



*GAINING MORE CUSTOMER LOYALTY FOR DUTCH RETAILERS, BY  
IMPLEMENTING AN IN-STORE SMARTPHONE STRATEGY*

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## Abstract

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The upswing of the smartphone has brought many changes in the retail environment. Already 60% of the smartphone owners use their phones in-store, to help them shopping. This in-store smartphone use can mean a great threat to retailers, when consumers use them to search for lower prices. However, smartphones are so settled in our everyday lives nowadays, that in-store smartphone use cannot be stopped. Therefore, retailers have to embrace the smartphone and implement an omnichannel smartphone strategy that focuses on offline retailers, with complementary online information which can be accessed through smartphones.

The goal of this research is to search for the best way to implement a smartphone strategy in the Dutch retail market. Therefore, the main question of this research is: How can Dutch retailers create more loyal customers by using a smartphone strategy? To answer this question two sub-questions were made. The first is: How can retailers create more loyal customers, by using in-store marketing? And the second one is: Which possible in-store smartphone strategies can be identified? To answer these questions a literature study was conducted.

The first sub-question explains the changes in marketing environment which retailers should adapt to. Customer loyalty became more important, but Dutch consumers turn out to be less loyal by nature. Customer loyalty exists of company loyalty and program loyalty. Company loyalty is about getting consumers in, while program loyalty makes them buy more once in-store. In the second sub-question five in-store smartphone strategies have been identified in the literature and sorted by kind of marketing. For push marketing these are coupons which are used mostly in combination with location-based services. For pull marketing, traceability on the internet and apps that help consumers shopping can be used. Furthermore, in viral communication social media is mostly used in-store.

Because of the disloyal nature of Dutch consumers, retailers should focus more on company loyalty than on program loyalty. Although program loyalty should not be forgotten, the combination of program and company loyalty has shown to satisfy the consumers most. To get company loyalty extra services should be offered to the consumers. Therefore, pull marketing strategies are most appropriate. Extra service should be offered by ensuring good traceability on the internet, when consumers search for a retailer it is important to stand on top of the list. And second, apps which support consumers shopping should be implemented. Examples are apps with extra product information, offering mobile payments and implementing in-store WiFi. In the end it is important for every retailer to set a smartphone strategy which complements their organizational goals and this research can be used as a guidance.

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## Problem statement

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Smartphones are booming these days, there is no getting around it anymore. A recent study shows that in the third quarter of 2013 already 72% of the Dutch population owns a smartphone (de Bruyckere & Niezink, 2013). The possibilities of these phones are endless and the consumer uses them all day long. Moreover, 70% of Dutch smartphone owners even claim they never leave home without their smartphones (Google, 2013a). We could definitely tell these phones play an important role in our everyday life nowadays.

Since a smartphone is a constant access point to the internet and information for consumers, it could also be used in-store. Research has already confirmed this in-store smartphone use, over 60% of the smartphone owners use their phones regularly in-store to help them shopping (Google, 2013b). This could mean just finding more product information. But for the retailer this might be risky, because consumers could search for lower prices which they may find at another (online) shop. The rise of the smartphone also made online purchases grow, a rise of 145% is expected in the Netherlands between 2012 and 2020. More important, in 2020 around 33% of online purchases will be bought on a smartphone (Thuiswinkel, 2012). Although online shopping grows, this does not mean consumers do not go to retailers anymore. Retailers still have advantages over online shopping, like feeling fabrics, which online shops can never exceed.

To coop with this changing mobile environment, businesses shift their perspective in marketing channels: from in-store, personal contact to more online contact with the consumer through their smartphones. Because of in-store smartphone use, the difference between on- and offline shopping becomes blurred. This in-store smartphone use can become a big threat to the retailers, when the consumer always checks the lowest price online and might end up buying somewhere else. Research shows that 11% of the Dutch consumers have, at least once, changed their minds in-store because of information found on their smartphones. This shows how much the consumers rely on their phone for getting information. Moreover, after seeing offline ads 39% of the Dutch consumers searched for more information on their smartphones in the past 6 months, from whom 32% after seeing in-store ads (Google, 2013a). The retailer has to make sure that the online content consumers will find, complements the in-store shopping experience.

To complement the shopping experience, businesses can make use of the new opportunities that smartphones bring. This research will focus on these opportunities. The retailer is enabled to interact with consumers through multiple channels and can show them online content while in-store. Albert Heijn, for example has the 'Appie' app, which gives the consumer the ability to compile shopping lists (in the order in which you walk in your own Albert Heijn), find recipes and see promotional offers (Albert Heijn, 2013). This smartphone strategy encourages in-store smartphone use in a way that makes the shopping experiences easier for consumers and creates an incentive to buy even more.

The aim of setting up a smartphone strategy is to keep existing customers and try to attract new customers. Loyal customers create the value a company has: they are the reason a company exists (Pepper & Rogers, 2005). In the future there will be a shift from in-store marketing to shopper marketing. This means that marketers should enhance the entire shopping experience to keep their customers loyal. The best way to do this is to create a holistic marketing program that combines various kinds of marketing channels, including mobile marketing (Shankar et al., 2011).

In the United States there are a lot of these initiatives that make use of smartphones. Ranging from offering free Wi-Fi in-store to checking in with Foursquare to get personal offers (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013). The importance of having a mobile strategy is already recognized. However, in May 2013 only 56% of American adults owned a smartphone (Smith, 2013). Compared to 72% in the Netherlands these days, the opportunity to reach customers through their smartphones is even

larger here. Unfortunately, Dutch retailers make limited use of the new kind of marketing channels, while this might be a great opportunity for them.

