

Effects of Advertising Strategies Adopted by Ooredoo Oman Telecom Company on Consumer Preferences

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Advertisement plays an imperative role in today's business environment. Especially the influence of Advertisements in service sector is immense. Various advertising strategies are employed by small, medium and large companies to earn consumer preference. Telecom sector throughout the world is witnessing immense competition. Telecom companies are employing a combination of advertising strategies to acquire and retain subscribers. Omani telecom sector is no different where various telecom service providers are trying to persuade their consumers using different advertising strategies. Ooredoo Oman is one of the major Telecom Service providers in Oman with over 3 million subscribers.

This research aims to study the effects of advertisement strategies adopted by Ooredoo-Oman Telecommunication Company on Consumer Preferences. The sample size for study chosen was 110 Ooredoo-Oman subscribers. A questionnaire was systematically formulated to find out the effects of advertisement strategies on Ooredoo-Oman's consumer's preferences.

The results reflect that advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo-Oman are very expedient not only to create persuasion among consumers but also in building powerful perceptions in the minds of consumers. Two variables such as consumer perceptions and brand awareness about Ooredoo Oman's services will result in favorable consumer preferences towards the company, as there exist a positive relation between the two variables.

Keywords :- Advertisement Strategies, Consumer Preferences, Subscription, Online Advertising, SMS Advertising, Broadcast Advertising, Print Advertising, Outdoor Advertising

Introduction / Rationale of The Study :- Oman has sixteen mobile networks offering telecom services. The networks providing 4-G coverage are Omantel, Ooredoo, Renna and Friendi.

Ooredoo Oman previously known as Nawras is a telecommunications company majority owned by the Q-tel Group that also has a number of significant Omani owners (shareholders) that ensure that the company is very strongly assimilated into the Omani society. It is the Sultanate of Oman's first privately owned Telecommunications Company.

Omani Qatari Telecom Company (Ooredoo, Oman) booked a net profit of OMR 41.9 million for the year 2019, listing a growth of over 30 percent when compared to the year 2018 with the net profit of over OMR 30 million.

As per muscatdaily.com, Ooredoo's revenues and the net profits grew regardless of the difficulties of a year that has seen the mobile market lose around 6.0 per cent of its customers. Ooredoo's total customers' base by the end of 2019 stood at 3013,688 consumers.

This research paper titled "Effects of Advertising Strategies Adopted by Ooredoo Oman Telecom Company on Consumer Preferences" studies the impact of various advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman Telecom on Consumer Preferences"

Statement of the Problem :- With the advent of many telecom companies entering Oman, the consumers' preference with respect to price, service quality and advertisement is changing rapidly. Ooredoo being one of the dominant player in the Omani telecom industry has managed to sustain and grow its market share even in an industry slowdown. Ooredoo Oman, along with other mobile resellers, summed 6,440 K subscriptions in the year 2019 (consists 712 K postpaid subscribers and also 7,728 K prepaid subscriptions). This measure up with a high of 6493 K mobile subscriptions in 2020. (As per Oman Observer, 2021)

This study focuses on learning the Ooredoo's advertising strategies in Oman and how the company has managed to survive the mobile telecom subscription dip in 2018. Researcher has made an effort to critically address following problem.

Consumer preference in telecom sector is affected by various factors, such as pricing, service quality, offers and advertisements. During the fall in sales and decline in the number of subscribers, what are the advertising strategies that can be used to manage the growth?

Aims and Objectives of the Study :- The core aim of this study was to understand how Ooredoo Oman developed advertising strategies in order to increase consumer preference. 5 advertising strategies, SMS Advertising, Online Advertising, Radio & Television Advertising, Outdoor Advertising and Print Advertising were investigated in this study.

The intention of study is to understand the advertising strategies of Ooredoo Oman. However, there are different attributes contributing to advertising strategies, they are - industry growth, pricing, brand name, distribution channels, customer satisfaction, service quality, etc.

The primary question in this study is which advertising strategies are the mainly effective in winning subscriber preference in Ooredoo Oman.

