

How Email Marketing affects Vietnamese Generation Z's purchasing decisions

A Survey of Young Generation Z Consumers in Vietnam

LAB University of Applied Sciences
Bachelor of Business Administration
Degree Programme in International Business
2021
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Abstract

Author(s) Nguyen, Phuoc	Publication type Bachelor's thesis	Published 2021
	Number of pages 50 + Appendices 11 pages	
Title of Publication How Email Marketing affects Vietnamese Generation Z's purchasing decisions A Survey of Young Generation Z Consumers in Vietnam		
Degree and field of study Bachelor of Business Administration in International Business		
Abstract <p>Since the introduction of the internet, marketing has shifted and formed a new marketing strategy called digital marketing including email marketing. Despite of the dominance of search engine ads and social media ads in Vietnam, email marketing is still considered as one of the most powerful digital marketing strategy for this market. To drive consumer decision and capture value, companies need to understand the consumer decision journey. However, the decision journeys are different among generations, and Generation Z is considered with the most buying power after Millennials. The main objective of the study is to understand how email marketing can affect Vietnamese Generation Z consumer decision journey and give recommendations.</p> <p>This research uses inductive reasoning and both quantitative and qualitative research method, in which the author focus on quantitative data, and qualitative data will be used for further information. Primary data and secondary data are used in this thesis. Primary data was gather through an online survey distributed among Vietnamese Generation Z consumer aging from 15-26 years old. The author use Google Form to conduct survey questionnaire and data collection process. The data collected was analysed and reflected back to the research topics for final results using Excel. Secondary data are gathered from books and articles.</p> <p>The finding of the research show that email marketing has automation, personalization, and contextual interaction capability to shape the journey and drive their purchasing decision. In addition, The results indicate several touchpoints based on Vietnamese consumer desires toward email marketing such as personalization, personal privacy, professional but friendly appearance, extra value, and knowledge about company ethics and social and environmental contribution.</p>		
Keywords Consumer decision journey, Generation Z, Email marketing		

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1 Introduction

1.1 Research background

Marketing has played an important role in the success of businesses. In 1993, British scientists, Tim Berners – Lee, and CERN brought the World Wide Web to the general public (CERN 2021). The Web's arrival brings changes in daily, business-related, and professional communication. The advent of the Internet brings in a new marketing strategy called digital marketing. Email marketing became the first digital marketing since the introduction of the Internet. The first introduction of Hotmail – the first free email service - opened a new door for marketers to approach potential customers (Lee 2013). Email marketing has become one of the most effective digital marketing strategy with its low-cost advantages, personal approach, and mobilization (Singh 2021). However, email marketing also has many critical limitations such as spam mails, engagement ability, and appearance (Forneris 2021). In the present, social media seems to have a huge impact on the way digital marketers used to reach their customers. However, Kindness (2021) mentioned that email marketing still converts more than most of any marketing strategies making it one of the most powerful marketing strategies to be considered.

Every industry requires generational marketing as a key marketing strategy. People from different generations often possess different preferences, point of views and education. Businesses can better understand their customers by dividing them into generation sections and forming a direct connection to the brand through tailored messages. (NCR 2021.) In 2021, the Generation Z age range falls within 11 to 26, and most of them are slowly entering the working force. In 2019, the number of people from working-age group of Vietnamese Generation Z was nearly 13 million, and it is forecasted that Generation Z will take up about a third of the total Vietnamese working-age group in 2025 (Nguyen 2021). In 2021, the number of internet users in Vietnam grew significantly up to 68.72 million in January (account for over 70% of the population) due to the pandemic (Kemp 2021). Vietnamese spend an average of six hours and 47 minutes each day on the Internet (Nguyen 2021). However, research shows that Vietnamese consumers have the lowest trust in e-commerce platforms and e-purchasing (Viet Nam News 2017). Even with email marketing, it is likely difficult to affect the decisions of Vietnamese Generation Z consumers.

Whenever customers interact with a brand or an organization, the points of interaction that create the customer's experience are called touchpoints (Uhlig). Marketers understand touchpoints as the metaphor of "funnel" in which consumers start with several brands when there is a need formed, then slowly reduce the choice into a specific brand they chose to

purchase from. Nowadays, with the diversity of product and digital channels, a more sophisticated approach called Consumer Decision Journey model was formed. The model is less linear and more complicated, and as a result, it can capture more touchpoints. (Court et al. 2009.) Customer experience is the key when consumers decide to continue doing business with the brand (Hyken 2018). Creating more customer experience through approaching touchpoints would benefit the business by gaining more customers, and creating a loyal relationship.

Search engine ads and social media ads are the dominant types of digital marketing in Vietnam. Search advertising is by far the most expensive kind of digital advertising in Vietnam. This type of digital marketing is considered the second highest-growing rate within the Vietnam market in 2020. In addition, social media advertising is stated as the most popular digital marketing strategy among Vietnamese enterprises in 2021 (Nguyen 2021.)

The purpose of this thesis is to discover how email marketing can affect decisions of Vietnamese Generation Z as consumers and give recommendations.

1.2 Thesis objectives, research questions and delimitations

Despite of the dominance of search engine ads and social media ads in Vietnam, email marketing is still considered as one of the most powerful digital marketing strategy for this market. To drive decisions of consumers and capture value from them, companies need to understand the consumer decision journey. However, the decision journeys are different among generations, and Generation Z is considered with the most buying power after Millennials. The main objective of the study is to understand how email marketing can affect Vietnamese Generation Z consumer decision journey and give recommendations.

Research questions are essential for the data collecting and analysis process. An excellent research question is particular and researchable. (White 2009, 33.) The thesis is focused on answering the following sub-questions:

How could email marketing affect the consumer decision journey of Vietnamese Generation Z (15-26)?

Research questions often define a broad topic for the whole study process. The main question can be divided into sub-questions as they are more particular and allow answering the research question step by step. (Urrbrae AHS Research.) The thesis is focused on answering the following research question:

- What are the characteristics of Vietnamese Generation Z as consumers?
- What are the email using behaviours of Vietnamese Generation Z?

- What effects can email marketing has on purchasing decision of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer?

Delimitations are the boundaries of the research study based on the decisions of the research. It limits the scope of the study to make it more manageable and relevant to what researchers are trying to prove. (DiscoverPhDs 2020.) As the target sample group of the thesis is Vietnamese Generation Z consumers in the Vietnam market, the research will collect statistics from the Vietnam market for the analysis process. Though email marketing is among one of the most powerful marketing strategies worldwide, the evaluation is only available for Vietnam's market. People from different generation possesses unique expectations, experiences, history, lifestyles, values, and demographics affecting their buying behaviour (Williams & Page 2018). Evaluations, reactions, and behaviours of people from each generation toward email marketing may differ. Focusing on one generation will provide the accuracy of thesis outcome, however, that also means less focus and resources to reach other generations.

1.3 Theoretical framework

The thesis aims to evaluate the possibility of using email marketing to drive their purchasing intention by affecting touchpoints in the consumer decision journey. The theory discussed is related to the research issue to provide readers a thorough understanding of the background of the research.

Considering the theoretical framework, the next three chapters will describe the theory of this thesis. Chapter 2 focuses on exploring how email marketing works and the advantages of email marketing with some drawbacks and types of email. Chapter 3 starts with the definition of Generation Z to take a deep understanding into the behaviours of Generation Z as consumers in Vietnam. Chapter 4 will take on the topic of consumer decision journey models.

1.4 Research methodology and data collection

In formal terms, research is a planned study that starts with selecting an approach, choosing suitable methods and techniques, selecting or developing data collection procedures, analysing the data and finishing with the answer to the research problem (Grover 2015).

There are two common approaches: the deductive and inductive. The deductive approach focuses on what is researched in a particular field to deduce a hypothesis, then, they finish

by confirming or rejecting the stated hypothesis. Inductive approach is the reverse of deductive reasoning. It focuses on the empirical data and findings on observations are used to draw conclusion for the study. (Bell & Bryman 2011, 11.)

This thesis applies the inductive approach. A specific observation of Vietnamese Generation Z consumers in their behaviours and reaction to email marketing activities is carried out. The thesis reflected the data back to the research problem for the conclusion.

Specific strategies for gathering and interpreting data are known as research methodologies. The development of research methodology is an important aspect of study plan. Quantitative research uses numbers and statistics from a group of the target sample, then generalizing the result to a larger group of samples to describe an event. Quantitative research provides an objective and conclusive answer. Quantitative research is recommended as long as the data is collected in systemized and trustful method, then the statistics are considered reliable. In addition, the outcome of the research can be generalized to an entire target group, when the target sample size is significant enough. The limitations of the quantitative research are the research does not account for elements such as emotion, perception, and the reasons or motivation behind the phenomenon (Bhatia 2018.) Qualitative research examines the study issue from the perspective of individuals, taking into consideration their beliefs, experiences, emotions, behaviours, and interactions (Jena et al. 2013, 192). However, the qualitative research method requires time and effort for planning the data collection process to get the most accurate answer. In addition, the participants have control over the content of the data, which will consciously or unconsciously affect the researcher's conclusion. The outcome of the research may not meet the requirement for generalizing to the population (Dowd 2018.)

The thesis outcome targets an entire generation. Therefore, the conclusion of the thesis needs to meet the requirements to be applied to a large sample size. As a result, the research will focus on quantitative research, and qualitative research will be applied to discover further information for the precise outcome.

There are two types of sampling method: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The probability method refers to choosing a non-criteria sampling group, and that means every member of the whole population has a chance to attend the survey. With a large-scale sampling group, probability sampling methods are more likely to generate answers meeting the requirement for generalizing to a whole population. However, the method is more time-consuming and cost-investing. Non-probability, in contrast, refer to a more subjective selecting method, which means individuals are selected based on non-random criteria and form a smaller group of sampling. This type of sampling is more cost-effective and

easier to conduct with a smaller size of sampling group. Yet, the method has a higher risk of sampling bias that may leave the result to be invalid or unusable. (McCombes 2021.)

The non-probability sampling method is conducted for this thesis. The target sampling of this thesis was reduced to Vietnamese Generation Z consumers between 15 to 26 (the Generation Z age range was 11-26). This sample group is easier to reach, having more access to digital advances, and they are likely to enter the labour force and gain more buying power.

Two main types of data, primary and secondary data are taken under consideration in this thesis. Primary data is collected through surveys, interviews, experiments. Secondary data refer to the collection of existing data through published books, articles, and journals. (Ullah 2014.) The data collection process is planned to be done in 7 days. The survey will take place in 2 or 3 days after the official survey was conducted. For the rest of the time, the author will collect secondary data from articles, scientific journals, and books.

1.5 Thesis structure

This sub-chapter describes the thesis structure used in this thesis. The thesis structure is summarized in below chart.