This leads to the main question of this research: “How can Dutch retailers create more loyal customers by using in-store smartphone marketing?” To be able to answer this main question there are sub-questions that need to be answered. First it is important to find out how customer loyalty can be created by using in-store marketing. After that, in the second sub-question, already used smartphone strategies will be described. After the sub-questions are answered, the information found can be combined to answer the main question. The applicable characteristics of creating more customer loyalty will be combined with some smartphone strategies already used. At last, the best strategies can be identified to conclude this research.

## **Main question**

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How can Dutch retailers create more loyal customers by using an in-store smartphone strategy?

## **Sub-questions**

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1. How can retailers create more loyal customers, by using in-store marketing?
2. Which possible in-store smartphone strategies can be identified?

### Sub-question 1: How can Dutch retailers create more loyal customers, by using in-store marketing?

#### Changes in the marketing environment

The traditional marketing approach built around the 4P's has been questioned since the 1980s (Grönroos, 1996,2006). This approach was mainly focused on making consumers buy, regardless of who these consumers are (Hollensen, 2010). In the new marketing management it is all about relationships and customer loyalty (Gummesson, 2002). Customer loyalty is an enduring positive attitude towards a company, brand or product, which often leads to positive word of mouth and repeated purchases. This loyalty is visualized as a ladder, in which a customer can climb from prospect to advocate. A prospect means that the consumer is in your target group and might become a customer. The highest organizational goal is to create advocates, which are consumers whom are extremely satisfied with the company and actively recommend it to others (Payne, 1994; Raphael & Raphael, 1995). When a consumer is at the so-called zero point at the ladder, price can be the most important characteristic of the product they buy. Also convenience can be an important feature, the consumer will then buy at the most convenient store and doesn't bother about price (Gummesson, 2002). Since web shops have very low fixed costs and nearly zero marginal costs of sales, they have a tremendous cost advantage over retailers (Nacinovich, 1998). Moreover, retailers have to make sure that they have a strong brand. A brand that the consumer feels attached to and which makes them willing to pay more. In other words, the consumer has to be high on the loyalty ladder of the retailer.

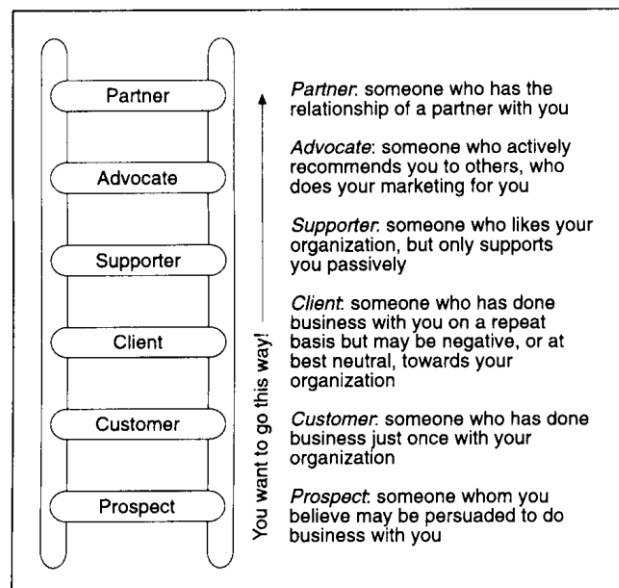


Figure 1: The Customer Loyalty Ladder (Payne, 1994)

Since the rise of the Internet, also marketing channels have experienced dramatic shifts. Some traditional media like newspapers and magazines have been negatively affected because of new media. On the contrary, some other channels like radio have been positively reinforced. The rise of new media has not made traditional media disappear, but it affected their market share in advertisement a lot. The most important characteristic of the new media is the ability of the consumer to talk back, this made the nature of the communication model change and the flow of communication became more important rather than click through rate on advertisements for example (Hoffman & Novak, 2009). The other characteristic is that new media are digital (Shankar & Hollinger, 2007). The smartphone is also covered by the category of new media. The consumer is enabled to interact with retailers through the internet and the device is digital. It is a new channel, with new characteristics, and consumers react differently on advertisements on their smartphones compared to traditional media. For example, consumers tend to be more price sensitive when shopping online, compared to offline (Shankar et al., 2003). The difficulty of the smartphone is that it is carried all the time. So on- and offline shopping cross each other these days. Therefore, consumers will also become more price sensitive in-store, because they can always check the lowest price

online. Since consumers will use their smartphones anyway, retailers should embrace this new device and take control of the content consumers use in-store.

## Targeting the right audience

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Retailers should think about which group they choose to target. A supermarket for instance may target everyone above 20 years old. However, a clothing store usually has a more specific audience. Stores which are focused on clothes for woman above 65 will probably not benefit that much from implementing a smartphone strategy, because not a lot of these women will own a smartphone. On the contrary, a retailer like H&M who is targeting young people can gain lots of competitive advantage with a smartphone strategy. Important factors in your target group are gender and age. Women are proven to have less trust in online shopping compared to men (Rodger & Harris, 2003). Also, for women compared to men, trust has more impact on customer satisfaction (Deng et al., 2010). Therefore in a mobile strategy, the message should be adapted to who your target is. Women will feel intruded in their personal space more often than men. So push marketing has to be used carefully on women. Also younger people have more trust in online information and services compared to older users, this is probably because younger generations are more willing to trust (Rouibah et al., 2008). In mobile marketing information from the consumer can be abstracted from their phones, so the retailer is able to find their age and gender through apps like Facebook. Therefore, in a smartphone strategy it is easy to create separate communication strategies for each target group and this makes it very usable as a marketing channel. A backdrop of using this strategy are privacy issues that consumers may have. Although almost every app installed these days extract information from other apps installed on your smartphone, some people may have issues with their data being used for other purposes and it will keep them from installing your app. A solution for this problem can be personalizing messages while retaining information locally on the smartphones, instead of deriving it and keep it in a large database (Sutanto et al., 2013). Building more trust in these privacy issues may also be beneficial for customer loyalty.