- 1) To identify the variety of advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo in Omani market.
- 2) To evaluate the effects of different advertisement strategies adopted by Ooredoo to gain consumer preference.

2.1: Effect of Online Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman on Consumer Preferences

2.2: Effect of SMS Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman on Consumer Preferences

2.3: Effect of Radio & Television Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman on Consumer Preferences

2.4: Effect of Print Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman on Consumer Preferences

2.5: Effect of Outdoor Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman on Consumer Preferences

Research Questions :-

- 1) State the various advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo in Omani market?
- 2) Also state the effects of these advertising strategies on consumers' preferences?

Hypothesis :-

Hy1: Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo-Oman have significant effects on consumer preferences

Hy0: Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo-Oman have no significant effects on consumer preferences.

Scope and Limitation :-

The Scope of Study:-

1) Increases awareness: This study will increase the knowledge about the consumer preference in the Omani telecom market, which helped Ooredoo in building an effective advertising campaign.

2) Analyzes changing market trends: Knowing your customer is extremely important for any business. A customer's preference is subject to change with the changing market conditions. This research analyzes these changing preferences of the customers.

3) Public feedback: This research will be in general useful for the Omani telecom industry as a whole as it gives a public opinion about

4) Results: Advertisement campaigns that will be created on the basis of results of the research will be effective and sustainable.

Limitations of the Study:-

1) Connecting secondary sources with primary sources

2) Authentic answers by prospectors why the actual reason to use Ooredoo.

3) Customers most of the times ignore advertisement messages.

Significance of the Study :- The study will be extremely advantageous to the following stakeholders:

(i) Telecom Service providers: They will understand what is expected by the customers.

(ii) Subscribers: They will be able to review the company as per their preferences and decide what is best for them.

(iii) Academicians and Researchers: They will understand the recent trends in services marketing especially the telecom sector.

Definition of Terms :-

(i) Consumer Preferences: They are defined as the personal tastes and likings, as measured by effectiveness, of various bundles of goods and services.

(ii) Advertising Strategies: Advertising strategies are plans to reach and persuade customers to purchase a product or a service.

(iii) Subscribers (telecom): A subscriber refers to ultimate user of a communication service. Subscribers include individuals, activities, organizations, etc. who chose to opt-in to your telecom network.

(iv) Outdoor Advertising: Any advertising done out-of-doors that broadcasts your business's idea, products and services. Outdoor advertising includes things like billboards etc.

The researchers have mentioned the rationale of the study, which is to discover the various Advertising strategies used by Ooredoo Telecom Company and discover how the company has been able to achieve high consumer preferences over the years.

Review of Related Literature :- With the increasing competition, advertising strategies have been progressively used by telecom companies as a strategy for achieving high consumer preference, hence it is imperative to understand the concept precisely. Keeping the above goal in mind, the researchers have reviewed related literature as a backdrop to create an understanding of the subject. Earlier research work involving 'advertising strategies of telecom companies and its effect on consumer preference' were intensely analyzed.

The focus of the review of literature is :-

1) To find information regarding the previous studies on advertising strategies adopted by telecommunication companies.

2) To understand the customer preferences while making purchase decisions in telecommunication sector.

3) To assess the impact of advertising strategies on consumer preference in telecommunication sector.

According to **Suk, Lee, & Lichtenstein (2012)** The research has examined the influence of price presentation and order on consumer preference, television advertising and print advertising effect on the influence of scheme recommendations on subscribers. The analytical aspect of consumer choice and the influence of advertising on choices among a set of opinion such as competitive advertising.

Amina Merabeta, Abderrezzak Benhabibb and Abderrezzak Merabet (2016) in their study titled "Impact of Mobile advertising on consumer attitudes in Algeria: case study of Ooredoo" stated that Mobile advertising is a great tool to build a customer relationship which is based on closeness between advertiser and consumer.

Niros, Meletios and Angelica (2017) stated that Brand Personality dimensions are proved to be the best way to create a long-term relationship with the brand's customers and therefore, to persuade brand awareness and implications. However, the desired advertising dimensions' may be receptive to the idea of the product. This study, which is centered on telecommunications' industry, has discovered the essential dimensions' consumer preference.