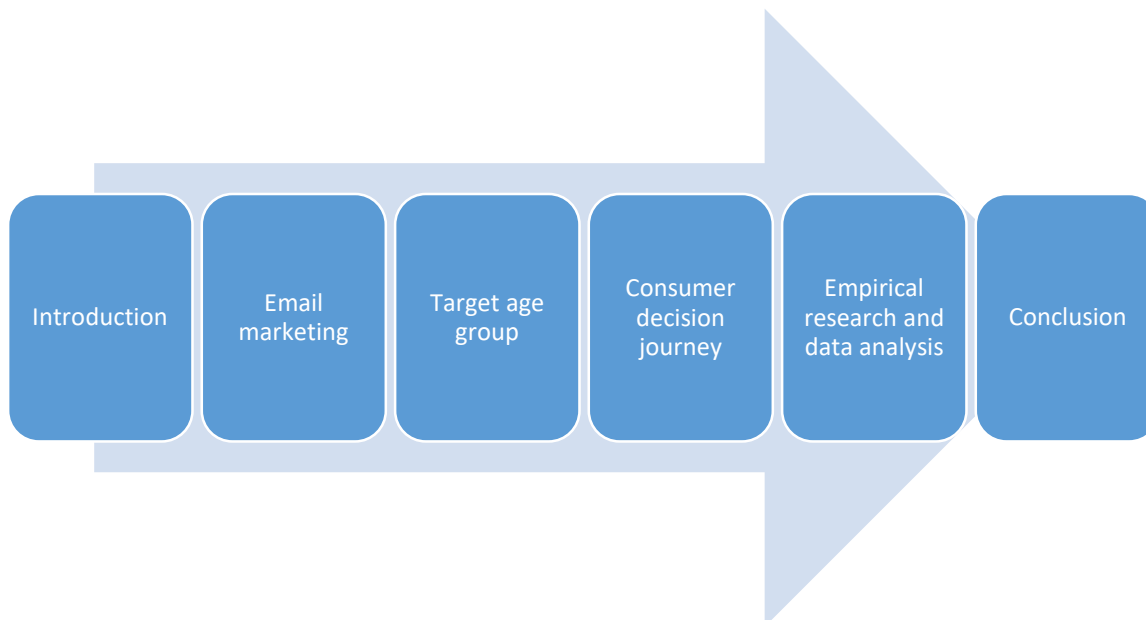


Figure 1. Thesis structure

The introduction section introduces the topic. It discusses research background information, thesis objective, main research question, sub-questions, and delimitations. It also introduces the research method.

Chapters two, three, and four are listed to discuss the key concept related to the thesis topic. Chapter two describes the email marketing process, types of email marketing, advantages and disadvantages of email marketing. Chapter three introduces the target sampling group (Vietnamese Generation Z consumer). The last chapter explains the Consumer Decision Journey model.

Two last chapters present the empirical research, data collected, analysed data, and the answers for research questions. The last chapter also discusses about the validity and reliability with suggestions for further research.

2 Email marketing

The publication of the Internet has changed how businesses sell their goods and engage with their consumers. As a result of the evolution of marketing, a new form of marketing was formed to reach people on the Internet called digital marketing. With email appearing to be the first e-communication channel, offline marketing methods are gradually replaced by email marketing

According to Mailchimp (2021a):

Email marketing is a powerful marketing channel, a form of direct marketing as well as digital marketing, that uses email to promote your business's products or services. It can help make your customers aware of your latest items or offers by integrating it into your marketing automation efforts. It can also play a pivotal role in your marketing strategy with lead generation, brand awareness, building relationships or keeping customers engaged between purchases through different types of marketing emails.

Kirsch (2021) mentioned that 4 billion people are using email daily, and the number is forecasted to reach 4.6 billion users in 2025. Sirohi (2021) maintains that the average email marketing ROI is 36:1 which means for every dollar businesses spend, there will be \$36 in return as profit.

2.1 Email marketing process

This sub-chapter focuses on the steps included in the email marketing process to make a standard email marketing campaign. The author describes the steps of marketing process in the figure below:

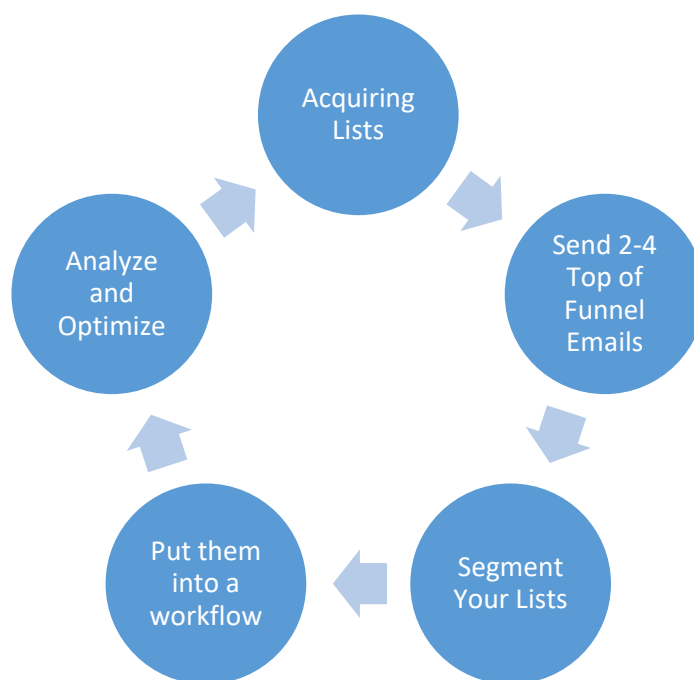


Figure 2. Email Marketing Process (RedBranch Media 2017)

The first step of any email marketing is collecting data from target customers to gain a list of contacts. Businesses can self-obtain the list of contact by blog hosting in which customers decide to become a subscriber of the blog by giving contact information for the latest update. In addition, offering valuable resources such as free trial and knowledge in exchange for contact information is also a common way to gain lists. Besides, email lists can also be archived from purchasing lists of other businesses in the same industry. (RedBranch Media 2017.)

However, Chapa (2021) mentioned that the email list is the most powerful marketing asset of the company, and buying it decreases the value that it should be provided in the first place. Reasons for not purchasing an email list including qualification of the contact, higher rate of being marked as spam, exclusive of contacts, decrease in engagement rate, and impact on brand awareness together will have huge impacts on the effectiveness of email marketing campaign in particular, and the business's reputation in general.

After gaining the list of contacts, starting some broad and easy to access email strategies to familiarize customers with the product of the business. The main purpose of sending emails to new subscribers is to measure the interest and willingness of engagement level for the segment process. (RedBranch Media 2017.)

Considering the segment email lists process, using email marketing automation tools will allow firms to find out who opened sent emails and who clicked certain links. The data collected was then used to segment target customers into states of the funnel from the top (not

very interested) to the bottom (ready to purchase) of the funnel to develop personalized approaches to every contact. (RedBranch Media 2017.)

The contacts then are put in different workflow with tailored email campaigns to move them further down the funnel. At the end of the email marketing campaign, analysing and optimizing process will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign, and the information acquired in the process will be applied for the next campaigns. (RedBranch Media 2017.)

2.2 Types of email marketing

Email marketing is divided into categories based on the function and purpose of the email sent. There are three important types of email marketing to attract attention of customers: newsletters, lead nurturing, promotional, milestone, surveys, and transactional emails. (Campaign Monitor 2021a; Tay.)

2.2.1 Newsletters email

According to Tejedor (2021), a newsletter email is a type of email that should be sent regularly, and the content of the email included guides, blog posts, news, product review, updates, recommendation, announcements. The email sent enable companies to cultivate their relationships by positioning themselves as industry leaders, offering insights, and promoting new goods that will drive visitors to the website.

2.2.2 Lead nurturing email

Lead Nurturing email is defined by SendPulse (2021) as email sent by companies to the consumer to inform them about the features of their product. Lead nurturing email affects decisions of consumers by moving them from consideration stage to decision making stage.

Marketers create a lead nurturing plan to influence decision-making and promote key features of a certain product from their brand. The strategy make the product stand out and become the best purchasing option for the customer. Users may choose to shop elsewhere if they are not nurtured, or they may alter their minds and opt not to shop at all. This is the common reason why the customer purchase from another brand even after forming a specific relationship with the company. (SendPulse 2021.)

2.2.3 Promotional email

Active Campaign mentions that promotional email refers to a type of email sent to the email list to notify of new or current items or services. The purpose of the promotional email is to

encourage purchase activity. It makes use of the existing relationship between customers and brands with active allowance to elicit a purchase of their specific product. (Nussey 2004, 124-125.)

2.2.4 Milestones email

Milestones Email is simply defined as a type of email sent by the business to remind or celebrate an important stage that customers interact with brands in the customer lifecycle (Knapp 2021). Marketers use milestone email marketing campaigns to improve customer engagement, form loyalty relationships, increase traffic, and elicit more purchases. The emails approach customer personal touches such as a birthday or the milestone of their journey while interacting with the brand to remind their experience with the company's product or service quality (Brui 2018).

2.2.5 Survey email

As Lavrakas (2008, 231) defines an email survey as:

An email survey is one that sends the survey instrument (e.g., questionnaire) to a respondent via email and most often samples respondents via email.

Businesses choose email to survey because of its features of easy to personalize survey experience, fast response rate, simple line the process of collecting data, and reduce the resource investing in the survey (Archit 2021).

2.2.6 Transactional email

Transactional emails refer to messages that were sent by business to an individual after a commercial transaction or an action that trigger by the recipients. As a result, corporations do not need to get consumer authorization before sending transactional emails. (Hexton 2021.) Nussey (2004, 124) mentions that transactional email is a convincing brand ambassador and a useful customer service tool since the email sent is initiated by the customer. Confirmation, welcome, remind/re-order, thank you, follow-up are all forms of a transactional email.

2.3 Advantages and disadvantages of email marketing

The number of global marketing values is \$7.5 billion in 2020, and it is forecasted to reach \$17.9 billion in 2027. 5.6 billion email accounts are active in 2019. More than 319 billion emails are sent and received daily. (Statista 2021a; Statista 2021b; Kirsch 2021.) Those metrics show how powerful email marketing is in the present and its huge potential as one

of the most powerful marketing strategies in the future. Email marketing is considered the most powerful option for direct marketing. It is known as the most personal and transactional medium, and such a famous marketing strategy as social media is six times less effective than email marketing. (Singh 2021.)

This sub-chapter will focus on discussing the advantages and disadvantages of email marketing, and the importance of email marketing will be included at the end of the chapter.

2.3.1 Advantages of email marketing

Email marketing is often known for its cost-effective features. In addition, email marketing tends to accomplish more effective results and consider to be a very effective marketing communication channel. Considering the term ROI, email marketing can generate higher results compared to other marketing channels. (Kindness 2021.)

Email can be considered as a flexible means of e-communication. The marketer can customize the content of an email to any format as length and size, and various email designs such as including other elements like images, sound, and video, or customization of HTML to tailor the message sent to the customer to convey the business branding. Customers may be segmented based on a variety of characteristics, including demographics, purchased items, frequency of purchase, and monetary worth of purchase. The customization and targeting features work together to provide a highly personalized marketing message. Moreover, it has been shown a 760% increase in revenue of marketers who used segmented campaigns (Campaign Monitor 2021b).

With the development of digital applications, marketing tools are now providing email marketing campaigns the ability to run A/B testing before sending the email. As Mailchimp (2021b) defines A/B testing of email as the features of testing between different versions of an email to choose the most optimize one. The process allows marketers to see what is the impact on the results when they change something from the email.

A/B testing provides firms with the ability to optimize the effectiveness of emails sent. By testing various design versions, the business can achieve the best suitable design for the target audience to get higher open and click-through rates email. Research shows that A/B testing can result in a 127% increase in click-through rate. (Campaign Monitor 2019c.)

Considering the effectiveness of connecting customers with business, email marketing provides a solution for real-time marketing. The feature helps businesses quickly provide relevant messages to their customers. With the digital nature of email marketing, marketers are allowed to observe such real-time data as website activity, recent purchase, cart abandonment to reach the customer in time.

2.3.2 Disadvantages of email marketing

As the author mentioned above about the cost-effective feature of email marketing, however, the cost is also a disadvantage of email marketing. According to Forneris, dealing with a high volume of emails can add up fees due to the need of upgrading email marketing tool plans. It may increase the budget burden for a start-up company if the company decides to outsource designing and managing the email marketing campaign. In addition, with a larger group of the target customer, additional staff may increase the budget to manage a larger email marketing campaign.

Audiences often subscribe in exchange for high values with low or no cost at all such as promotion, free knowledge, free or \$1 trial. Further email marketing in this state can be easily considered as an annoyance. Even in the case that the email addresses are given deliberately, the customer is mostly responsive at the beginning. It becomes a huge challenge for businesses to keep them engaged with the brand. (Forneris.)