Of course not all customers will be reached through a smartphone strategy. Still a large part of the Dutch population does not own a smartphone. As mentioned in the problem statement, 72% of the Dutch population owns a smartphone. The demographic data of this group can be derived from a research conducted by Google (2013a). In their research about 'Our mobile planet' they took a sample of the Dutch population which is representative on basis of age, gender, region, brand smartphone, frequency of smartphone use and tablet use. An extensive table with this data can be found in attachment 1. There is no significant difference in smartphone ownership between man and woman, respectively 52% and 48%. People between the age of 25 and 34 clearly own the most smartphones with 33%. Other age categories like 18-24, 35-44, 45-54 and above 55 show percentages between 15 and 21%. Moreover, most smartphone owners (53%) live in cities. In marketing it is important to know who your target group is. Based on age we can tell that most of the smartphone owners belong to generation Y. An important characteristic of this generation is that they are used to being 'wired' all the time. They grew up with video games, internet and mobile phones (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Customer loyalty is also very much bound to culture (Hofstede, 1984). Matthyssens and Wursten (2003) designed six kinds of cultures, based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions. The Dutch population is categorized as being the 'network type'. Characteristics of this type are mutual independence and consensus, which have proven to have less loyalty compared to Suriname which is categorized as being a 'family type' (Noordhoff et al., 2004). Because Dutch consumers are by nature less loyal, they will be more price sensitive in-store and are more likely to use their smartphones to find cheaper alternatives. Therefore, the smartphone is a relatively greater threat to Dutch retailers. This threat can be turned into new opportunities, by implementing the right smartphone strategy.

## Company loyalty

Customer loyalty exists of two kinds of loyalty, company- or program loyalty (Yi & Yeon, 2003). So retailers want to increase their customer loyalty these two kinds need to be examined. Company loyalty is about emotional incentives, like the amount of trust, satisfaction and commitment the customer feels towards the company. Program loyalty, on the contrary, is more driven by rationality. Customers focus more on the economic value the program has to offer. Company loyalty makes sure the customer gets to the store, while program loyalty encourages more purchases once in-store. Therefore, it is important for a retailer to combine both and have a clear value proposition. This is important in the overall company to satisfy the customer, but also by offering a discount with the loyalty program (Evanschitzky et al., 2012).

Company loyalty is the first important step to get a customer in-store. As seen in figure 2, to get high company loyalty the retailer has to make sure the customer has trust, is satisfied and feels committed towards the company. Research shows that trust is critical in influencing the customers' future interaction, but customer trust is hard to establish in ecommerce. Customers have concerns about their security, privacy and service when buying on the internet (Brendon, 2002). Trust in an online retailer can be build when the customer feels less vulnerable and his expectations are consistently met. Which means, satisfaction is a driver of trust (Rose et al., 2012). Since buying online makes the customer feel more vulnerable, this is an advantage the retailer has over online shopping which might make the customer willing to pay more when buying in-store.

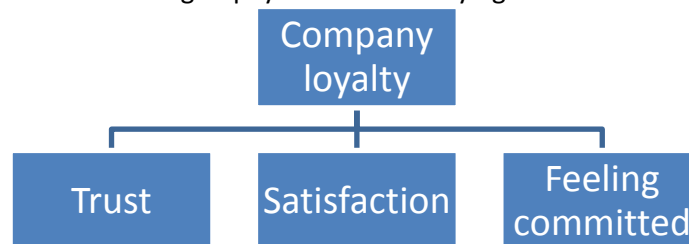


Figure 2: Drivers of company loyalty

The level of company loyalty is connected with the level of customer satisfaction (Hallowell, 1995). According to the model of expectations, post-purchase affective states and affective behaviors by Santos & Boote (2006), a higher level of service than the customers expect will lead to complimenting behavior. Customer satisfaction is described as customers' feelings of pleasure or disappointment that result from comparing a product's perceived performance to expectations (Tsiros et al., 2004). It's difficult to accomplish, because every customer has different expectations. The goal, as mentioned earlier, is to get target customers to become advocates of your company. To do so, every customer should be highly satisfied which means their experiences with the company should exceed their expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Customer expectations are derived from past experiences within a product or retail category and from the customer's perception of typical product performance (Hubbert et al., 1995). In the Netherlands very few retailers already use smartphone strategies, so this might be a good way to gain competitive advantage. Past experiences of most customers will not include a smartphone strategy, so when implementing a smartphone strategy the retailer offers extra service which the customer does not expect and therefore increases customer satisfaction.

