest possible segment of friends and acquaintances who communicate with them (Ismail, 2013: 71). Free offers are among the most influential tools on customers, which bring many advantages to companies (Abu Sneina, 23:2020).

**The second requirement: the decision to buy**

**First:** The concept of the purchase decision: The purchase process is a dynamic process consisting of a set of steps and effects that the consumer goes through to make the purchase decision. The purchase decision-making process goes through a series of long steps and stages, which includes a study of all available alternatives and means, comparing them and choosing the most appropriate product to satisfy the need and solve a specific problem. The purchase decision is defined as a set of stages that the consumer takes for a problem related to his needs and desires (Hasonat,2015.34), 2015 (Rani) defines it as a study of the consumer's purchasing behavior, and this decision is affected by a number of factors, including personal characteristics, buying habits, the influence of family and friends, as well as the behavior of the seller himself (Rani, 2014: 52). And (Wafaa) defined the purchase decision-making process as A set of steps and stages followed by the consumer to purchase specific products after making a comparison between them (Wafaa, 2014: 32).

**Second: Types of purchase decision:**

The quality of making a decision to purchase a product varies from one consumer to another based on a number of factors, including the complexity of the purchasing position and the number of people involved in making the purchase decision, thus, purchasing decisions can be divided on the basis of the complexity the purchasing position (Allamy, 2014:37 ) and as follows:

A-Routine purchase decision: It is the least complicated purchase situation and occurs in the event that the consumer is well aware of the type and characteristics of the product, and therefore relies on his previous experience in purchasing the product. This type of purchasing behavior usually occurs in the case of purchasing a product at a low cost in terms of money, effort and time.

B. Average complex purchase decision: The consumer may be familiar with a product because he is used to buying it, but he is not aware of all the available alternatives, so he needs to think, even if in a limited way, because he is familiar with the product and needs some information about competing products.

c. A very complex purchase decision: This type of decision is related to high-cost products, such as buying a house or a car, where it takes effort and takes a long time to choose the best product.

D-Diversified purchase decision: The purchase decision is affected by the development that occurs with the surrounding environmental factors and the emergence of a wide variety of products and services, which leads customers to buy more high-quality products at the lowest cost. Many customers to do the process of change for renewal and diversification.

**Third: the steps of the process of making a purchase decision.**

**The purchase process goes through several steps until the purchase decision is made (Qazzafi, 2019:359), as follows:**

1-Feeling the problem: The decision-making process begins with identifying the problem. The problem appears in the event that there is a difference between the current situation and the desired situation, so the consumer feels a specific need that he wants to satisfy, and at this stage the consumer is affected by internal and external influences, and sales representatives play an important role in persuading consumers to choose these needs and this is done by using promotional efforts and activities (announcement of sales promotion , retail views...)

2. Data collection: After the consumer knows his need, he collects or searches for information in order to select the goods and services that best suit his needs and desires.

3-Estimating Choices: After the information has been collected, the consumer is ready to make a decision. And also at this stage, he should be able to evaluate the different options and choose the products that meet his requirements.

4-Purchasing: This is the stage in which all marketing activities are the result. And the consumer at this stage, according to the information already obtained, has identified the product that he feels meets his need and buys.

5. Post-purchase: The consumer matches the purchased goods with ideas, products, competitors, product perceptions and expectations. There is a possibility of consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the products, which may appear due to various reasons.

**The third axis: the field side:**

First: The stability of the questionnaire: The stability of the questionnaire was calculated using the Cronbach's Alpha equation, which takes values between zero and one (0-1), to measure the extent to which the questionnaire questions relate to each other, and the results are as shown in the following table:

**Table No. (3) Cro-Nabach alpha coefficient to measure the degree of stability of the resolution.**



Stability coefficient	Number of paragraphs	Variables	
0.847	7	social media sites	.1
0.852	8	E-mail	.2
0.878	5	Advertising campaigns	.3
0.895	5	Free offers	.4
0.886	9	Make a purchase decision	.5
0.931	34	the form as a whole	

**The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the SPSS V.22 program**

It is clear from Table No. (3) that the stability coefficients for the variable of viral marketing techniques ranged between (0.847) as a minimum, and between (0.895) as a maximum, while the stability coefficients for the variable of purchasing decision-making reached (0.886), and the general stability coefficient for the study axes reached (0.886). 0.931, all of which are very high reliable coefficients in the current study.

**Second:** Descriptive Statistics: The following table shows the answers of the study sample about the study variables (viral marketing techniques, purchase decision).

Table No. (4) Descriptive statistics for the study variables

rank	relative importance	standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	Dimensions
2	0.7806	0.480	3.903	social media sites
4	0.6462	0.750	3.231	E-mail
3	0.735	0.612	3.675	Advertising campaigns
1	0.8168	0.657	4.084	Free offers
	0.7498	0.609	3.749	Make a purchase decision

**The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the SPSS V.22 program**

It is clear from Table No. (4) that the study sample members agreed on the questions about the dimensions of the variable of viral marketing technologies to a high degree, and the standard deviation values were small, less than one integer, and this means that the answers were consistent and there were no significant deviations in them, which indicates that the answers were Accurate and realistic, as the free offers dimension ranked first with an arithmetic mean of (4.08), a standard deviation of (0.657), and a relative importance of (81%), which indicates that the free offers have a clear impact on the desires of customers, followed by the social networking sites dimension. the second, with an arithmetic mean of (3.903), and a standard deviation of (0.480), With a relative importance of (78%), followed by the dimension of advertising campaigns with a relative importance of (73%), and finally came the e-mail dimension with an arithmetic mean of (3.231), with a standard deviation of (0.750), and with a relative importance of (64.6%), as evidenced by The above table shows the level of agreement of the study sample in the variable of making the purchase decision, with an arithmetic mean (3.749), a standard deviation of (0.609), and a relative importance of (74%).