The number of Internet users worldwide that are accessing the Internet through their mobile devices is 90.9% (DataReportal 2021). The number is 71.54 million mobile internet users in Vietnam in 2021, which accounts for more than 70% of the total population (Statista 2021c). Those numbers describe the popularity of mobile internet users in 2021. However, the display setting of mobile or other electronic devices may differ. The email sent may display differently in those devices, which causes a huge change in the message that businesses want to express. In the worst scenario, misunderstanding or error display will affect the reputation of the company, which leads to unsubscribing. (Forneris.)

Considering the most important disadvantage of email marketing, spam is the first thing marketer need to avoid, or else the email sent will not be delivered to the customer. Cisco defined spam email as unwanted junk email delivered for commercial advertisement in a large amount to an email list. According to the statistic from Statista (2021b), there are 319 billion emails are sent and received daily. People's email inboxes are flooded with both solicited and unsolicited emails. To improve user experience, many email services decide to add filters to eliminate the unwanted emails from the mailbox of users. There is a high chance that emails sent from businesses might end up in the spam folder and never be seen, or open. Spam emails are considered an illegal way of marketing; violations of the CAN-SPAM Act can be charged up to \$16,000.

3 Target age group

Francis and Hoefel (2018) identify generations from baby boomer to Generation Z as shown in the chart below.

Today's young people differ from yesterday's.

				
	Baby boomer 1940–59	Gen X 1960–79	Gen Y (millennial) 1980–94	Gen Z 1995–2010
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postwar • Dictatorship and repression in Brazil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political transition • Capitalism and meritocracy dominate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalization • Economic stability • Emergence of internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility and multiple realities • Social networks • Digital natives
Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idealism • Revolutionary • Collectivist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materialistic • Competitive • Individualistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalist • Questioning • Oriented to self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undefined ID • “Communaholic” • “Dialoguer” • Realistic
Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideology • Vinyl and movies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status • Brands and cars • Luxury articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience • Festivals and travel • Flagships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniqueness • Unlimited • Ethical

McKinsey&Company

Figure 3. Characteristics of Generations (Francis & Hoefel 2018)

Generation Z mentioned the generation following Millennials, who were born between 1995 and 2010. Generation Z was the first generation that has been raised in a fully digital world, in which the internet and social media are popular. Being raised in a digital world, Generation Z is more open-minded than the previous generation. Generation Z prefers shaping their identity over time through the experience of different ways. Generation Z has a strong connection with groups of opinion, style, or truth, which means besides value the unique identity they created, the identity of others is accepted and valued willingly. Generation Z is considered the most curious generation since they are willing to unveil the truth behind surrounding things. They understand, filter, extract and absorb knowledge from different sources that are meaningful to them. (Francis & Hoefel 2018.)

3.1 Generation Z as consumers

Considering as a generation that has no experience of a world without digital access, Generation Z gets early access to a wide range of information worldwide, which will provide them knowledge about the brand and the realities behind them. Therefore, generation Z require access and evaluate the information of the product, or service. Then, Generation Z form options and weigh up before making a purchase decision. 65% of Generation Z participants of a survey say they try to learn about the origins of the product they bought. (Francis & Hoefel 2018.) Generation Z understands the method and process of marketing, which makes them aware of the selling effort in marketing campaigns. Generation Z is not cynical of the marketing activities as well as the information provided and interaction of business with them. However, Generation Z is forming their limits of those activities, they are ready to be ruthless if businesses cross those limits. (Woo 2018.) While Generation Z is price-conscious, they are not as price-focused as earlier generations. To get into the Generation Z wallet, products and companies must demonstrate a balance of value, quality, and ethical behaviour. (Bewicke 2021.)

Generation Z values individual expression. The concept of displaying unique individuality is the core mind-set of Generation Z. Therefore, consumption becomes a means of self-expression to the people from this generation. Generation Z demands a personalized experience of products and services. They are willing to buy products that highlight their personality, or the features of the product seem to be made for them. (Francis & Hoefel 2018.)

Even though Generation Z has full access to the digital world, they like shopping in the physical store. A survey from IBM indicates that 98% of their participants said they would purchase from a store some or most of the time. When compared to the amount of Generation Z who prefer shopping online, three times as many Generation Z said they would enjoy the experience from shopping at the store. Yet, in comparison to prior generations, Generation Z has different expectations about how such experiences should be provided. Generation Z expects mobilization of shopping activity, which require business wanted to target this group to develop an Omni channel marketing campaign (Francis & Hoefel 2018). In any shopping channel, they demand consistency and reliability. Besides experience from the product, Generation Z prefers an individualized shopping experience that is tailored to their purchasing preference from both online and offline shopping channels (Bewicke 2021).

However, despite desiring personalized treatment, Generation Z prefers remaining anonymous online. According to a survey by Francis & Hoefel (2018), 10 to 15% of their respondents are willing to share their data with businesses as they value personal privacy. The number can be increased up to 35% if there is an obvious inverse relationship between

businesses and customers, however, the number is considered relatively low. Marketers are required to maintain a balance between personalization and personal privacy online. If the balance is off in either direction, generation Z may avoid purchasing a specific brand, or in the worst scenario, damage the brand reputation. (Woo 2018.)

Generation Z expects brands to have their unique value to deliver to their customer. The point is not having the right attitude toward various topics, but the specific topic that is meaningful to either brand and customer, and having a clear point of view about the topic stated. (Francis & Hoefel 2018.) Hodgson (2018) defines generation Z as

...diverse, adaptive, open-minded and socially responsible generation who wants to make the world a better place.

The people from this generation have high expectations of brand ethics and responsibilities to a better world. Moreover, Generation Z does not distinguish the different ethics of a brand, the company, and its network of partners and suppliers. The ethics or ideals of a business have a huge impact on the purchase decision and must be applied thorough the entire business action. Seventy percent of Generation Z say they prefer purchasing from brands that they consider ethical. Generation Z is sensitive to the scandal and controversial history of a brand. 80% of Generation Z in a survey say they remember at least one scandal of a company and the same percentage for the people who refuse to purchase from companies that are involved in scandals and controversies. Yet, generation Z consumers are tolerant of brands in case that the company has a suitable reaction to their mistakes and scandals. (Francis & Hoefel 2018.)

Considering the ethics of the company, Generation Z is more aware of the social and environmental challenges than getting the economy back to normal after the pandemic. Eighty-one percent of Generation Z say that the direction of the company toward the social and environmental issues is the essential lead to make a difference. Eighty-three percent of Generation Z say that they will be more motivated and loyal as employees and customers if firms are and become more socially and ecologically responsible. (Sustainable Brands 2019.)

As Karl et al. (2018) state that Generation Z has a strong desire to share their opinions, collaborate and co-create with the brand. People expect brands to be highly responsive to their sharing, and quickly shape the business activity to fit with their needs.

3.2 Vietnamese Generation Z consumer

Generation Z accounts for over one-fifth of the Vietnam population, translating to over 20 million, and most of them are slowly or already entered the labour force (PopulationPyramid.net 2021). According to Thomassen (2015), 47% of Generation Z respondents prefer using stickers or emoji to express their feeling. Marketers are required to adapt and learn to speak the language that draws their attention. Generation Z is the generation following Millennials to have full access to the digital world, with the development of the mobile device, Generation Z demand mobilized internet access. In Thomassen survey, 89% of Generation Z from the age of 13 to 21 have access to mobile phone.

ALMOST ALL HAVE A MOBILE PHONE – EVEN THOSE AGED 13-15

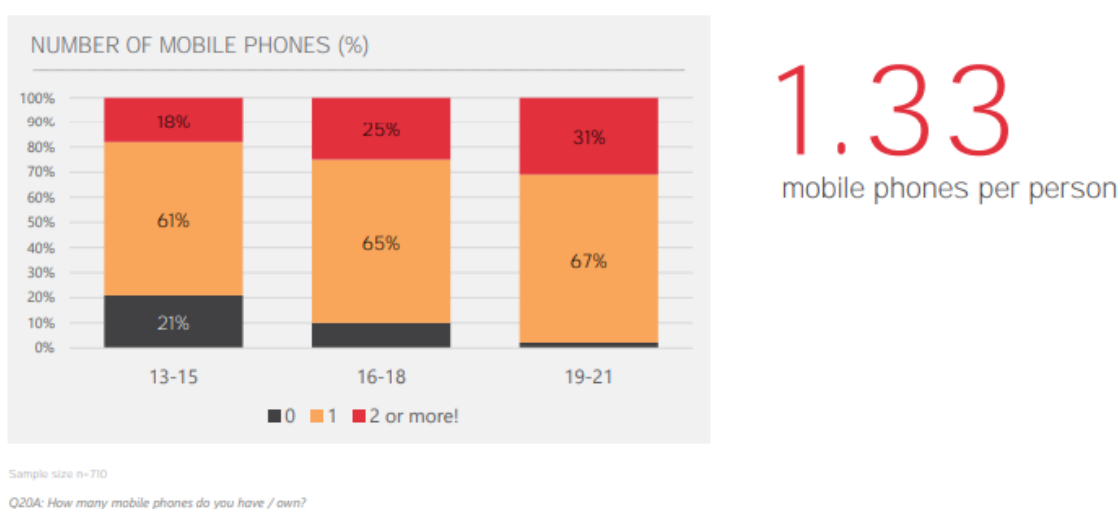


Figure 4. The number of mobile phone by age range of Generation Z in Vietnam (Thomassen 2015)

Mobile-marketing campaign in Vietnam market is inevitable. Marketers in the market need to consider mobile-adaptive aspects before launching any marketing campaign.

GENZILLA ARE MORE SKEPTICAL THAN YOU THINK.

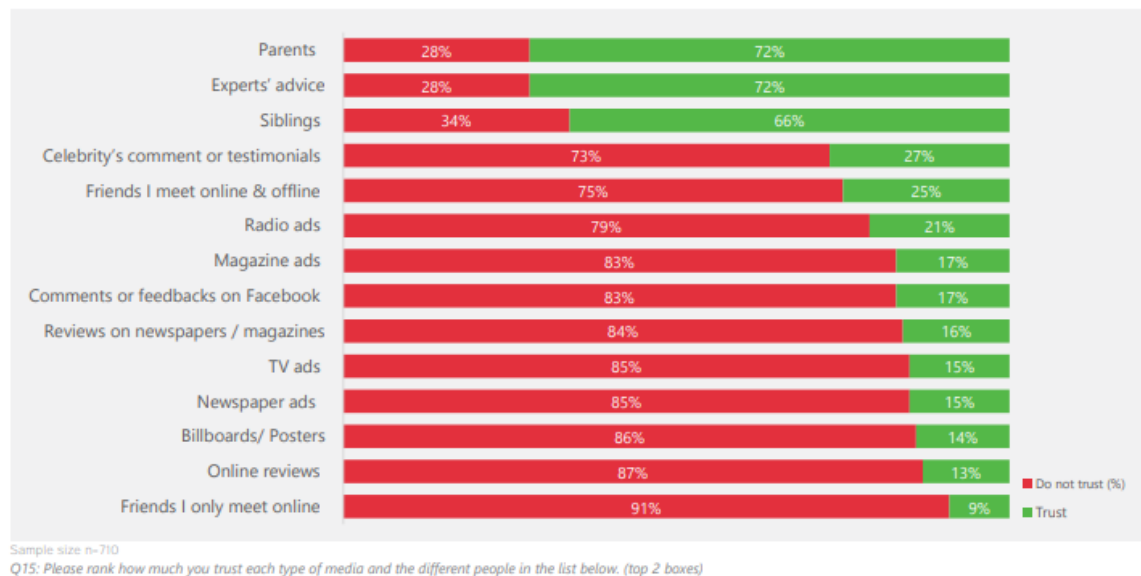
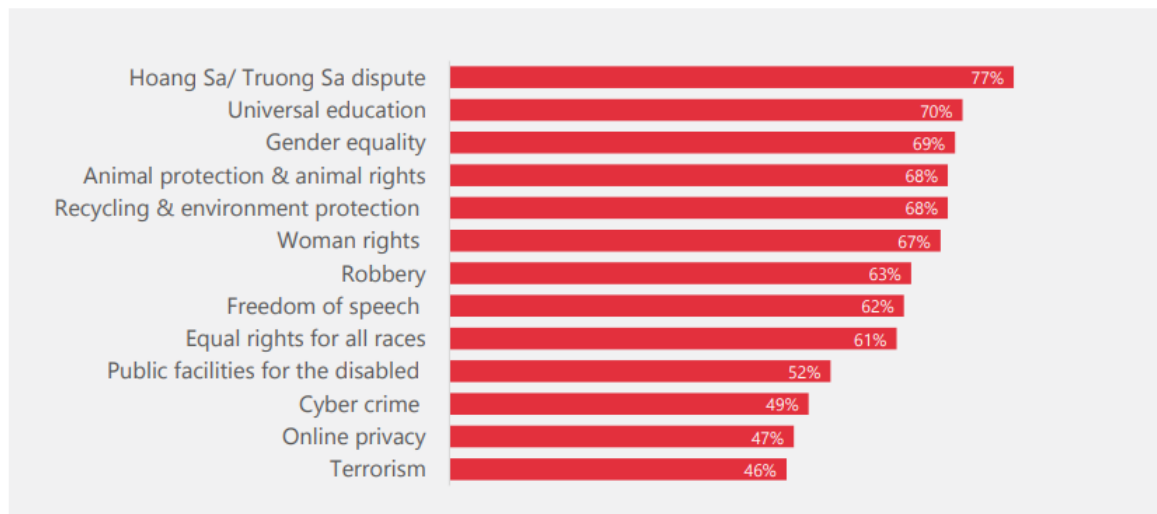