Customer commitment is the last important driver for company loyalty. Brand commitment should be seen as a long-run end pursued to achieve long-run competitive advantage. It is also found brand commitment is a good predictor of loyal customers, and so it is seen as very important (Baldinger & Rubinson, 1996). The conceptual framework of true brand loyalty construct by Amine (1998) shows commitment to exist of two different features. One is the calculative commitment,

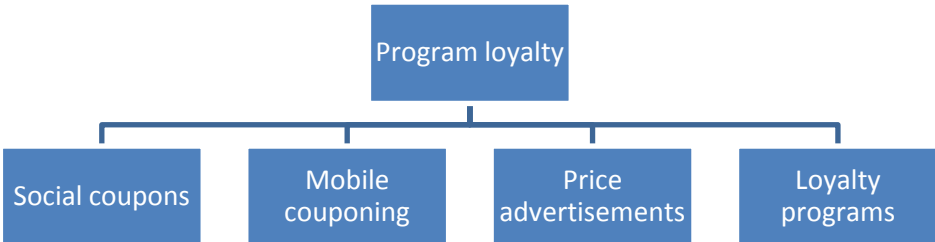


which are cognitive motives to buy at a certain retailer. The second is affective commitment, which are more the emotional and affective feelings towards a brand. There are four factors influencing this commitment: perceived differences among the brands, perceived risk, brand sensitivity and brand liking. Brand sensitivity is a set factor in the customers mind, and cannot be influenced by a company. Perceived differences are very important for customers, the more they are familiar with a product category the more details they will see. Perceived risk is about the probability of making a wrong choice and the importance of negative consequences of this choice. For a company this means they have to be consistent, in delivering quality and services. But when risk is perceived as high, when something is very expensive for instance, the customer can try to reduce the risk by comparing prices of multiple retailers. With a good smartphone strategy in place the retailer cannot avoid these price comparisons, but extra services like in-store WiFi or shopping apps could bind customers to a particular store and avoid them buying somewhere else. However, this is the least important factor.

Brand liking is: ‘an emotional feeling the customer develops towards a specific brand which expresses their psychological closeness to that brand’. This feeling can be build by advertising that enhances the similarity between the brand’s personality and the customers’ self-image. The tighter this similarity is, the more attached the customer feels towards the brand. So the company should be very aware of who their target customers are and emphasize their similarities. In a smartphone strategy these similarities can be emphasized quite easy. Just like in advertisement the look and feel of, for instance, an app should complement the overall brand. The app should be developed with the idea of creating a stable brand through every channel. In emotional attachment contact with employees can also be very important. According to research, employees who poses high emotional competences, to be more able to influence customer satisfaction and loyalty. Emotional competence is the ability to perceive, use, understand and regulate emotions. This shows the importance of hiring the right employees. However, emotional competence can also be taught and improved by training, which the managers should be aware of (Delcourt et al., 2013).

**Program loyalty**

Program loyalty, as opposed to company loyalty, is more driven by rational choices of customers. They focus on the economic value the program offers them. As can be seen in figure 3, a distinction is made between four kinds of loyalty programs. Social coupons are the first kind of program. The economic value of these coupons are usually very high for the customer, since the average discount per offer is 53% (Rueter, 2011). Moreover, these coupons have taken a prominent place in American culture because of their popularity. For businesses the choice of giving out these coupons is very complicated. Because of the coupons the number of customers can increase extremely. There should never be more coupons sold than the business can handle. Because of the high discount percentages the return on investment will only get positive when the new customers come back later (Kumar & Rajan, 2012). Therefore, the customers need to be served above expectations, because their company loyalty will then increase.



**Figure 3: The four identified kinds of loyalty programs**

Another new phenomenon is mobile couponing, which are digital coupons that are being sent to your mobile phone. They can be time and place sensitive, which is very useful to attract customers at

quiet hours. However, these coupons are used very little in marketing mixes of companies. To make sure customers will actually use these coupons the coupon value should be high enough and the company policies and privacy issues should be clarified. Also, some care is needed with the amount of messages. Too much messages, unclear company policies and privacy issues will make the customer feel intruded in their personal space, because the mobile phone is a highly personal medium (Barwise & Strong, 2002). This intruded feeling can also be diminished by increasing the relevance of the message (Edwards et al., 2002). In short, mobile couponing is a very useful new medium, but because of this newness customers need time to adapt (Dickinger & Kleijnen, 2008).

Price advertisements are another commonly used marketing tool, which mostly consists of reference pricing, limited-time availability and/or sale announcements. These features are proven to be effective under certain circumstances only. Under low-involvement shopping conditions, which means a customer just 'walks in-to it' and wasn't looking for something special, limited-time availability and a sale announcement affects their price perceptions of the product. Under high-involvement shopping conditions, which means the customer is actively shopping for a product, reference prices and limited-time information affect them. The advice is to use reference pricing and limited-time together, because these effects seem to compensate for each other in different levels of customer involvement. Sale announcements can be used anytime, because they have the potential to convert non shoppers into shoppers (Howard & Kerin, 2006). A new opportunity for retailers are push messages, which can be send to shoppers who are at a certain time at a certain locations. These messages are particularly meant for people under low-involvement shopping conditions, because it will not affect people under high-involvement shopping conditions. Therefore, the content should exist of sale announcements and products with limited-time-availability to affect their price perceptions. Smartphones are very suitable for this use, because retailers can send certain sale announcements which are only valid for a short time period from the moment a customer walks in-store and hopefully persuade them to buy something.

Program loyalty can also be about loyalty programs, which are used in retailing to build store traffic, increase basket size and increase frequency to create an extensive relationship with their customers. With the upcoming of Customer Relationship management the loyalty programs have increased significantly (Bhattacharya, 1998). A loyalty program is seen as the business process of identifying, maintaining and increasing the yield from best customers through interactive value-added relationships (Capizzi et al., 2004). Customers who are cardholders of a loyalty program and receive valuable benefits, are likely to be satisfied and engaged in behaviors targeted to secure the relationship as loyalty to the program. This satisfaction with the program is also positively correlated to company loyalty. These customers will become more loyal to the store and less price-sensitive compared to unsatisfied cardholders of the program (Omar et al., 2010).

