

# Role of Disruptive Technology in Personal Selling

VEDANT VENGSARKAR

*Student, Narsee Monjee Institute of Management, Kirit P. Mehta School of Law.*

**Abstract—Purpose-** *As per previous findings personal selling was done on a small scale and the salespeople were considered important without which a product could not sell itself. As per the current research with evolution in technology there are robot advisors who eliminate the need of salespeople and allow people to conveniently deal with the products they need and get it customized accordingly. Also, as per current studies the process of personal selling has become customer centric and focuses on delivering tailor made products suited to customers. Research Implications-* *This paper gives us an understanding of how technology is useful in the process of personal selling that is there are path breaking findings like the introduction of drones which deliver products and reduce the delivery time and the shipping cost. Also, personal selling provides a triple integration reward system which boosts employee morale as well as leads to a healthy and cordial working relationship between the employee and the company. Research Findings-* *The major findings of this paper are that the game theory which predicts how a customer would behave and thus aids the salesperson in determining the customer's demands. It also aids in the formulation of a strategy for how the customer would react when the salesman goes door to door selling a product, as well as reducing the customer's shame. Based on the wants and expectations of the customer, the salesperson will adjust his attitude. The other is the use of the AIDA model which is attention, interest, desire and action which identifies a stage through which a customer goes before purchasing a product. In personal selling also the salesperson needs to identify the needs of the customer making these two processes interrelated. Research Methodology-* *The researcher has relied on secondary sources of data like Scopus indexed papers.*

**Indexed Terms-** *AIDA, game theory, product, customer Index.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Personal selling is when vendors and potential buyers speak directly to one another. It allows for direct two-way communication between the customer and the vendor (Perreault and McCarthy,2020). This gives the company more opportunity to research their customers' needs and can give them more freedom in modifying their offers (Doyle and Stern, 2020).

Personal selling entails a two-way communication flow between a buyer and a seller. Face-to-face encounters are frequently used to influence a person's or a group's buying choice. Personal selling is now possible over the phone, via video conferencing, and interactive computer links, thanks to technological advancements. Personal selling plays three key functions in a company's entire marketing strategy (Kotler,2020). Salespeople must understand their clients' businesses better than they do, and match themselves with their goals. Personal selling, which involves listening to customers, assessing their needs, and organising attempts to solve their problems, is still an important part of the promotional mix (Kotler and Armstrong ,2019).

### SAP

SAP claims that by improving their salespeople's social selling skills, they were able to generate 32% more revenue and 10% more quota.

SAP purchased LinkedIn Sales Navigator to help them with their social selling efforts. This gave sales staff a more efficient approach to contact prospects and communicate with existing customers.

### COCA-COLA

**ATTENTION:** - They have caught the attention of the audience from their posters. They had run a zero original campaign consisted of posters on billboards and bus stations. The posters were black in color, and the question was written in red colour. That campaign had attracted a massive amount of people before they know anything about the product.

**INTEREST:** - After catching their attention, it's important to make them feel interested in your product, and the Coca-Cola team had done that very well. In that campaign, they incorporated the word "ZERO" with it, and here people started noticing that word and were curious to know what was represented here.

DESIRE: - As they can develop the desire among people regarding the product, they also focused on the fact that it doesn't contain sugar. It tastes the same as any other beverage. This way, they have stimulated the audience to try, like how it is different.

ACTION: - Now, this is the stage where you gain or lose the customer. The customer has fallen into the funnel and they are ready to take the action because they have designed the stage as per the A.I.D.A model (Ritwika Chatterjee,2021)

## II. EVOLUTION OF PERSONAL SELLING

Evolution of Personal selling Selling as a means of exchange is documented in ancient Greek history, and the name "salesman" first appears in Plato's writings at this time. The first door-to-door salesperson arose in the shape of the peddler in the later Middle Ages. As the United States economy grew in strength during the twentieth century, it became clear that marketing would be critical in shifting the economy away from rural roots and toward mass production and efficient transportation. Whereas in the future, personal selling it follows more of a customer centric approach and the whole process is based on trust and the relationship post sales. Some of the world's largest multi-level marketing and direct selling enterprises include Natura &Co, COWAY, Nu Skin Enterprises, PM-International, among others. The top direct selling companies in the United States are Amway and Herbalife. The second largest company, Herbalife, primarily offers weight management and nutritional products, and reported net sales of approximately five and a half billion U.S. dollars in that same year (Statista,2020).