Figure 5. Vietnamese Generation Z credibility on different online information source (Thomassen 2015)

Although Vietnamese generation Z prefer spending their time for leisure activities and information searching, they are considered to be very discerning when it comes to online information. Vietnamese Generation Z does not have much trust in most types of advertising or informative channels that are likely to be created by the brand. Moreover, seeding marketing is become more popular in Vietnam. This type of marketing makes the testimonials, comments, and feedback seem to be lacked credibility. Influencer marketing can be considered useful since most of the trust is based on the definition of customer about the influencer to decide whether the person is an expert or a celebrity. (Thomassen 2015.) Brands that reflect Vietnamese values and cultures and have timeless or traditional brand connections are preferred by 50% of Generation Z (Demographic 2018). To reach the people from generation Z, the fact is all about trustworthiness and unique values. Delivering valuable experience, keeping a certain level of engagement, and making them believe in the authenticity of the brand is the key to winning over Generation Z.

Generation Z expresses great awareness of the social issue. The attitude of Vietnamese Generation Z toward the social issues as shown in figure below.

CONCERNED WITH SOCIAL ISSUES



Sample size n=710

Q6: How much do you care about the following causes or happenings? (top 2 boxes)

Figure 6. Level of awareness about several social issues of Vietnamese Generation Z (Thomassen 2015)

Generation Z is more likely to support businesses that considered having social contributions to serve a higher purpose. Companies need to be aware of the importance of developing a certain level of social involvement in the purpose of their business before reaching generation Z in the Vietnam market. (Thomassen 2015.)

4 Consumer decision journey

Being invented by Elias St. Elmo Lewis at the end of 20th, the AIDA model represents the stages of the relationship between business and customer. The model includes four stages:

- awareness
- interest
- desire
- action

Companies start to add two more stages: loyalty and conversion. The stages added is to improve the marketing strategy. In the end, the marketing funnel end up as the chart below.

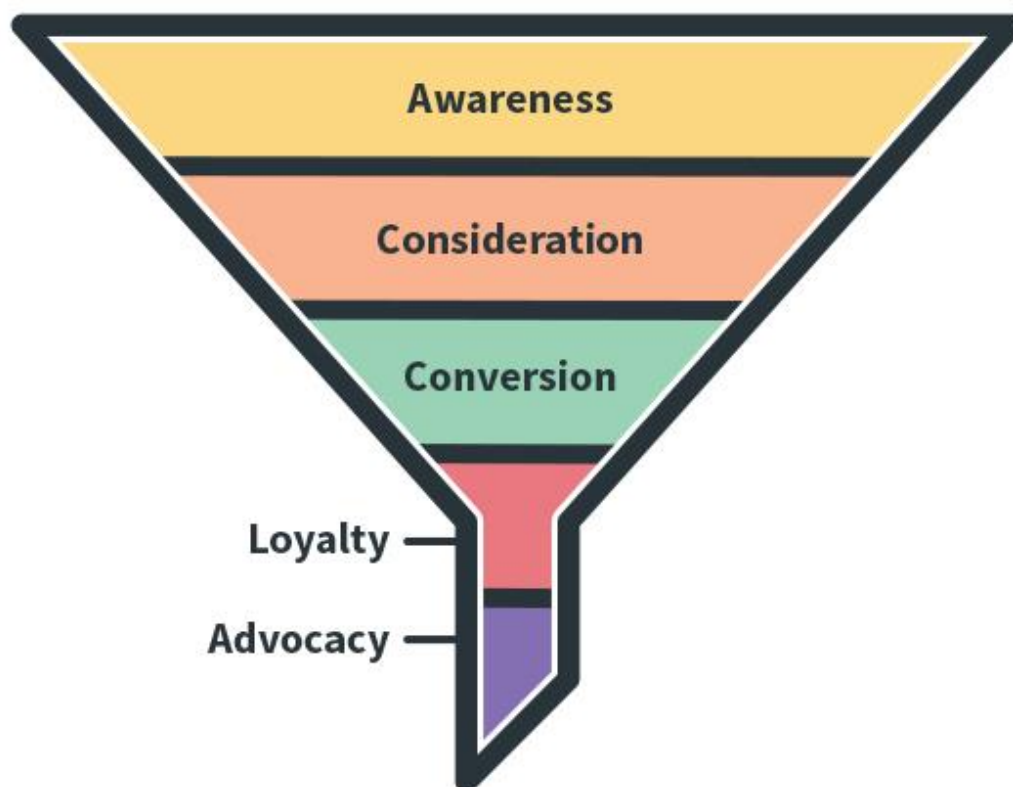


Figure 7. Traditional Marketing Funnel (Sprout Social 2021)

The idea of the traditional marketing funnel is to reach a large amount of consumer as the first stage. Then, marketers lead potential consumers to different stages of the funnel, narrowing down candidates at each level of the funnel (Skyword 2020).

According to Social Sprout (2021), the marketing funnel simplify the customer journey into visual stages. This change helps the company to track and manage the process to optimize the marketing campaign. However, digital advance emerges, followed by the well-informed

consumer which makes the funnel less effective to capture touchpoints and key buying motivation.

Adapting to an advanced digital world, marketers are required to develop a modern approach to reach the modern consumers. In 2009, research from McKinsey created a new model called “Consumer Decision Journey” that is circular and more complicated.

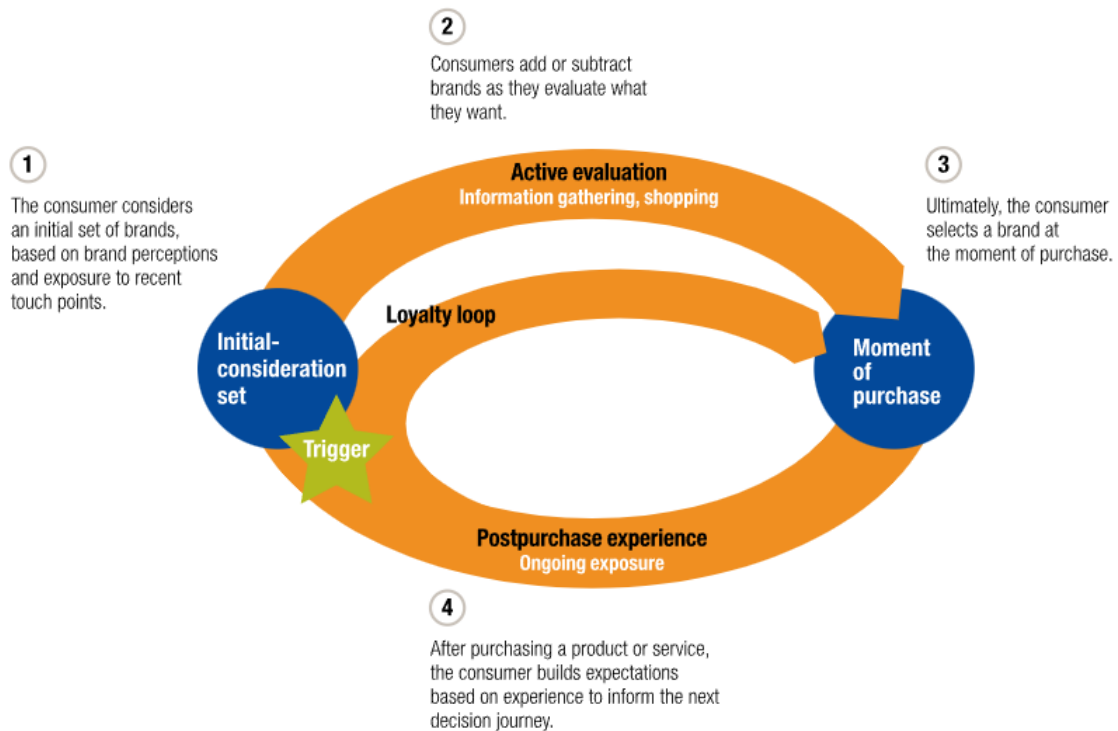


Figure 8. McKinsey Consumer Decision Journey model (Court et al. 2009)

According to the model of the consumer journey map from above figure, four main phases of interaction between business and consumer are described:

- initial consideration
- active evaluation
- closure
- post-purchase

Consumers start the journey with an initial consideration set that includes several potential brands that may fulfil their needs. Brands use company-driven marketing to push information to the consumer. The information form an impression of the brand which later appear as brand awareness in the initial consideration set of consumer. Brands in the initial-consideration group are up to three times more likely to be purchased in the long run. (Court et al. 2009.)

After forming a set of brands, the consumers move to the active evaluation stage where they gather information and weigh the pros and cons of choices from each brand. According to the traditional marketing funnel, this stage often narrows down the choice of brands into the best option for customers. In this stage, marketers use traditional advertising, direct marketing, sponsorship, and other channels to affect decisions of consumers on whittling down their options. However, customers are more informed due to the easy access to the Internet. This change makes the number of brand increases as consumers broaden their search as they pull helpful information for more options outside the brand that they already know. Consumer-driven marketing activities such as online reviews, word-of-mouth recommendations, in-store experience, and recollections of experience are shown to be involved in two-third of the consumer touchpoints. The empowered consumer creates opportunities for brands that are not in the initial consideration set as they can reach the consumer by adding those touchpoints where interaction between brand and consumer is possible. Brands in the initial consideration set are no longer received the same advantage as before. (Court et al. 2009.)

Two-thirds of the touch points during the active-evaluation phase involve consumer-driven activities such as Internet reviews and word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and family.

Most-influential touch points by stage of consumer decision journey, for competitors and new customers, % of effectiveness¹

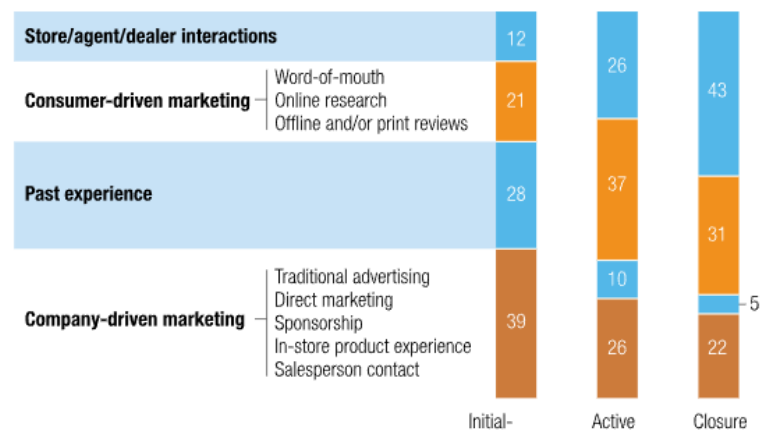


Figure 9. Consumer touchpoints in different phases of decision journey (Court et al. 2009)

When the consumer reaches the moment of purchase, a post-purchase experience captures customer loyalty and shapes their opinion for the next decision in the category. Active loyalists and passive loyalists are two types of consumer loyalty. Active loyalists represent the active consumer who are desired to contribute to the brand activity and make recommendations to others. On contrary, passive loyalists do not commit to a brand, and people from this group are more likely to switch to competitor brands. (Court et al. 2009.)