For high-involvement products loyalty marketing is a better fit compared to low-involvement products. Moreover, loyalty marketing with high-involvement products can reach brand loyalty through both direct and indirect routes. With these products direct rewards, like products, are preferable over indirect rewards, like tokens, coupons or trading stamps. The timing of the reward is irrelevant for these products. For low-involvement product managers need to be careful when using a loyalty program, because no relationship has been found between the value perception and brand loyalty. The only important factor is derived value from the program, which is easily imitated by competitors. The goal to get company loyalty through these products is probably set too high; to get program loyalty might be a more appropriate goal (Yi & Jeon, 2003). Probably most retailers will sell low involvement products, like groceries, so loyalty programs will not be profitable. But there are some kind of retailers for whom this might be interesting, like electronic stores, because they sell expensive products where the customer is probably more involved. Moreover, they could integrate the loyalty program in an app. This app could for example show the customers' balance and which rewards they will eventually get.

## Sub-question 2: Which possible in-store smartphone strategies can be identified?

These days it is very important to implement a so called Omnichannel strategy, which means that different channels will be fused into one seamless customer experience (Yurcan, 2012). In this study that means that on- and offline marketing will be used simultaneously in-store and complement each other. An Omnichannel strategy became more important over the last few years because of the rise of the smartphone. 74% of the Dutch consumers regularly use their smartphone to do research on products or services. Also in-store advertisement raises curiosity with consumers: about 39% of the Dutch consumers has done mobile research after seeing an add (Google, 2013b). Therefore, it is very important for a retailer to be able to control the information the consumer finds on his smartphone. However, not only the online experience is important, also the offline area should not be forgotten. In an offline shop the customer is able to touch the products, which can be very important in some sectors, like feeling the fabric of clothing. For the retailer there are even more benefits. Since an offline shop enables the retailer to reach a segment of customers that do not like online shopping, it also increases the company capacity to make more sales and provide better service. Furthermore, in-store the retailer can build a better understanding of current and future customers and in-store connections are made with potential customers before they can become discouraged (Art et al., 2013).

The smartphone, as a marketing tool, offers three opportunities: push- pull- and viral communication towards customers. Push means the marketer addresses the consumer, while pull is the other way around: when consumers ask for content themselves. Viral communication happens when consumers mutually exchange information (Palka et al., 2009). Usually a marketing plan consist of both push and pull marketing, because the combination helps to attract new customers, maintain the already existing customers and build a relationship, and to meet sales targets by creating more demand and satisfying needs (Rimlinger, 2011). Viral communication is hard to control by a company, because you cannot control what consumers talk about. Although, by having great offers, making controversial commercials for instance, companies will try to become a topic of conversation.

In this chapter several smartphone strategies will be identified and explained, ordered by the type of marketing (push, pull and viral). Some strategies already existed before, but because of the smartphone more opportunities came up. This is for example what happened with coupons; they already existed on paper before. But with the new technology in smartphones, a whole lot of new opportunities arose. In figure 4 all identified in-store smartphone strategies are summed up in an overview. For every kind of strategy, also the advantages will be summed up about how these strategies will complement the in-store shopping experience.

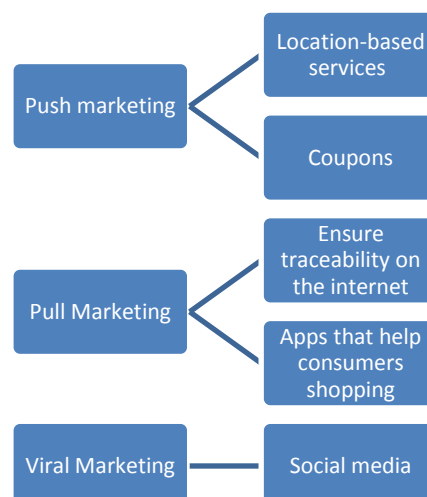


Figure 4: Identified smartphone strategies, ordered by kind of marketing

## Push marketing

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Push marketing is about giving consumers information, which they didn't ask for. However, this doesn't mean the received information is irrelevant for this individual. Characteristics of when this kind of marketing is appropriate are: low brand loyalty and brand choice is made in-store, impulse buying and product benefits are well understood (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Push marketing is useful to create new consumer demand and reach new customers. The company is completely in control of the message, like the timing and content (Rimlinger, 2011). Two categories of push marketing are identified in the literature, which are appropriate to use in a smartphone strategy.

## Location-based services

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The smartphone enables the retailer to reach consumers through a new channel. This channel has features as GPS and time-sensitivity that traditional channels did not have. GPS gives the retailer the opportunity to identify the exact location of the customer at a precise moment; this is called location-sensitivity. The great advantage of location-based services is that the retailer can reach customers whom are present in the shopping street. Time-sensitivity is another feature that allows the retailer to send messages which can be only relevant at a certain time range, at the exact right moment (Kaplan, 2012). Kaplan (2012) has identified Four I's that help companies to integrate a mobile social media strategy. Which can all be applied in location-based services and are important to keep in mind. Firstly, Integrate your activities into users' lives, to avoid being a nuisance. When customers are participating in the marketing program, the retailer has to be very careful to avoid abusing the trust the customer gave him. The amount of messages is very important in location-based services. There cannot be too many locations where pop-ups appear, because the customer will feel invaded. Second, Individualize your activities to take account of user preferences and interests. When using smartphones there is lots of information available about the consumer, since this device mostly belongs to one individual. The retailer should use this in order to personalize messages and offers. This has lots of advantages, namely the ability to target your best customers, to learn more about characteristics of your customers and connect more with them, the sales results of each advertising dollar can be measured and the best thing in the end: it will increase sales to people whom are contacted, because their special needs and wants are satisfied (Dent, 1991). As a third, the user needs to be Involved through engaging conversation. Moreover, the smartphone offers opportunities to involve consumers into marketing games or experiences. Companies should involve consumers in these sorts of activities. Examples are checking in at Foursquare to get a discount or 'looking' for a free ticket for a basketball game by checking in at various sport-related locations through town. The fourth I is to Initiate the creation of user-generated content. Word-of-mouth communication will always be more effective than a good marketing campaign (Silverman, 2001). More about this subject will be explained in the subchapter about viral marketing.