Rakish Belwal and Mohammed Amireh (2018) from Sohar University in their research titled "Service Quality and Attitudinal Loyalty" examined the service levels for two main telecommunication companies in Oman – They are: Omantel and Ooredoo using the SERVQUAL model and has tested the outcome of five service dimensions on the loyalty of consumer. Their study also revealed the importance of reliability dimensions in affecting the attitudinal loyalty of telecommunication customers for the long-term growth, it also designates the option of tangibles, receptiveness, and empathy in resulting behavioral loyalty to prevent customers' switching in the short period of time. By doing so and positioning their main service quality focus on dependability and reassurance, telecommunication companies can protect a higher loyalty and also profitability in the long run.

As per Iqbal and Siddique (2019) there is a strong effect of Advertising on consumer Loyalty in the telecommunications industry. Therefore, customer happiness and their trust are the two important factors causing a positive word of mouth and significant way. Also it shows that there exists an affirmative and strong important effect on customer satisfaction and trust on their preferences along with the arbitration of word of mouth.

Conceptual Framework :- The following conceptual framework will be followed to study the effects of advertising strategies by Ooredoo Telecom Company on consumer preference, which forms the dependent variable. The focus

will be to analyze the effects of Ooredoo Oman's advertising strategies on consumer preferences.

Based on the past studies the researcher has noted down five advertising strategies that affect consumer preference in telecom sector. They are: Online Advertising, SMS Advertising, Radio & TV Advertising, Print Advertising and Outdoor Advertising Strategies. They form the independent variables. (Refer to Figure 1.1 – Conceptual Framework)

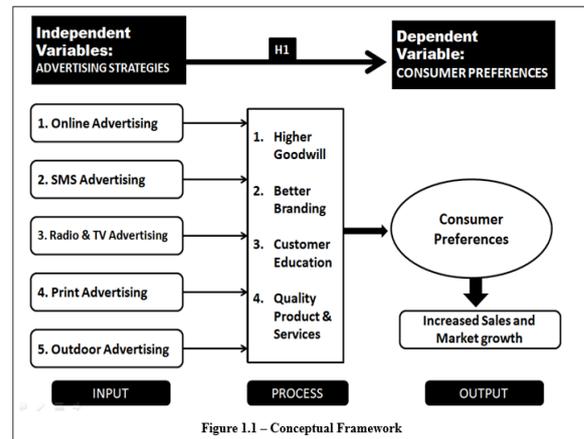


Figure 1.1 – Conceptual Framework

Source: Developed by researchers for the study

Further the different advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo Telecom company will be studied in order to assess their effects on consumer preference.

Advertising strategies are a part of marketing and similar strategies.

In Advertising, it is imperative to find the right combination "media-mixing" with approaches that contains online advertising, SMS Advertising, Radio & TV Advertising, Print Advertising & Outdoor Advertising.

An effective Advertising strategy is the one that includes the following:

1. Decide the perfect frequency to advertisements and to avoid spreading the budget too much
2. Identifying the perfect media-mix
3. Utilizing the right media and targets the primary customers and audience
4. To maximize the reach and frequency. By perfectly targeting the right demographics and continuously to keep the concerned products and services visible to the consumers.

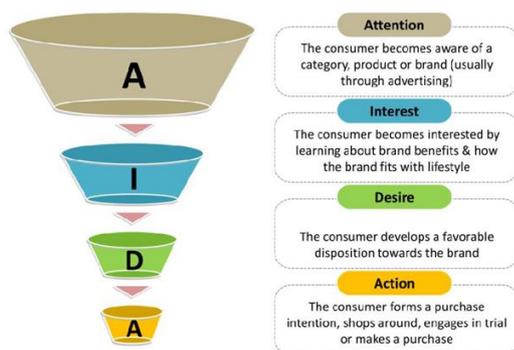
Analyzing effects of Advertising Strategies :- An Advertiser can promote definite products in many different ways.

Conventional advertising like television and radio, billboards advertisements that targets wider audience can still be extremely functional if properly planned and executed.

Advertising strategy is a part of marketing strategy which is a larger thing.