In 2015, to adapt with changes because of the new characteristic of consumers as the digital world is getting more advanced, Edelman & Singer (2015a) has updated the new consumer decision journey.

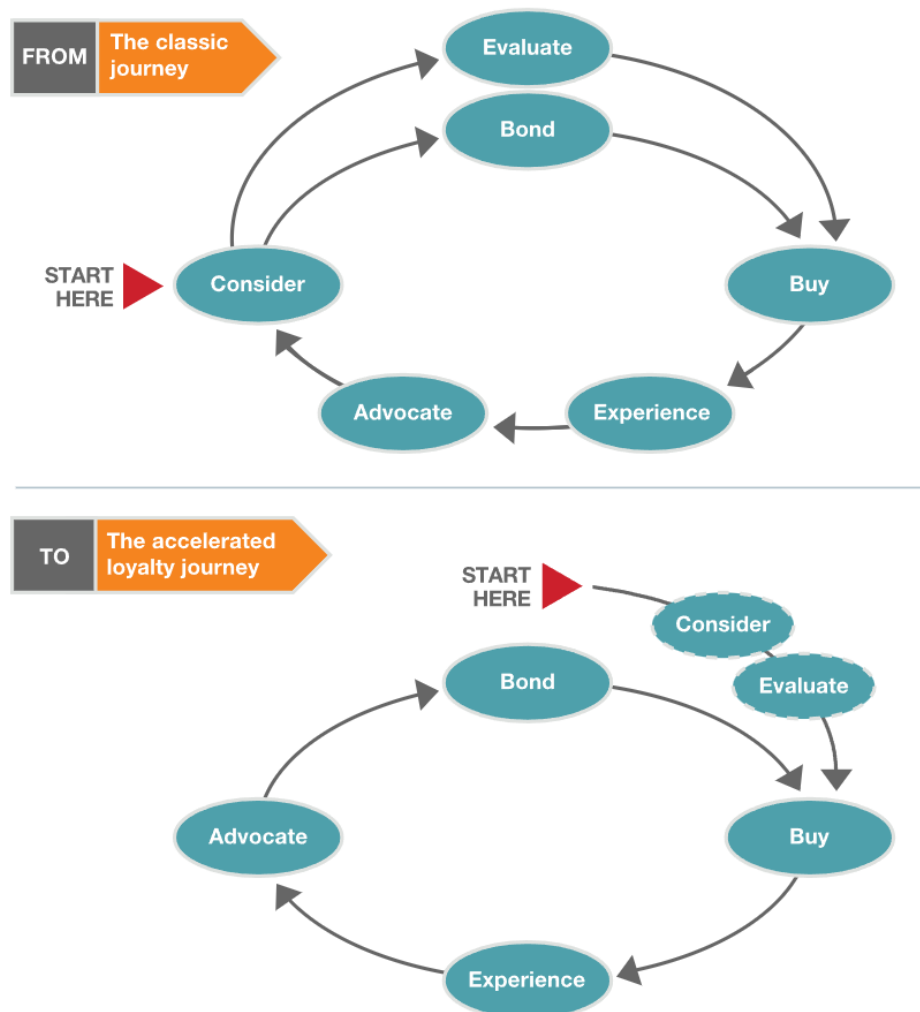


Figure 10. The change of new Consumer Decision Journey (Edelman & Singer 2015a)

According to the new consumer decision journey, Edelman & Singer (2015a) states that instead of reacting to the behaviour of the consumer to push them into making the decision, marketers need to play a more proactive role. The old consumer decision journey requires the company to affect decisions of consumers in pre-set stages. This approach is proved to be more effective than the traditional marketing funnel. However, it does not capture enough touchpoints and fail to engage the customer at the right time. The new approach allows marketers to shape the journey and create a more personalized journey that instantly engages with the customer when they need it. As a matter of fact, marketers can skip initiate parts such as consideration and evaluation stage, and drive customers to making purchase. Consumers are more willing to stay and actively engage back to the brand as they benefit from the journey itself. In addition, brands benefit from the journey since they gain the ability

to expand the journey and capture more value from their customer while improving consumer engagement with the brand.

The capacity of a corporation to provide that value is based on four unique but interrelated capabilities:

- automation streamlines
- proactive personalization
- contextual interaction
- journey innovation

Automation streamline refers to digitalizing the process in each stage of the journey that was formerly accomplished manually. The aim of automation is to enable effortless, helpful while increasing engaging experiences. Allowing customers to process through the journey faster and easier will improve the engaging experiences of consumers. In addition, as automation can react immediately to the behaviour of the consumer, they are more likely to get what they need at the right time. Therefore, automation becomes the foundation of creating a sticky journey and keeping the consumer with the brand. (Edelman & Singer 2015b.)

With the development of automation streamlines, companies gain new capability of collecting real-time data from consumers. Proactive personalization means using the existing consumer shopping activities to individualize their shopping experience. Moreover, the personalization process expands to analysing and optimizing the next step in the journey. Companies are required the capability to analyse the real-time behaviour of consumers in the journey, then, tailoring the next suitable interaction to make the journey more individualized. By doing that, the consumer is benefited from the journey and becomes willing to stay in the relationship with the brand while the business captures more value from the consumer by displaying the right product to the right person. (Edelman & Singer 2015b.)

Contextual interaction is a key capability involved in using knowledge of the present position of consumers in the journey to bring them into the next interactions that the company desire. This means the company navigates the customer to the desired destination after they trigger a specific activity, or delivers relevant messages referred to their current context. More advanced versions allow for a variety of interactions that help to modify and improve the experience. (Edelman & Singer 2015b.)

The last capability is journey innovation, which refers to experimenting and analysing the insights of consumers to design new useful touchpoints into the journey. The journey will be extended as well as a relationship with the consumer. The process may identify new sources of value that benefit both business and consumer. Companies have required this

capability as it increases the value of the existing consumer journey by integrating with other service providers. The capability helps businesses capture more value from customers, and opens doors for cooperation opportunities. (Edelman & Singer 2015b.)

5 Empirical research and data analysis

5.1 Empirical research

Empirical research refers to the type of research where conclusions of the whole study are based on concrete evidence. Empirical research is considered verifiable. The study gathers evidence using quantitative or qualitative research methods. Quantitative represent the use of numerical and statistical data. On contrary, the qualitative method gathers non-numerical data to describe the meaning, opinion, and reason of the target sample. (QuestionPro.) The thesis decides to use both quantitative and qualitative to collect data. Most questions of the survey will focus on quantitative data and one open-ended question at the end for qualitative data.

The thesis included both research methods on the same online questionnaire survey. The survey was first formed in English for evaluation. The survey was translated to Vietnamese, and conducted among the target sample. Both language versions of the survey were attached in appendices 1 and 2. The purposes of the survey are to find out about the email-using behaviour of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer and their desires toward email marketing. Another purpose is to discover what effects can email marketing has on the Vietnamese Generation Z decision journey. The author distributed the survey using Facebook direct message and sharing among from the friend list. The survey includes 5 multiple choice questions, 17 rating sentences, a short answer question, and an open-ended question.

5.2 Data collection

The author started the thesis in October 2021. The process began with gathering theoretical data about key concepts of the study, which are Email Marketing, Generation Z as consumers in Viet Nam, and the consumer decision journey model. Considering the survey, the author formed the questions that the survey needs to answer as the groundwork to form the survey question. The survey is created by Google Form in two language versions which are English and Vietnamese. It was tested the ability to deliver the meaning of questions before sending them to the target sample. The author conducted the survey on November 18th, 2021, and was closed after 2 days. The author reached the respondents of the survey through Facebook direct message and sharing among their friend list.

In total, after two days of sharing the survey form, there were 104 participants whose age range is between 15 and 26, which means all the responses are valid. The main group of respondents was 20-22 years old (63 respondents), followed by 29 respondents at the age of 17-19. Nine respondents are at the age of 22-26, and only three of them are below 17.

5.3 Data analysis

The author gathers the demographic of the respondents through the first two questions of the survey. The target population of the thesis is Vietnamese Generation Z whose age is between 15-26. The first question considers the validation of the participants to the criteria of the study, and 104 answers are valid. Gender is another question, however, the study does not take consider gender-driven factors. However, the ratio between male and female is 32.7% to 67.3%.

How often do you check your mailbox in a week?

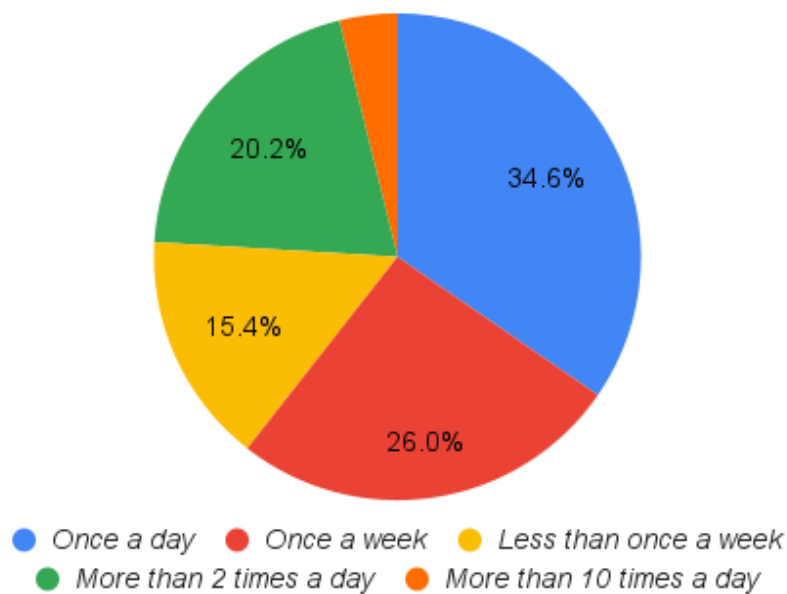


Figure 11. Mailbox checking frequency of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer (n=103)

The next question considers the frequency of Vietnamese Generation Z checking their email in a week. According to the above chart, most responses choose once a day, followed by once a week with an 8.6% difference in number. In general, the percentage of respondents who check their mailboxes on daily basis was 58.6% in total. 26% of respondents consider email checking on a weekly basis. Surprisingly, Nguyen Q. (2021) states that Vietnamese spend six hours and 47 minutes on average daily, still, 15.4% of respondents said that they checked emails less than once a week.