**Third:** Relationship Hypothesis Test: We used Pearson correlation, and the results appeared as in the following table:

Table No. (5) Correlation coefficients between study dimensions and variables.

Viral marketing techniques	Free offers	Advertising campaigns	E-mail	social media sites	Variants
0.729**	0.649**	0.466**	0.510**	0.537**	Make a purchase decision

**The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the SPSS V.22 program**

We note from Table No. (5) that there is a strong positive relationship and a statistical function between viral marketing techniques and purchase decision-making, and that all the values of the correlation coefficients are significant between the variable and dimensions of viral marketing techniques and the purchase decision-making variable at a confidence level of (0.05), and accordingly we accept the hypothesis that states (There is a significant relationship between viral marketing techniques and its dimensions (social networking sites, e-mail, advertising campaigns, free offers), and making the purchase decision.

**Fourth:** Impact hypothesis test: Simple linear regression analysis was used for the purpose of testing the hypothesis, and the results are as in the following table:





**Table No. (6) Results of the regression analysis of the study variables**

Make a purchase decision								variants
Sig.	T	Beta	Sig.	F	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>	R	
0.00	4.312	0.249	0.00	227.454	0.419	0.421	0.649	social media sites
0.00	6.197	0.212	0.00	170.502	0.519	0.522	0.723	E-mail
0.04	2.025	0.090	0.00	130.591	0.553	0.557	0.747	Advertising campaigns
0.00	9.804	0.403	0.00	99.946	0.558	0.563	0.750	Free offers
0.00	18.829	0.957	0.00	354.531	0.530	0.531	0.729	Viral marketing techniques

The table was prepared by the researcher based on the outputs of the SPSS V.22 program

We note from Table No. (6) that the results of the regression model are significant between the variable of viral marketing techniques and the variable of purchasing decision-making through the value of (R) of (0.729), and the value of the determination coefficient (R<sup>2</sup>), which represents the explanatory power of (0.531), as well as the value of the coefficient of Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>, which represents the net explanatory power, meaning that the change that occurs in making a purchase decision is due to the change in viral marketing techniques by (53%), and the relationship is also shown through beta values, where the free offers dimension came first with ( 0.403), followed by the social media dimension (0.249), then the e-mail dimension (0.212), and finally the, Advertising campaigns with (0.090), and this is confirmed by the (T) values for the variable of viral marketing technologies amounting to (18.829), with a significant level (0.00), and the value of (F) was (354.531) with a significant level (0.00), and we also note that the results of the analysis between marketing technologies Viral virus infection and buying decision were all significant and have an effect at the level of confidence (0.05), and therefore we accept the hypothesis that states. (There is a significant effect between viral marketing techniques and its dimensions (social networking sites, e-mail, advertising campaigns, free offers) and making a decision.

#### **THE FOURTH TOPIC: CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS**

##### **First: conclusions:**

**1-**The use of viral marketing techniques by business organizations will enable them to achieve differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage.

**2-**Through the use of viral marketing techniques, the organization's customers can transfer the characteristics and specifications they want in the

product to the producing organization.

**3-**There is a relationship between the information that reaches customers through their websites and the degree of its credibility and re-transmission.

**4-**Through the answers of the respondents, we conclude that viral marketing techniques have a significant impact on stimulating the target audience to make a purchase decision and acquire products more easily.

**5-** The results of the correlation analysis indicate that there is a significant positive correlation between the combined viral marketing tools as an independent variable and the dimensions of purchasing decision-making "as a dependent variable, which means that the research sample members have an increased interest in the dimensions (viral marketing tools) represented by (social networking sites, e-mail , advertising campaigns, free offers), which contributed to influencing (purchasing decision) making, which includes the interest of corporate management in building good relationships with customers through social networking sites and the use of smart devices.

##### **SECOND: RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1-**Based on the conclusions reached by the current research, the researcher presents a number of proposals that he deems necessary for the management of the company under study.

**2-**Business organizations should pay more attention to viral marketing techniques because of their effective role in enhancing the dimensions of a successful purchase decision.

**3-**Business organizations should take care of making a successful purchasing decision, as it is the means through which it enhances the volume of sales and achieve



profits.

4-Business organizations should pay more attention (advertising campaigns), by carrying out advertising campaigns in line with the technological development taking place in the business environment.

5. Business organizations should pay attention to viral marketing tools alike and not be indifferent to one or more, because these tools are integrated with each other.

6-Business organizations should pay attention to the steps of a successful purchase decision equally, and not to discrepancy in the interest and use of these steps, because these steps are all integrated with each other.

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