## Coupons

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Coupons are a classic example of push marketing. Moreover, they are oriented at selling specific products or at specific times, like off-peak hours. As mentioned earlier, they are oriented at products that have low brand loyalty and create new customers by luring people in. For retailers this can be a nice way to fill in off-peak hours or try to get people to try something new. Back in the days coupons were mostly printed flyers, while these days mobile couponing is booming. The mobile coupons have more options, like sending them out at a specific time of location or within a certain time restriction. Applying knowledge from the first chapter, coupons have to deliver enough value; otherwise they will be seen as annoying. Also companies need to give enough thought to the dosage of coupons, because they need to be able to handle all of these new customers.

Research shows that online coupons are redeemed much more than offline coupons, because of 'selective nature of distribution'. This would probably also be applicable on mobile couponing, because the audience is selected with much more care than people who just receive a flyer on the street. Therefore, the redemption rate will probably be higher in mobile couponing compared to offline couponing. The same study also found that discounting with a 'percentage off' framing follows a cubic trend in redemption rate, whereas dollar-off coupons are negatively linear. The cubic pattern is because, from a certain threshold, consumers may have doubts about the credibility of the value. The prices before promotion may be inflated or a permanent reduction is promoted as a temporary (Chen et al., 1998). But when a higher threshold is passed the savings will exceed these thoughts and the redemption rate will go up again. Also framing with 'free' makes the redemption rate rise, in comparison with using 'discount'. Advice is to use a discount level of 20% or 50% and higher, because the redemption rate peaks at those levels (Jung & Lee, 2010). While sending out coupons on smartphones the marketer needs to give thoughts on how the coupon should be framed. Their goal is usually to make consumers redeem as much coupons as possible. Therefore, the tips mentioned above can be helpful tools for marketers.

Although coupons are useful to sell more to consumers who are already in-store, they might not result into more returning customers in the Netherlands. Groupon is a very large international couponing company. They have a very diverse assortment that ranges from cheap dinners to concert tickets, and everything is offered with an enormous discount percentage. Groupon offers companies the opportunity to attract new customers by giving a discount for new customers (Groupon, n.d.). However, in 2012 they received a fine by the Dutch 'Reclame Code Commissie' (RCC), because of misleading the business owners they worked with. Groupon claimed that the business owners would get a young and willing audience which would return regularly. This turned out to be based on a research on the American population. In the contrary, Dutch consumers turn out not to return regularly after using a coupon (NU.NL, 2012). As mentioned earlier, Dutch consumers are not very loyal and more price sensitive compared to other countries. Therefore, couponing will not be profitable for most Dutch retailers, unless the coupon is sold above their cost-price.

## Pull

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Pull communication delivers information that the consumers requested. It is information the consumer literally pulls towards him. This information is mostly to help consumers take decisions or help them shopping. A company should give some thought about which information the consumers would want, and help them by making this information easily accessible. This knowledge can also help the company to benefit from this consumer behavior. By controlling the information the consumer searches for, the company can make sure it is positive for their brand and show the consumer how great their products are. Two categories of pull marketing are identified in literature: ensure traceability on the internet and offer apps that help customers shopping. These will be elaborately explained in the next sub-chapters.

### *Ensure traceability on the internet*

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Controlling information the consumers finds online is very important these days. Already 58% of the consumers use their smartphone in daily life to find information about products and 11% of the consumers has changed their minds about buying a product or service because of the information found on their smartphones. This is a huge opportunity for companies, because when consumers find the right information they might easily change their minds to buy something. Of course the other way around is also possible, consumers might buy products somewhere cheaper or don't buy them at all because of information they found.

Around 81% of smartphone users regularly search for local information on their phones. Moreover, even 68% of them has taken action as a result of the information found at least once (Google, 2013a). Therefore it is very important for companies to be aware on what consumers find online and to try to control this information. Over 80% of all internet users use search engines to locate online information and services. So most of these smartphone users will search through a search engine. In SEO, search engine optimisation, it is very important as a company to know which search terms are being used. When having this knowledge, a company can try to control the pages that appear in the search engine. Being on top of the list on a search engine is crucial, because the amount of people who only view the first page of results is extremely high (Jansen & Spink, 2006). This can be done in two ways: by using key-words on your website or by sponsored search advertising. When using a lot of key-words on your website, it will automatically go up in ranking on search engines, but the top of the list is mostly reserved for sponsored search advertising. Another advantage of sponsored search engine advertising is that it shows immediate result, while automatically growing in ranking is usually a very long-term process.

Search engines usually work with bidding prices. That means companies choose their keywords and determine a daily budget on those words. When the costs exceed the budget, the add will not be shown anymore for that day. Therefore, it is important to know which key words create the highest click-through rates, so money is spend in the best way possible. Brand-specific keywords are usually more important than retailer-specific keywords, because in brand-specific keywords also adds from competitors show up. In retailer-specific keywords probably only your own ads will appear, but this will organically happen anyway by just using keywords on your website. So the advice is to focus mostly on brand-specific keywords in sponsored search advertising (Ghose & Yang, 2009).