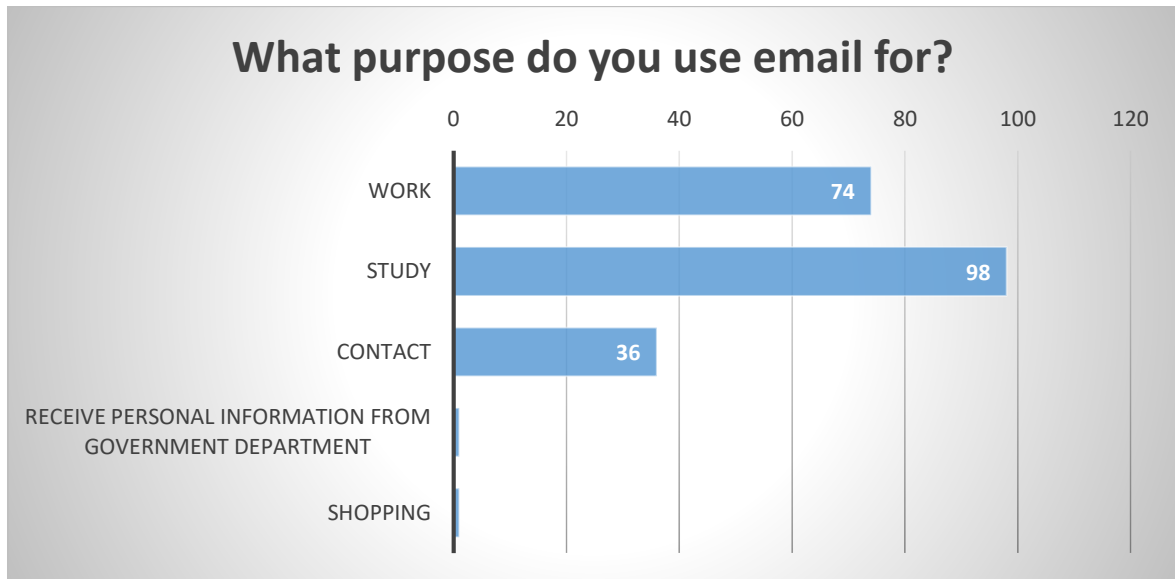


Figure 12. Email using purpose of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer (n=104)

The question from the above chart is a checkbox question. The participants were asked about the purposes of using email. The author gave three default options, which are work, study, and contact. The respondents are free to give additional options. The majority of respondents chose email for study purposes, followed by working purposes with 74 out of 104 respondents. 34.6% of responses indicated that they use email for contacting other people. A small sign of using email for shopping purposes is shown by one response, however, the number is too low to indicate anything about the activity.

How many emails from brands do you typically receive in a week?

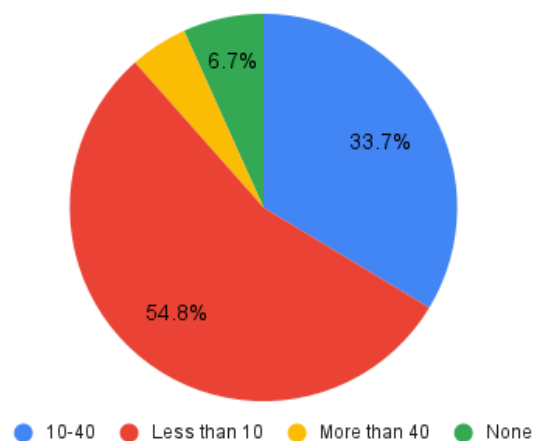


Figure 13. Brand emails receiving frequency of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer (n=104)

To discover the impact of email marketing on consumers, the respondents were asked to estimate the number of emails from brands they got in a week. The author shows the finding of the question on the chart above.

According to the chart, 54.8% of respondents said that they received less than 10 emails per week. The statistic may be the result of not subscribing to so many brands, or the brands are not sending out a large number of emails. The second most chosen answer is 10 to 40 emails, which account for one-third of the responses. 5 out of 104 respondents said choose more than 40 emails per week. 4.8% of participants did not receive any email from brands. This may represent a small part of Generation Z who refuse to give their email address to any brand.

The next survey question seeks for the limitation toward the frequency of email from brands of Generation Z. The graph below shows the number of emails that a single brand could generate negative experience on Generation Z consumers.

How many of emails from a single brands that likely annoy you?

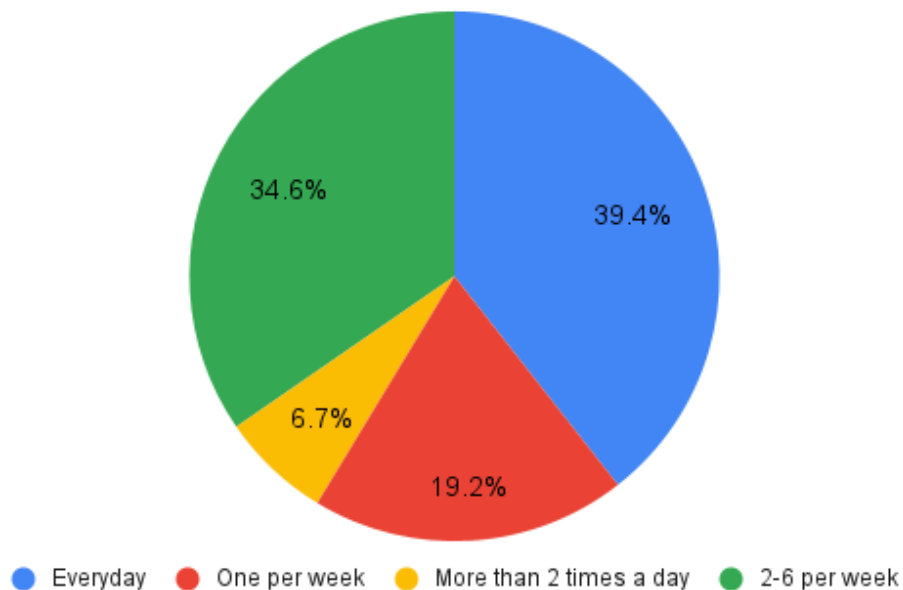


Figure 14. Annoying frequency of email receiving of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer (n=104)

Most choose answer refers to every day, which accounts for 39.4% of responses, followed by two to six emails per week with a slight margin of 4.8%. The results show that email volume sent out to Generation Z consumer are not suitable on a daily basis since nearly three-fourth of participants refused to receive emails on a daily basis and two to six times per week. 19.2% of participants said that they feel annoyed with one email from brands a

week. The result accounts for one-fifth of the respondents, and it refers to a group of Generation Z consumers that has a strong negative attitude toward email from brands. Only 6.7% of responses show that Generation Z has their patience for emails.

To measure the effectiveness of email marketing to Vietnamese Generation Z consumers, the author included several rating questions of consumer experience toward email marketing activities. The diagram below represents the result of survey findings.

Respondents were asked to choose the rating options from Disagree to Agree about their level of agreement toward the sentence given in the survey. The responses with Disagree and Slightly Disagree answer are presumed to have a negative experience with the email marketing campaign from brands; responses choose Neutral options may represent consumers who are confirming their position of experience, or in author opinion, this group may refer to Generation Z consumer who easily recognizes marketing activities, and the experiences based on whether they need the emails at the time they read it or not; responses with Slightly Agree or Agree indicate positive experience, and the email marketing activities are valuable to the respondents.



Figure 15. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to first email after subscription (n=104)

After the subscription, a welcome or introduction email is sent to create the first impression to the consumer, which decides their interest and engagement with the brands later in the process. The purpose of the question was to find out whether email marketing can affect Generation Z consumers in consideration and evaluation stages of their journey or not. 44% of respondents said that they are more aware of the brands after the first emails. Only 17% of respondents thought they are not, and 40% of them choose neutral options.

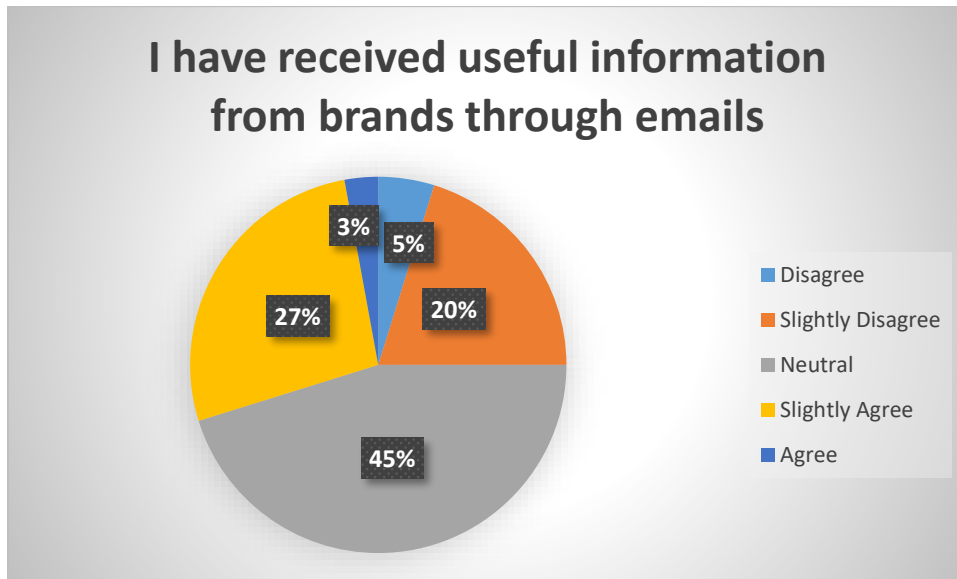


Figure 16. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to information given through email sent by brands (n=104)

The survey question is to find out whether the information given through email by brands is useful or not under the perspective of Generation Z. Nearly 30% of participants felt that the information sent from brands is useful compared to 26% of them do not. 45% of respondents acknowledge the usefulness of information from brands, however, there are elements that need to be further considered.

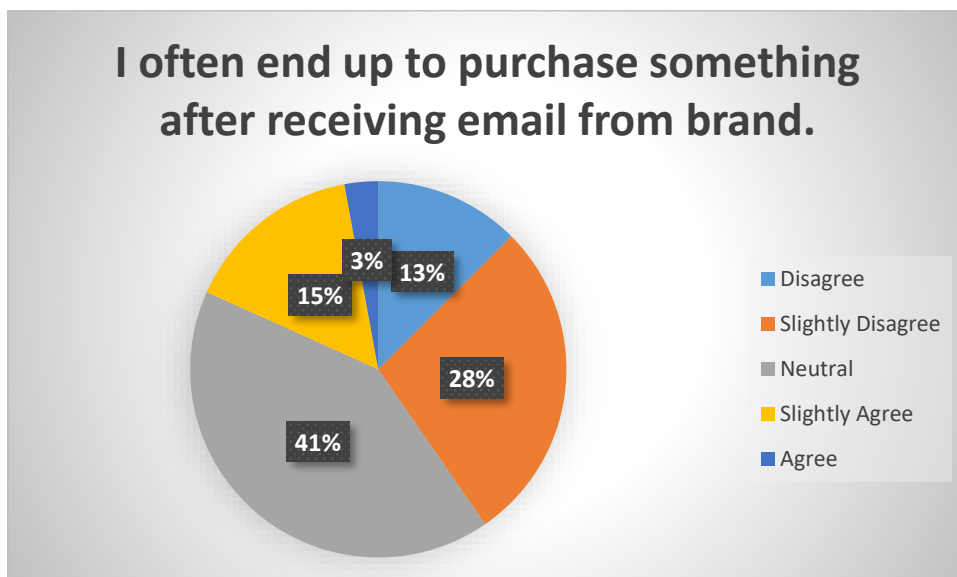


Figure 17. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to their intention of purchasing after receiving emails from brands (n=104)

Innovation journey is one of the capabilities to shape the consumer decision journey and capture the value from the journey itself. In the case of email marketing, the ability to create new touchpoints by redirecting, then, leading the consumer to make a purchase refers to

that capability. The purpose of this question is to find out whether Generation Z consumer is purchasing after receiving emails sent from brands or not. Only 18% of respondents claim that they end up purchasing after receiving emails from brands. 41% of the responses choose not to make a purchase. The same number appeared in the percentage of respondents choosing the neutral option.



Figure 18. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to their intention of purchasing after receiving product recommendation emails from brands (n=104)

The purpose of the above question is to find out whether promotional or product recommendation emails affect consumer purchasing decisions or not. More than a third of respondents thought that promotional email can trigger purchasing activity, followed by disagree attitude with a 6% difference. 38% of respondents choose the neutral option.