## III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To examine the relationship between game pricing theory and personal selling

To investigate how disruptive technology is incorporated into personal selling.

To study the procedure and stages of personal selling

## IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Is the game pricing theory a personal selling theoretical framework?

How can such technologies produce disruption in a business?

What are the procedures and stages of a personal selling mechanism?

## V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H<sub>1</sub>: Personal Selling evokes a feeling of self-provoked embarrassment.

H<sub>0</sub>: Personal Selling doesn't evoke a feeling of self-provoked embarrassment.

## VI. SCOPE

of the Topic Personal selling is a customer centric approach which needs to maintain good cordial relations with its customers. When disruptive technologies are adopted, it reduces the self-provoked embarrassment a salesman usually faces and there are less chances of errors made by the salesmen.

## VII. LIMITATIONS

of the Research "The study is based only on secondary data from books, journals, newspaper articles, websites etc. Which may work as a limitation of the study". Another weakness of this study is the lack of research on the consumer side of personal selling, specifically how customers perceive and embrace the personal selling. The other research gap is that not much research has been done on how personal selling process evokes a sense of embarrassment in the customers as well.

## VIII. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Personal selling (PS) is the most expensive form of promotion. PS involves the building of relationship through communication for the purpose of creating a sales transaction. A seller tries to uncover and satisfy buyers' needs in a mutual, long-term manner suitable for both parties (Weitz and Castleberry ,2019). Thus, personal selling affirmed to be an interpersonal communication relating to the goods and services. Communication is the most basic activity for the sales representative during personal selling and exchange; (Schwepker Jr Williams,2020). It is a social situation involving two persons in a communication exchange (Engel & Kollat ,2020). Personal selling serves three

major roles in a firm's overall marketing effort. Salespeople are the critical link between the firm and its customers. They represent what a company is or attempts to be and are often the only personal contact a customer has with the company. Lastly, personal selling may play a dominant role in a company's marketing program (Kotler, 2019). Salespeople are people who sell products or services to customers. They must have a great deal of knowledge about the products they sell and be aware of their customers, according to the American Institute of Purchasing and Salesmen's Association (AIPSA)(Walker,2020). Salesforce plays a vital role in developing positive customer value. In addition, because the company image is first formed by salespeople who are in direct contact with customers, the role of salespeople in human sales is very important for business success and sustainability. (Dubinsky, A.J.; Ingram,2020).

#### IX. STAGES AND PROCEDURES OF PERSONAL SELLING

There are 7 stages of personal selling:

Stage 1: Pre – sale preparation: Is the selection, training, and motivating of salespeople. Salespeople must be knowledgeable about the company, its products/services, the market environment, be skilled at selling, and be aware of the products of competitors and the level of competition. They should also be familiar with the firm's policies and effective selling strategies (Hamman P,2019)

Stage 2: Prospecting /qualifying: This stage involves finding the prospective customer who needs a particular product and possess the ability to make a purchasing decision. A youngster, for example, may be a qualified prospect for a toy, but the parents who make the purchasing choice are the qualified prospect (Hamman P,2019)

Stage 3: Approach: This is the stage where the salesperson should approach the customer in a dignified and polite manner. The customer should feel that he/she is getting a lot of attention because first impression is always everlasting (Hamman P,2019)

Step 4: Presentation/Demonstration: Salespeople may need to demonstrate their products or services in order to pique a prospect's attention and persuade them to come to a conclusion. (Hamman P,2019)