Advertising can be again broken down by what's possible to induce a consumer in having interest in our product.

The researcher will use the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire and Action) model to evaluate the effects of advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman on Consumer preferences.



Source: <https://yourfreetemplates.com/aida-model-template/>

Research Gap :- It was observed the most of the literatures which were reviewed focus on the Price, Quality and Trust aspect to study consumer preferences in telecom sector. Few studies focused on marketing factor. But none of the literatures reviewed focused on Advertising strategies and their total effects on consumer preference. Therefore, this research will provide valuable insights with respect to the advertising strategies and their effects on consumer preferences with respect to telecommunication sector.

There is also a requirement for a better understanding of the advertising strategies which have brought about a paradigm shift in the procurement decisions of telecom consumers in the Omani market.

Research Methodology :-

Introduction :- This chapter comprises of the research methodology for the project. We will examine, in more detail, the research approach, the research strategies, the research methodology, the approaches of data collection, how to do selection of the sample size, the overall research procedure, the type of data analysis, and the ethical consideration(s) for the project.

Type of Research :-

Research Type : Quantitative Research.

Method of Data Collection : Survey method using Questionnaires.

Quantitative Research is preferred in this study so as to quantify the problems by means of generating numerical data which can be transformed into working statistics. For this study we need to quantify preferences, attitude, opinion, behavior, and other variables and at last generalize the results from the sample population (Ooredoo Customers) qualitative. study together. This method approach is used to obtain a full understanding of fundamental causes, motives, and viewpoints (interviews and questionnaires), which will result in reliable data. It provides methodological flexibility and an understanding of the conflict between quantitative outcomes and qualitative findings. In addition to that mixed-method helps get additional information about this topic and identify uncovered data when using questionnaires only.

Research design :- The target population for this study are the subscribers of Ooredoo-Oman from the national capital Muscat. The variables identified for this study are advertising strategies and consumer preferences. Consumer preference is depended variable as it depends on company's various advertising strategies, which are independent variables.

Research Method :- In this research, correlation method will be used to measure the relationship between two variables. It is a statistical tool that

explains the relationship between two variables. In this study we are examining if there is a relationship between advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo (Online, SMS, Broadcast etc.) and consumer perceptions. Deductive reasoning will be used to test the theory presented in the figure 1.1 (The AIDA model).

Research Respondents :- Ooredoo-Oman subscribers from Muscat Governorate, Sultanate of Oman

Research Instrument :- Structured Questionnaire will be used to gather primary data (Sample Questionnaire is the part of this report as Annexure 1.1)

Research Procedure:

(A) Gathering of Data:- Ethical Implications

- The researchers will ensure that the information collected is Valid (up to date)
- The participation in this research will be Voluntary and through Consent.
- Procedure used in gathering primary data:
- Structured questionnaires will be prepared keeping the research objectives in mind
- They will be floated for data collection
- Data collected will be entered in the system for analysis
- Data Analysis and Interpretation will be done
- Conclusion and Recommendations

(B) Treatment of Data :- Data Analysis: Descriptive data analysis techniques like (Mean, Median, Frequency and Range) will be applied using relevant Statistical tools from Micro Soft Excel.

Confidentiality of the information collected will be maintained by the researchers all the time.

Data Analysis And Interpretation :- Out of the sample size of 110 respondents, 108 respondents have submitted the complete survey questionnaire. Their analysis of their response with respect to effective advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo-Oman is as follows:

1. Gender of the Respondents:

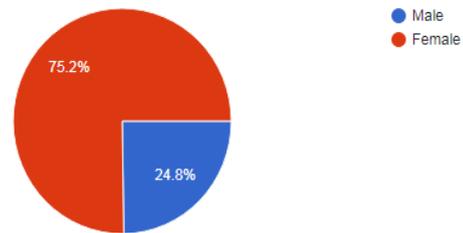


Figure – 4.1

The above graph shows the gender of the respondents. Out of the total 110 Respondents, 83 were females and 27 were males.