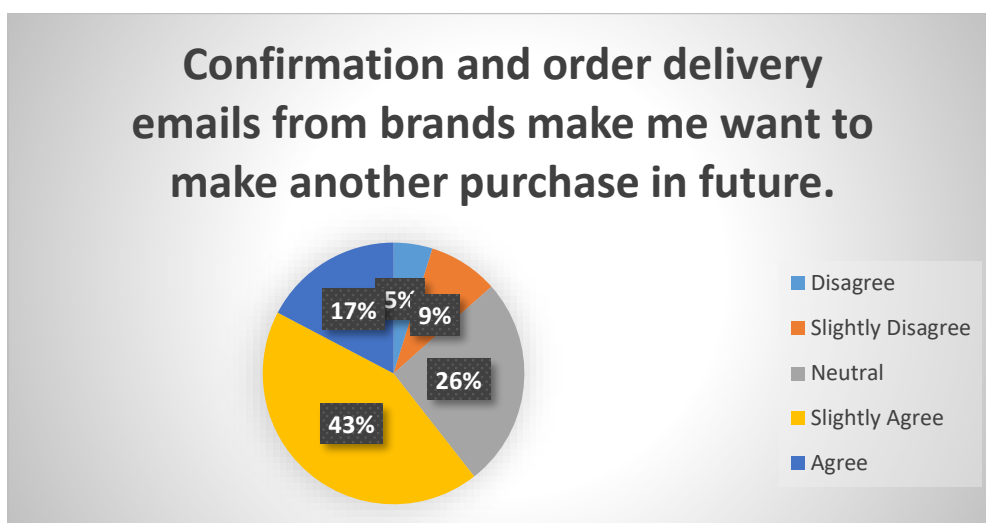


Figure 19. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to their intention of purchasing after receiving confirmation and order delivery email (n=104)

Automated transaction email refers to the capability of automation and contextual interaction in email marketing. The purpose of this question is to discover whether confirmation and order delivery affect consumer purchasing decisions in the future. 60% of respondents agreed that those types of emails generate a good experience and willingness to make another purchase in the future. Only 14% of them disagreed with 26% remaining neutral attitude.

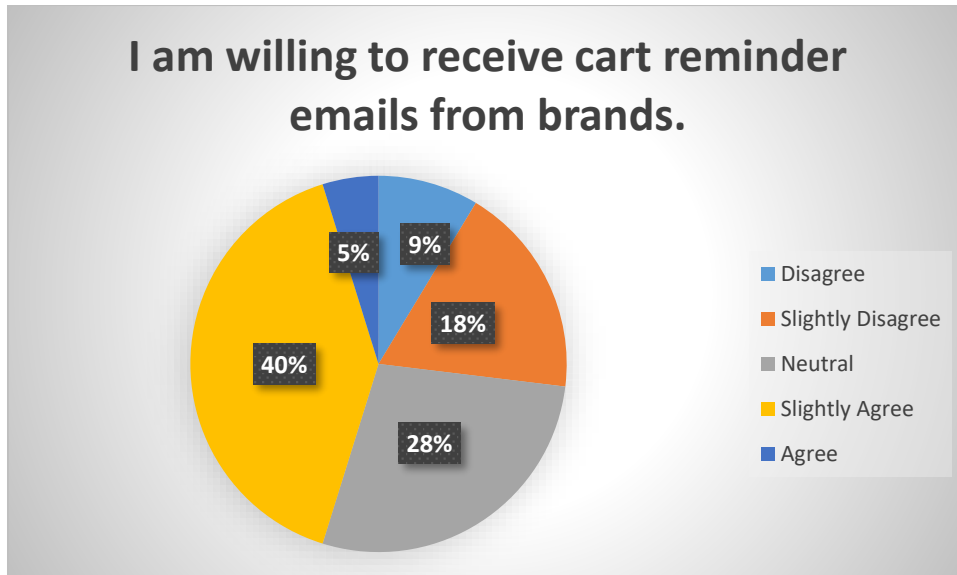


Figure 20. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to their willingness of receiving cart reminder email (n=104)

The above question will discover the willingness of receiving cart reminder emails. The result represents more than 45% positive attitude compared to 27% of negative one. Nearly a third of respondents choose 50/50 options.

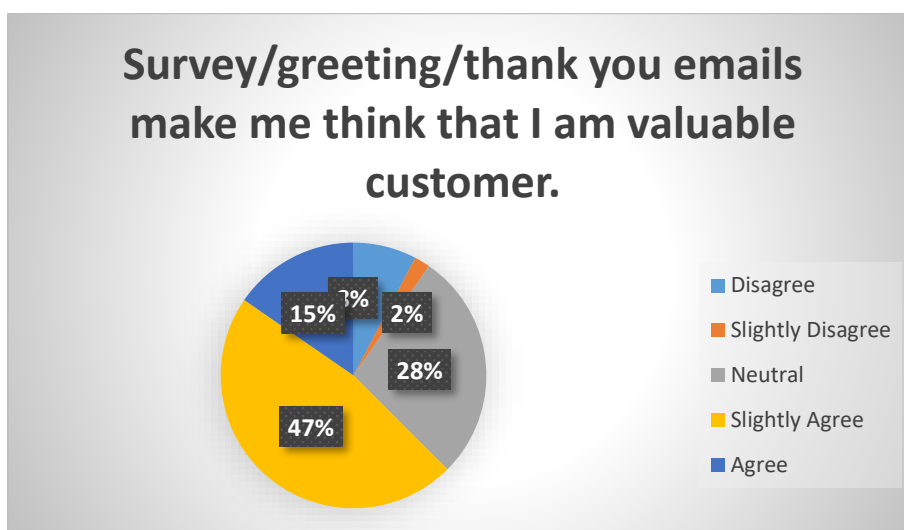


Figure 21. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to their experience with survey/greeting/thank you email (n=104)

Considering the performance of survey and milestones email, 63% of responses think that they are valuable to the company after receiving survey, greeting, and thank you email from brands. Only 10 out of 104 respondents disagree with the term that those types of emails indicate that companies value their presence, and 28% still need further consideration.

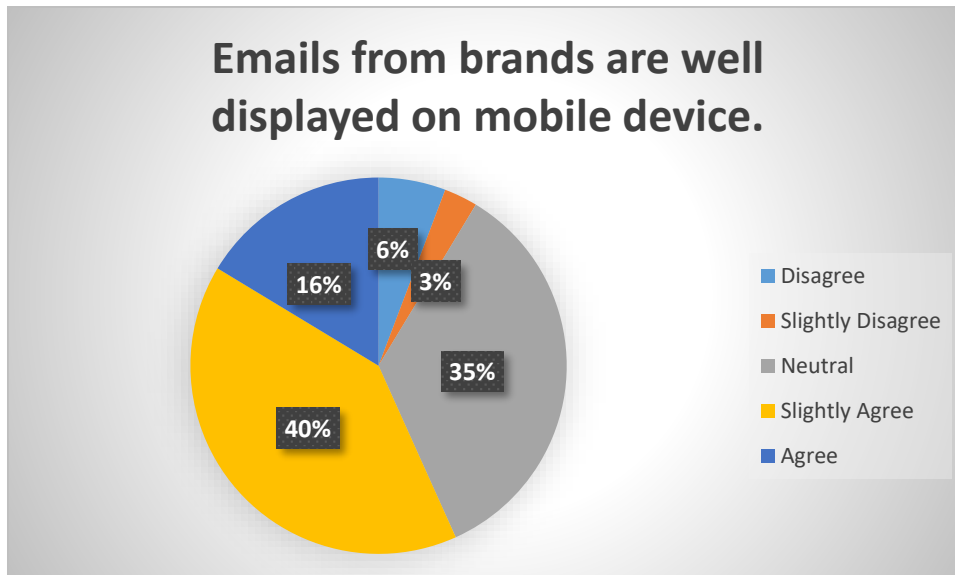


Figure 22. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer to their experience email on mobile devices (n=104)

This question discovers the mobile-adaptive ability of email marketing. More than half of respondents (56%) agree that the emails sent from brands are well-displayed on mobile devices. The responses that choose the neutral option are surprisingly high (40%). 35% of participants that need further consideration decided to choose 50/50 experience on this matter.

To find touchpoints based on the characteristic of Vietnamese Generation Z consumers, the author gave rating questions based on several touchpoints of the target population developed in the theory part. The graphs below indicate the survey finding.



Figure 23. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to time-personalize promotional email (n=104)

The first question considers the timing factor of sending promotional emails to consumers. Major of the responses (46%) indicated that they want to receive the promotional email at the time they want to purchase. Over one-fifth of respondents would not prefer only the emails that were sent at the right time. The rest of the respondents choose the neutral option.

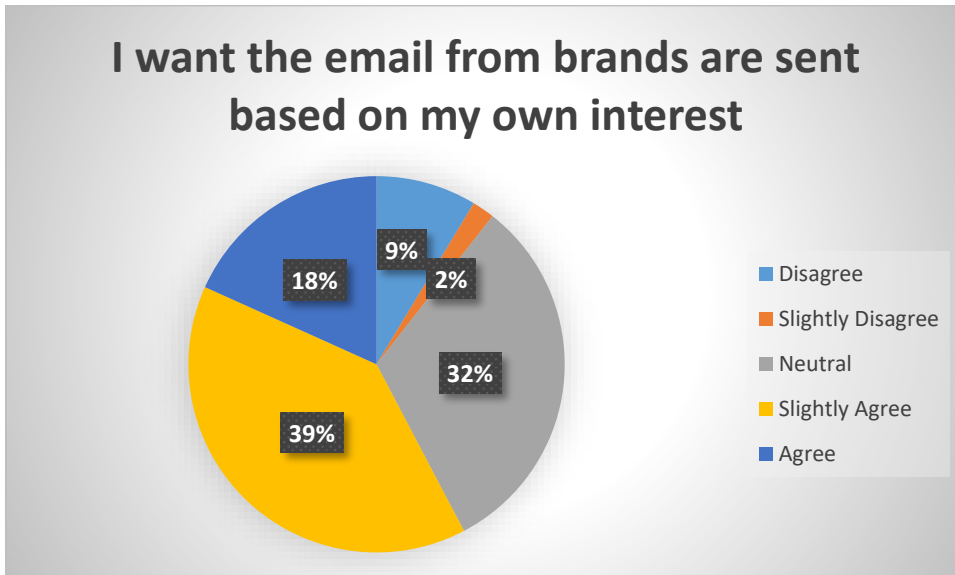


Figure 24. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to interest-personalize promotional email (n=104)

Considering the personalization factor, 57% of respondents prefer personalized emails from brands. However, a small group of them (11%) said that they do not give much attention to personalization. This group may refer to people who have experienced personal privacy

threats from emails including sensitive insights. A third of participants decided to choose 50/50 options.



Figure 25. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to personal privacy online protection in email marketing (n=104)

The question indicates the desire for personal privacy online of Vietnamese Generation Z consumers. 75% of participants showed a strong desire toward personal privacy protection with only 9 of them expressing no serious concern about personal privacy online.



Figure 26. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to authentic, professional, and trustworthy design of email from brands (n=104)

The purpose of the question is to discover the desire of Vietnamese Generation Z consumers toward authentic, professional, and trustworthy emails. 63.5% of participants agreed

that the emails from companies need to be designed in an authentic, professional, and trustworthy manner. A small group (9.6%) indicated that the authentic factor is not necessary.