A company should not only be findable in search engines, but also on comparison websites. These websites seem like a great rival of retailers, but the fact is consumer will search for products on these sites. So when a company is not listed, the consumers will definitely not buy it from them. However, because buying on the internet is mostly cheaper for consumers because of the low fixed costs they have, direct price comparisons should be avoided. To do so, there are three options: the first is to add distinctive features to your products. Usually manufacturers make minor modifications for each seller and give each kind another product code. This however may annoy customers, so be careful when using this method. Second is to make certain products exclusive and make sure you sell specific products that others don't have. This makes a store preferred over others without the cost-focus. And as a third, sell bundles of products. Bundled products are harder to compare across stores than single items (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013). Besides these strategies, of course low costs are always very important. When having low fixed costs a retailer can offer products at a low price and still maintain its profit margin. And some things cannot be expressed in money, like high service and the advantage to take your products home immediately etcetera.

### *Apps that supports customers shopping*

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Applications, or apps, are small programs, which can be installed on smartphones. In the app-store, from which they can be downloaded, thousands of apps are available these days. Some companies have already seen this new kind of in-store marketing coming up, and launched their own app. These apps can be very diverse, from online-shopping apps to apps in which a shopping list can be made. Apps which are relevant in this paper are apps which are being used in-store. Like the shopping list app, because it sorts your grocery's so you will walk the fastest route through the store. In these apps also information gathered from the customers' smartphones can be used. Products to put on their shopping lists can be suggested based on earlier use and location can for example be used to lead the customer to the store nearby.

New technology, that makes even more possible with smartphones, is NFC, which means Near Field Communication. This is a wireless technology and works with a build-in NFC-chip, which most new smartphones have nowadays. NFC doesn't need a downloaded application; it can communicate with other NFC-devices by just holding these devices against each other (Samsung, n.d.). This technology can be used in multiple ways in-store. An example is the Y-market, which creates a personalized shopping experience because of the unique ID which every smartphone contains. There is a large database behind this Y-market with information about purchasing history, targeted promotions and loyalty rewards. A consumer has to download the NFC-based app to enhance their personal experience. After that, they can scan product they want to purchase with their smartphone and in the end pay with it at the cashier. By scanning a product they also a request can be send for more product information, for recipes with that product, and the app will also inform consumers about relevant products that are on sale (Teng et al., 2013).

Another feature NFC made possible is paying with a smartphone. However, this is very difficult to implement successfully. Because acceptance and actual use by consumers is needed and therefore, consumers need to trust the system, the transaction costs should not be too high and it should be convenient. Also a standardized mobile payment procedure has not been developed yet, which makes mobile payment unattractive because for every store you may need a different app to pay with (Kreyer et al., 2003; Mallat & Tuurnainen, 2008). NFC technology looks like an attractive option to standardize mobile payments. In the Netherlands already some tests with NFC paying have been done. In the town Leiden consumers are able to pay with their smartphones since September 2013. For amounts above €25,- a PIN has to be entered and below that just scanning your smartphone is enough (Leonards, 2013). The test has proven to be very successful, for amounts below €25,-76% of the consumers prefer to use mobile payment over pin and cash. The great advantages for them are convenience, because their smartphone is always within reach, fast and easy. Also business owners were very pleased with the test, for 38% of them the test went above expectations. The biggest advantage is shorter lines before checkout, because mobile payments are on average 7 seconds faster compared to paying cash or PIN (Keulen, 2014). So far NFC technology sounds promising, the two conditions to make mobile paying successful seem to be present in this system. After €50,- is paid with a smartphone the PIN has to be entered again. So even when a smartphone has been stolen, not much money can be spent. Also a customer can decide themselves to enter their PIN every time, or just after the €50,- (Ringelestijn, 2013). So everyone can choose the method with which they feel most comfortable. This makes the trust in the system probably high enough to become successful. Also actual use by customers is proven in this test. Already 2000 payments per week have been registered and because of the satisfaction of the consumers this number will only go up in time (Keulen, 2014).

To offer some extra service, some retailers offer a free WiFi connection. With this WiFi connection the consumer has an extra incentive to use the stores app. The mobile commerce manager Sarah Baillie, from the English warehouse Debenhams, thinks consumers will use their smartphones in-store anyway, so it is vital they get involved in this mobile traffic. Debenhams has special offers for connected consumers, and out-of-stock items can directly be ordered through their app (Clews, 2012). Other stores also mention positive reasons to install in-store WiFi. Marks & Spencer for example provide consumers with more information about their products through WiFi (O'Reilly, 2012). All the marketing tools mentioned in this chapter can be encouraged to use through offering in-store WiFi, so all retailers who are trying to influence the mobile behavior of consumers should offer this.

## Viral marketing

Viral marketing is the kind of marketing that tries to encourage consumers to pass on a marketing message and trying to create exponential growth in the message's exposure and influence.

Off the internet this is defined as word-of-mouth, creating a buzz, leveraging the media or network marketing, but online the word viral is being used (Wilson, 2000). As said before, since this is a process from consumer to consumer it is very hard to control and initiate. However, it is a strong kind of marketing, since most customers will probably trust their friends or family over commercials seen on TV. And so a lot of companies will try for their message to 'go viral'. The only kind of viral marketing on a smartphone is social media, which is almost comparable with word-of-mouth but on a much larger scale.

### *Social media*

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Unlike traditional media, social media are by nature consumer-driven. And unlike before, this enables the consumer to directly communicate their opinions about products to companies and other consumers who willing to listen. Because social media are consumer driven, most consumers find them to be more trustworthy sources for information. The rise of social media had already happened before the development of smartphones, although smartphones have made social media portable and available anytime and anywhere. Which means, consumers can post positive or negative comments on companies Facebook pages, reviewing websites or twitter also anytime and anywhere. But not only comments have the potential to go viral, companies also try to create things to talk about. For example, special commercials, new kinds of products or limited editions collections.