2. Occupation of the Respondents:

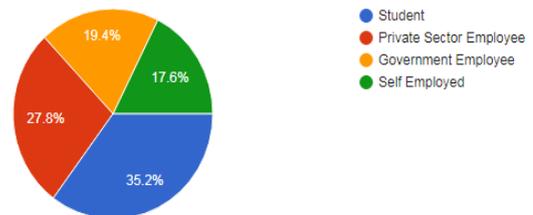


Figure – 4.2

The above graph denotes the occupation of the respondents who were surveyed. Out of the total 110 respondents, 108 respondents have expressed their occupation. The data states; 38 respondents as Students, 30 as Private Sector Employees, 21 as Government Sector Employees and 19 respondents stated that they are Self Employed.

3. Income levels of the Respondents:

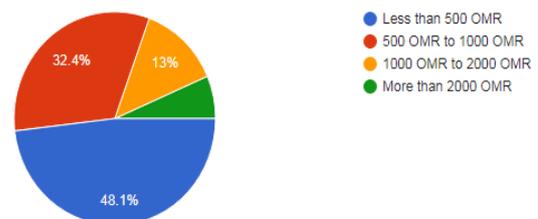


Figure – 4.3

The respondents were asked about their monthly income levels.

Income of Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Less than 500 OMR	52	48.14814815	48.1481481	48.1481481
500 to 1000 OMR	35	32.40740741	32.4074074	80.5555555
1000 to 2000 OMR	14	12.96296296	12.962963	93.5185185
Above 2000 OMR	7	6.481481481	6.48148148	100
Total	108	100	100	

Table 4.3

Interpretation : The response stated that majority of them 52 (48.1%) earn less than 500 OMR per month, 35 (32.4%) of the respondents stated that they earn between 500 OMR to 1000 OMR per month. 14 (13%) respondents stated that they earn between 1000 OMR to 2000 OMR. Only 7 (6.5%) of the respondents stated that they earn more than OMR 2000 a month

4. For how long you have been Ooredoo Oman customer?

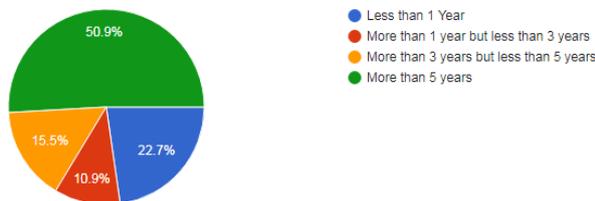


Figure – 4.4

Out of the total respondents surveyed, 50.9% of them stated that they have been an Ooredoo Oman customer from more than 5 years. 15.5% of the respondents stated that they have been Ooredoo Oman customer from more than 3 years but less than 5 years. 10.9% of the respondents are Ooredoo customers for more than 1 year but less than 3 years. 22.7% of the respondents stated that they are new customers of Ooredoo Oman.

Interpretation: It can be noted that majority of the respondents (50.9%) are Ooredoo Oman customers for more than 5 years.

5. How will you rate the Online Advertising by Ooredoo Oman?

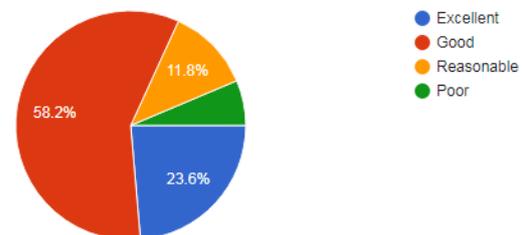


Figure – 4.5

Majority of the respondents (58.2%) have stated the Online Advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Good, followed by 23.6% of the respondents, who felt that the online advertising by Ooredoo Oman is Excellent. 11.8% of the respondents felt the Online advertisement by Ooredoo Oman as Reasonable. Only 6.4% of the respondents felt that Ooredoo Oman’s online advertisement is Poor.

Interpretation: Ooredoo Oman’s online advertising was stated as effective by the respondents as 70% of them replied the online advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Excellent and Good.