Step 5: Handling objections: The salesperson must be articulate and able to persuade and convince the prospect. If the prospect asks too many questions and takes too long to make a decision, he or she must not lose patience. Without getting into a fight or losing his anger, the salesperson should dispel all concerns and objections (Hamman P,2019)

Step 6: Sales decision: At this point, the prospect decides whether or not to buy. The salesperson, on the other hand, could advise rather than persuade the prospect into making a decision. If the customer decides to buy, he should feel confident that he has made the appropriate decision. However, if the prospect did not purchase, the salesperson may politely request a return visit at a later date (Hamman P,2019)

Step 7: After sale activities: At this stage, prospects are revisited to enhance sales probably at subsequent visits. It helps to secure repeat sales, to identify additional prospects and to evaluate salesman effectiveness (Hamman P,2019)

#### X. GAME PRICING THEORY FRAMEWORK

The theory of sales is a collection of tools for predicting outcomes of a group of interacting agents where an action of a single agent directly affects the payoff of other participating agents. The core theory of emphasis was the game pricing theory, which is based on the premise of parties' interaction (Ezeudu,2020). It is the study of multi-person decision problems (Gibbons ,2019). It could also be referred to as a bag of analytical tools designed to help us understand the phenomena that is observed when decision-makers interact (Myerson,2020). Salespeople can use game theory to help them anticipate what their customer and competitive salespeople/s will do, using the principles of game theory. The crucial aspect of this is the information a salesperson has when he chooses a strategy. A salesperson could potentially gain an edge by re-evaluating their sales strategy using the concepts of game theory, according to a study by the University of Bath in the UK. Research has suggested "the customer" will start an interaction 80 percent of the time with one of the same four opening comments, according to a study by PricewaterhouseCoopers

(PWC). Salespeople can gain an edge over their competition by taking the time to "due diligence" on a potential customer

#### XI. FINDINGS

The researcher observed the application of game theory in this research, which predicts how a customer would behave and thus aids the salesperson in determining the customer's demands. An attempt to use game theory for pricing is that of (Rao and Shakun, 2018) which developed a quasi-game theoretic model for price fixing. They used the concept of "acceptable interval of prices" (Gabor & Granger, 2020) and several postulates. It is possible to integrate information about competitors' intentions with qualitative interviews and surveys submitted to managers and experts in the industrial sector. The results of these surveys can then be used to test the empirical soundness of the model (Di Benedetto, 2020). It also aids in the formulation of a strategy for how the customer would react when the salesman goes door to door selling a product, as well as reducing the customer's shame. Based on the wants and expectations of the customer, the salesperson will adjust his attitude. The other is the use of the AIDA model which is attention, interest, desire and action which identifies a stage through which a customer goes before purchasing a product. In personal selling also the salesperson needs to identify the needs of the customer making these two processes interrelated.

#### XII. DISCUSSION

As per the previous findings personal selling was done on a small scale and there was no advanced technology which enabled the salesperson to know the demands of a customer. The significance of salespeople was not even given consideration as per previous findings and they were considered as a nuisance by the customers who would be persuaded to buy a product when they were relaxing or if they are not interested. Whereas in our paper it can be seen that the concept of personal selling has evolved where the salesperson or the company has the policy of the customer as the king. The products which are sold have been evaluated and there are surveys which have been taken which determine the needs of the customers. Then there are specific features which are adhered to while designing

the products. In the near future there would not be any need of salespeople delivering products to customers. Another one was a future development made by Amazon called Prime Air where Amazon would deliver the products via drones to customers within 30 minutes and this would eliminate the risk of traffic and would reduce the shipping time instantly. Also, the introduction of robo advisors eliminates the need for salespeople making it an easy and interactive interface.