When a company is working with social media, some caution is needed. For example, a Facebook page could gain you some extra revenue, but because of complaints consumer may post on your page, sales could also decrease. Still, in 2012 already 39 percent of the companies surveyed by McKinsey used social-media and saw it as their primary digital tool to reach customers. Facebook is mostly used, with 92%, followed by LinkedIn (71%), Twitter (84%) and Blogs (68%) (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012). Actually social media use is pull marketing, because a consumer has to search for a company's Facebook or twitter page. However, social media did not come up when the smartphone arose. The newness of social media is the direct access consumers have nowadays. Social media has become much more an opportunity but at the same time a threat for companies.



## Discussion

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In this paper an explorative research is conducted about applying smartphone strategies in the Netherlands. This paper can be used to guide future researches in this field. Because of the explorative character, the scope of this research was quite broad. Retailer is a very broad concept, every retailer has its own characteristics and objective. Therefore, no general conclusion will apply for all kinds of retailers. Research by Google (2013b) shows that in Grocery shopping only 36% of the consumers search for lower prices, compared to 74% in stores for appliances. This difference would be interesting to conduct a research on with a smaller scope, with the focus on a specific retailer.

Another research topic would be whether the right generation would be reached by a smartphone strategy. Research by Google (2013a) tells us that about 15% of the people above 35 years old own a smartphone in the Netherlands. This is the generation that is already working and would earn the most money. Therefore, they are the most interesting group for retailers to reach. However, a smartphone strategy is not the only marketing tool that companies use. In their marketing strategies they should not forget to also use a channel that reaches the older generations.

This research is based on the assumption that the Dutch retailer has not fully recognized the opportunities of using a smartphone strategy. Although some Dutch retailers do have one, there might be another reason for them not to use a smartphone strategy. For example, people always say the Dutch are very stingy. This might be a reason for Dutch retailers not to use couponing, because of the high chance these customers will only visit their store once, to make use of the discount. While in America this is a good way to attract new customers, it might not work for the Dutch population. To examine this more, the Dutch retailers should be surveyed to find the reason why they do not use a smartphone strategy yet.

The focus in this paper is on creating customer loyalty with in-store strategies. Of course in marketing also pre- and post-shopping experiences related to the retailer are important. For future research it would be interesting to investigate smartphone strategies which focus hereon. Examples for pre-shopping may be, apps which already shows the current in-store collection would be interesting. And for post-shopping customer services can play an important role, when there are questions or complaints about products.

## Conclusion

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The main goal in this research was to find out how Dutch retailers can create more loyal customers by using an in-store smartphone strategy. Therefore, the sub-questions explain how customer loyalty can be created in-store in these new smartphone era and shows already existing smartphone strategies and their usability in the Dutch market.

The first sub-question explains how marketing has shifted lately. From just trying to sell more, loyalty became more important. The smartphone brought a lot of new opportunities to create loyal customers and should be enhanced in the offline shopping experience. Therefore, an omnichannel strategy should be implemented that combines online channels with the offline retailer. To reach the right customers they need to be targeted with care. Dutch consumers are by nature less loyal, and are more price sensitive in-store. Therefore, program loyalty, where customers focus on the economic value of the program, is less appropriate for the Dutch market. Customers who make use of these coupons and offers will not become more loyal to the company. Although program loyalty will not make consumers very loyal, it is still important to use it sometimes. The combination of offering a discount and offering more services to get company loyalty will satisfy the customer more. However, the price after discount should still exceed the costs, because these marketing efforts will not be paid back in more customer loyalty.

For Dutch retailers, company loyalty is the most important to focus on, it is the first step to get a consumer in-store. Trust, satisfaction and feeling committed are the important drivers of company loyalty. In-store retailers already have a great competitive advantage in trust, because trust is very hard to establish in ecommerce. To get customer satisfaction, the retailer should exceed the expectations that customers have. Because there are very little retailers making use of smartphone strategies in the Netherlands this is a very good way to exceed expectations of customers, which are mostly based on their previous experiences. Commitment exists of a calculative and an affective component. Extra services will be beneficial when a certain retailer is compared to another and therefore the calculative component will choose the retailer with more services. For the affective component the whole brand should give the consumers a consistent brand feeling, which they can identify themselves with.

Pull marketing is used to get more company loyalty. In pull marketing the consumers themselves request information. The two identified smartphone pull strategies are: ensuring traceability on the internet and offering extra service with apps that support consumers shopping. Ensuring traceability makes sure that whenever consumers search for the company it will show up and offers some extra information that the consumer might need. Apps can be very diverse, for example apps which help consumers shopping and offer more product information. But also paying with smartphones is possible and offering WiFi to support the use of these apps, are services that can be very beneficial for customers.

Push marketing should also be used to encourage program loyalty, but to a lesser extent than pull marketing in the Dutch market. This is used to sell more once the consumers are in-store. Location-based services and couponing are identified in this category, which are mostly used together when a coupon is sent to a consumers' smartphone by location-based services. They can be distributed to consumers at a certain location. They are very useful to distribute to consumers who are already in-store to make them actually buy something. Another advantage is that they can fill off-peak hours.

To conclude, it is important for every retailer to think about his organizational goals when implementing a smartphone strategy. Every smartphone strategy has its own characteristics and is applicable in various kinds of situations. In this research an overview has been given for every kind of

strategy, which can be used by Dutch retailers to decide which may be the most appropriate for them.

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## Demografische gegevens