6. How will you rate the SMS update Advertising adopted by Ooredoo Oman?

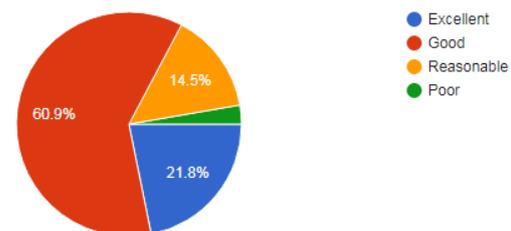


Figure – 4.6

Majority of the respondents (60.9%) have stated the SMS advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Good, followed by 21.8% of the respondents, who felt that the sms advertising by Ooredoo Oman is Excellent. 14.5% of the respondents felt the SMS advertisement by Ooredoo Oman as Reasonable. Only 2.8% of the respondents felt that Ooredoo Oman’s SMS advertisement is Poor.

Interpretation : Ooredoo Oman’s sms advertising was stated as effective by the respondents as 82.7% of them replied the sms advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Excellent and Good.

7. How will you rate the Radio and Television updates provided by Ooredoo Oman?

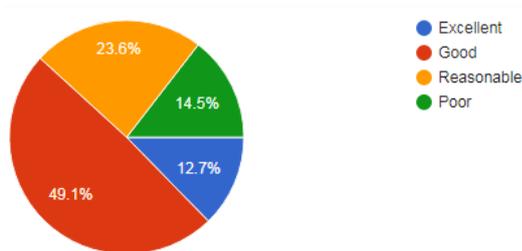


Figure – 4.7

Majority of the respondents (49.1%) have stated the Radio & Television Advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Good, followed by 23.6% of the respondents, who felt that the Radio & Television Advertising by Ooredoo Oman is Reasonable. 14.5% of the respondents felt the Radio and TV advertisement by Ooredoo Oman as Poor. 12.7% of the respondents felt that Ooredoo Oman’s Radio and TV advertisement is Excellent.

Interpretation : Ooredoo Oman’s Radio & Television Advertising was stated as effective by the respondents as 61.8% of them replied the Radio & Television Advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Excellent and Good. It is to be noted that 14.5% of the respondents are not happy with Radio & Television Advertising by Ooredoo Oman.

8. How will you rate the Print Advertisements such as Newspaper and Magazine Advertisements by Ooredoo Oman?

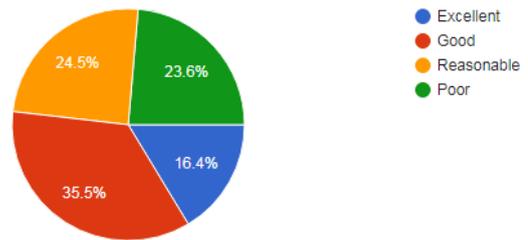
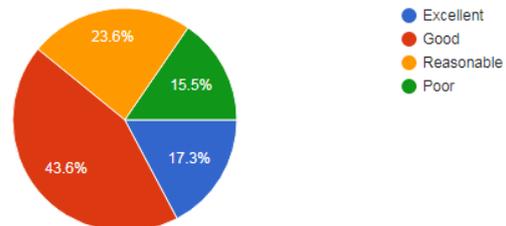


Figure – 4.8

Majority of the respondents (35.5%) have stated the Print Advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Good, followed by 24.5% of the respondents, who felt that the Print Advertising by Ooredoo Oman is Reasonable. 23.6% of the respondents felt the Print advertisement by Ooredoo Oman as poor. 16.4% of the respondents felt that Ooredoo Oman’s Print advertisement is Excellent.

Interpretation: Ooredoo Oman’s Print Advertising was stated as effective by the respondents as 51.9% of them replied the Print Advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Excellent and Good. It is to be noted that 26.6% of the respondents are not happy with Print Advertising by Ooredoo Oman.

9. How will you rate the Outdoor Advertising such as Billboards and Kiosks by Ooredoo Oman?



Majority of the respondents (43.6%) have stated the Outdoor Advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Good, followed by 23.6% of the respondents, who felt that the Outdoor Advertising by Ooredoo Oman is Reasonable. 15.5% of the respondents felt the Print advertisement by Ooredoo Oman as poor. 17.3% of the respondents felt that Ooredoo Oman’s Print advertisement is Excellent.