#### XIII. CONCLUSION

It is a known saying that a quality product cannot sell itself but through the aid of personal selling and a sales representative it can be sold to its peak. When you talk about disruptive technology it helps the salesperson in developing a sharp interrogation tactic which includes knowing the unknown needs of the prospective customer. Another aspect involved in this would be asserting a point of view that is targeting customers who were not interested in the product by providing them with a root cause analysis and contrasting views which would encourage them to purchase a product. Thus, personal selling does evoke a sense of provoked embarrassment.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Greve, G., & Meyer, F. (2021). Analysis of the use of robo-advisors as a replacement for personal selling. In *Robo-Advisory* (pp. 93-104). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-40818-3\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-40818-3_6)
- [2] Ahn, J., Shamim, A., & Park, J. (2021). Impacts of cruise industry corporate social responsibility reputation on customers' loyalty: Mediating role of trust and identification. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 92, 102706. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102706>
- [3] Eluyela, D. F., Akintimehin, O. O., Okere, W., Ozordi, E., Osuma, G. O., Ilogho, S. O., & Oladipo, O. A. (2018). Board meeting frequency and firm performance: examining the nexus in Nigerian deposit money banks. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2018.e00850>
- [4] Peterson, R. A., Crittenden, V. L., & Albaum, G. (2019). On the economic and social benefits of direct selling. *Business Horizons*, 62(3), 373-

382.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2018.12.002>
- [5] Rapp, A., & Beeler, L. (2021). The state of selling & sales management research: a review and future research agenda. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 29(1), 37-50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10696679.2020.1860680>
- [6] Alavi, S., & Habel, J. (2021). The human side of digital transformation in sales: review & future paths. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 41(2), 83-86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2021.1920969>
- [7] AYDIN, S., & Akyollu, S. (2021). THE EFFECTS OF CRM OVER SALESPERSONS' SELLING INTENTION AND SALES PERFORMANCE: A RESEARCH IN TURKISH NON-LIFE INSURANCE MARKET. *Uluslararası İktisadi ve İdari İncelemeler Dergisi*, (30), 291-308. <https://doi.org/10.18092/ulikidince.844803>
- [8] Zoltners, A. A., Sinha, P., Sahay, D., Shastri, A., & Lorimer, S. E. (2021). Practical insights for sales force digitalization success. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 41(2), 87-102. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2021.1908144>
- [9] Guenzi, P., & Nijssen, E. J. (2021). The impact of digital transformation on salespeople: an empirical investigation using the JD-R model. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 41(2), 130-149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2021.1918005>
- [10] Matviiets, O., & Kipen, V. (2021). The features of direct marketing and personal selling as a form of marketing communications. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2021.1916396>
- [11] Udayana, I. B. N., & Farida, N. (2021). The role of customer networking capability effectiveness in enhancing the salespeople's performance in small and medium enterprises. *ASEAN Marketing Journal*, 12(1), 4. <https://doi.org/10.21002/amj.v12i1.12889>
- [12] Corsaro, D., & Maggioni, I. (2021). Managing the sales transformation process in B2B: between human and digital. *Italian Journal of Marketing*, 2021(1), 25-56. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43039-021-00025-w>
- [13] Gupta, M., Sinha, N., Singh, P., & Liébana-Cabanillas, F. (2021). Instagram Advertising among Young Consumers in Wearable Fitness Trackers: The Moderating Role of Technology Acceptance Factors. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 34(5), 411-432. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2021.1931616>
- [14] Cron, W. L., & Baldauf, A. (2021). Commentary: practical insights for sales force digitalization success: the scholar's perspective. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, 41(2), 103-106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08853134.2021.1919523>
- [15] Melnyk, L. H., Dehtyarova, I. B., Kubatko, O. V., & Kharchenko, M. O. (2020). Economic and Social Challenges of Disruptive Technologies in Conditions of Industries 4.0 and 5.0: the EU Experience. *Mechanism of an Economic Regulation* 4: 32-42. <https://doi.org/10.21272/mer.2019.86.04>