Interpretation: Ooredoo Oman’s Outdoor Advertising was stated as effective by the respondents as 60.9% of them replied the

Outdoor Advertising by Ooredoo Oman as Excellent and Good. It is to be noted that 15.5% of the respondents are not happy with Outdoor Advertising by Ooredoo Oman and the stated it as poor.

Hypothesis Testing:

Sr. No.	Hypothesis Statement	Correlation of Coefficient	Remarks
1	H1: Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo-Oman has significant effects on consumer preference.	0.821592223	Accept

Interpretation: Since the Correlation coefficient is 0.82, the alternate hypothesis is accepted and it can be stated that there exist significant effects of Advertising Strategies adopted by Ooredoo Oman on Consumer preferences.

Data Interpretation:

Sr. No	Advertising Strategy	Respondent (%)	Rank
1.	SMS Advertising	82.7%	1
2.	Online Advertising	70%	2
3.	Radio & Television Advertising	61.8%.	3
4..	Outdoor Advertising	60.9%	4
5.	Print Advertising	51.9%	5

Table 4.10 – Data Interpretation using ranking

It can be interpreted from the data analysis that; SMS Advertising and Online Advertising are the most effective as per the customers of Ooredoo Oman. Therefore, these advertising strategies have the highest consumer preferences. These are followed by Radio & television Advertising. Outdoor Advertising and Print Advertising strategies had the least impact on Ooredoo Oman’s customers, therefore they had the least effects on customer preferences.

Findings and Discussion :- Findings in relation to the Objectives of the Study:

The majority of the respondents surveyed stated that they have been Ooredoo Oman customers for more than 5 years.

1) To identify the various advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo in Omani market.

Ooredoo-Oman has successfully used a combination of different advertising strategies to manage their rate over the period of time market growth

These strategies are -

1.	SMS Advertising Strategy
2.	Online Advertising Strategy
3.	Radio & Television Advertising Strategy
4..	Outdoor Advertising Strategy
5.	Print Advertising Strategy

Table 1.1: Advertising strategies ranking

2) To assess the effects of various advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo to gain consumer preference.

Let us discuss the findings with respect Effects of Advertising strategies adopted by Ooredoo on Consumer Preferences:

2.1: Online Advertising Strategy adopted by Ooredoo Oman had the most effect on the Consumer preferences.

2.2: SMS Advertising was the second most preferred advertising strategy by the customers of Ooredoo Oman

2.3: Radio and Television strategy seemed to be less preferred over Online and SMS Advertising strategy.

2.4: Outdoor Advertising strategy adopted by Ooredoo Oman was among the less preferred and had less effect on the preference of Ooredoo Oman consumers.

2.5: Amongst all the advertising strategies adopted by the company, the print strategy was least effective as per Ooredoo Oman consumers.

Conclusion and Recommendations :- Revitalizing advertising strategies and thereby winning consumer preference had been the most vital as well as significant objective for Ooredoo Oman, with an aim to ensure long tern survival and

delivering sustainable growth to the company over the period of time. Advertising Strategies imply retaining the current existing customer base in count to acquiring new customer base.

Out of the different Advertising strategies implemented by the company, some strategies, such as Online Advertising, SMS Advertising were praised by Ooredoo customers. However, some advertising strategies like, Outdoor and Print Advertising strategies were criticized.

The study concludes how Ooredoo Oman, as a leading telecom company in the country can benefit from the effective advertising strategies. The study also highlights, where the company needs to focus more for winning and sustaining customers.

Recommendations :-

- With the advent of technology, consumers are switching toward the modern digital modes of communication. The company should keep the following things in mind to come up with an effective advertising strategy:
- The consumers are more inclined towards technology, such as digital / online modes, therefore more campaigns should be started on online digital platforms
- Second most important thing for consumers in convenience since a huge number of consumers have stated SMS advertising extremely effective. This is due to convenience; Therefore, the company should continue its SMS Advertising strategy.
- More focus is required on Radio and Television presence, since these mediums have high reach and frequency.
- Lastly, innovation is required for outdoor and print media advertising strategies. Since most of the respondents

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