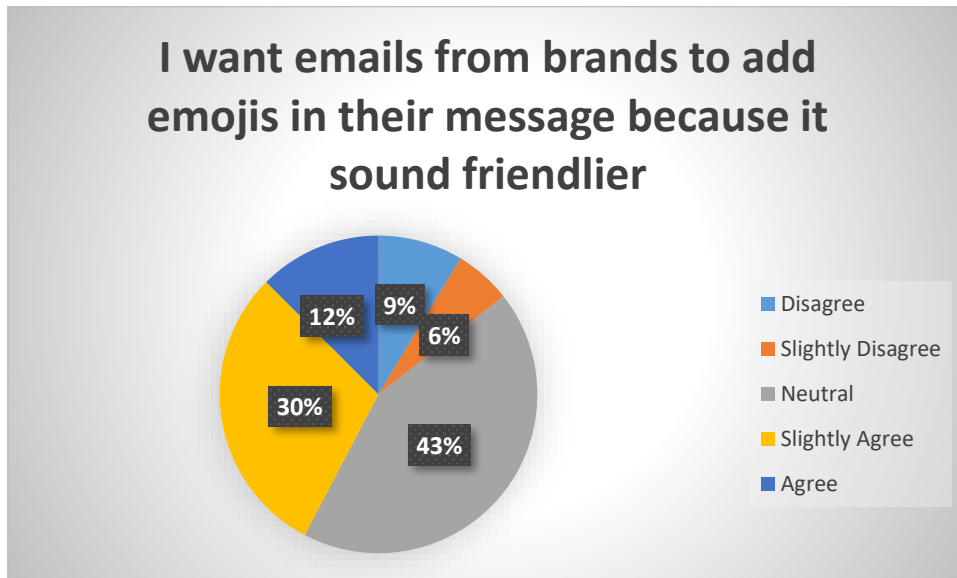


Figure 27. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to email from brands that has emoji (n=104)

Emoji is the communication language of Generation Z. The question discovers the desire for emoji in the email sent from brands. 42% of responses expressed a positive attitude toward the efforts of the company on making the message friendlier by adding emoji to email. Only 15% of participants disagreed with the matter. Interestingly, majority of responses (43%) decide to remain neutral attitude in this activity.



Figure 28. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to promotion codes and exclusive deals (n=104)

The purpose of the question is to discover the desire of Vietnamese Generation Z consumers toward extra value from brands through emails. 56% of participants said that they are more likely to finalize a purchase with emails including promotion code or exclusive deal, and 16.3% are not. A small group (27.7%) said that they agree that those discounts are valuable, however, the decision based on other aspects.



Figure 29. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to company ethics information through email marketing (n=104)

It has been said in theory part that ethics, social and environmental contribution activities of the brands have a huge impact on the relationship between consumer and company. The above rating question mentioned the desire of Generation Z consumers of receiving company ethics information. The consumer decides to consider whether the company is ethical or not based on that information. 57% of respondents showed their curiosity toward company ethics; 13% of responses choose not to receive that information. 30% of the respondents still need further consideration.

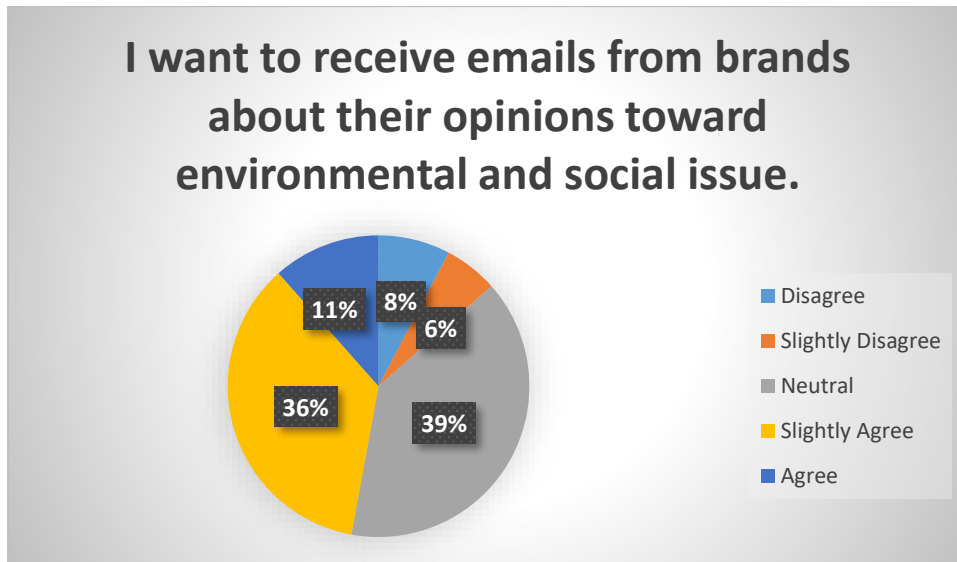


Figure 30. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer desired to information about social and environmental contribution of company through email marketing (n=104)

Considering the environmental and social opinions, the finding showed that 47% of respondents were willing to receive those emails, and 14% do not. More than a third of respondents choose the 50/50 option.

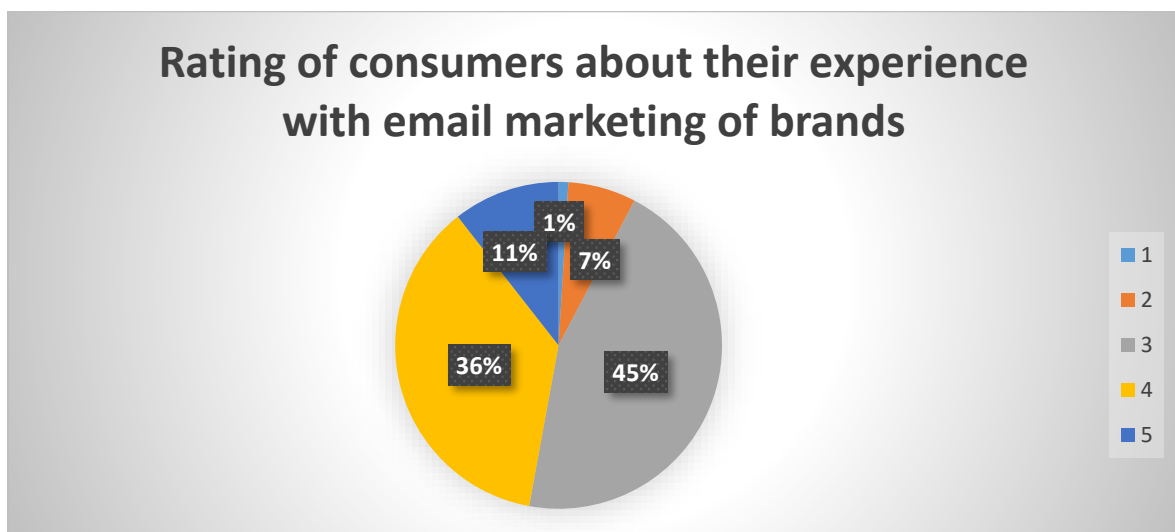


Figure 31. Rating of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer with email marketing from brands (n=104)

The majority of respondents (45%) said that they do not have strong points on their experience with email marketing of brands. Nevertheless, with the total percentage of positive experience being 47% over 8% of negative attitude, it can be indicated that emails marketing is delivering a positive experience to Vietnamese Generation Z consumers.

For further consideration toward the elements that consumers need from email marketing of brands, the last open-ended question is given to discover how companies can improve their email marketing under the Vietnamese Generation Z consumer perspective. The answers are in Vietnamese. After the evaluation and filtering process, there are 6 valid answers which are related to the topic. The author transferred the answers to English and list below:

- nice and attractive headlines
- sending emails with attractive topics, enticing recipients to click on the email to read more
- using friendly emoji along with short and concise content but enough to understand the value to bring sympathy to buyers
- do not advertise topics I am not interested in
- choosing a marketing time frame according to customer age
- sending emails only when preparing to start a promotion, customer gratitude

The author splits answers into two categories: the first three answers are appearance and content factor categories, the rest of them are personalization factor categories for analyzing process.

Considering the appearance and content factor, a nice and attractive headline is mentioned. Attractive headlines may increase the open rate of email, and it seems that the consumer is expecting good headlines from emails sent out from brands. The term “attractive topics” may refer to trendy information and topics in a certain field of business that matches the interest of their consumer. Answer number three also mentioned how the messages should be delivered in emails. In general, attractive headlines together with short, concise, suitable content with a clear message are the elements that Vietnamese Generation Z consumers are expected. In addition, the Generation Z consumer encouraged the use of emoji within emails.

The last three answers refer to the personalization of email marketing. It is easy to see that Generation Z consumers are asking companies to tailor email marketing to their interests, ages, and time. The result represents the need for improvement in the segmentation process and proactive personalization capability.

5.4 Discussion

Considering the Vietnamese Generation Z email using behaviour, the results show that majority of people receive a low volume of emails from brands. Due to the emerging of the Covid-19 pandemic, more than half of Generation Z check their email inbox on a daily basis

for working and studying purposes. However, Generation Z consumers do not have a positive attitude toward the volume of emails sent on a daily basis and two to six times per week. The results suggest that marketers need to keep consumers engaged with the brand while managing to keep the number of emails as low as possible.

The data show that participants do not think that email marketing is making them more aware of the brand after subscription. In addition, respondents claimed that they do not consider information from brands through emails to be useful, and the emails can not attract consumers to make a purchase. It is clear that email marketing could not positively contribute to initiating consideration set and active evaluation process of Generation Z consumer decision. In addition, based on the qualitative data, some respondents recommend attractive headlines together with short, clear, and interesting content to generate easy-to-read emails.

On the other hand, most respondents show a positive attitude toward different types of emails sent from brands. However, promotional emails or product recommendations receive a neutral pattern from the choices of the consumer. The results prove that email marketing activities have three stated capabilities to affect Vietnamese Generation Z purchasing decisions and capture value from their journey. Moreover, it is clear that email marketing is a valuable channel to generate a loyal relationship with Generation Z consumers. However, the effects of promotional emails on Generation Z purchasing decisions may depend on other factors.

In addition, the experience with emails on mobile devices is shown to be positive. Therefore, it is clear that email marketing from brands can perform mobile-adaptive capability.

In line with the theory, the results indicated that most of the respondents are showing a strong desire toward personalization, personal privacy, professional but friendly appearance, and knowledge about company ethics and social and environmental contribution from emails. The findings suggest marketers focus on personalization with age, interest, and time of the Vietnamese Generation Z consumer. However, personalization has a limit, and the personal privacy of Generation Z needs to be taken under consideration. Further personalization may contain sensitive touch to audiences and generate personal privacy violence experience. Generation Z is marketing conscious. They may accept the fact that the friendly voice added in the email generates a positive experience for audiences. However, further efforts on making friendlier messages may cross the limit of their patience toward receiving marketing activities, which generates a negative impact on consumer experience. Therefore, the results of the finding are clear that Generation Z consumer expects professional and trustworthy, but friendly enough emails to form authentication while closing the gap

between consumer and the brand. It also proves that Generation Z consumer is socially conscious, and they take ethics and social and environmental contribution of the company as key factors to form a relationship with the brands.

Besides the stated theory, Vietnamese Generation Z consumer shows a positive attitude toward promotional codes and exclusive deals. It is easy to see that extra values from the emails have an impact on their purchasing decision.

6 Conclusion

This chapter concludes the answers to either the main research question or sub-questions. Validity and reliability will be analyzed after that, and suggestions for further research section will be added at the end of this chapter.

6.1 Answers of research questions

To answer the main research question, sub-questions will be answer first.

What are the characteristics of Vietnamese Generation Z as consumers?

The characteristic of this generation is separated from the previous generation. Being well-educated by the easy access to a wide range of information, Generation Z is considered as marketing conscious. Through experiment, it is clear that generation Z value individual experience and personal privacy. Moreover, the results indicate that Generation Z consumer has high expectation toward ethics value, social and environmental contribution of the company. They also have a strong desire of sharing and collaborating with brands. However, the result from empirical findings shows that Generation Z purchasing decision is still affected by extra value such as promotion codes, discount, and exclusive deals as Millennials.

What are the email using behaviour of Vietnamese Generation Z?

Through findings and experiments, it indicates that Vietnamese Generation Z is sensitive to the number of emails sent by the brands. Email sent on a daily basis is more likely to be seen as annoying. It proves that Vietnamese Generation Z is impatience toward email marketing.

What effects can email marketing has on purchasing decision of Vietnamese Generation Z consumer?

It has been shown through empirical findings that email marketing has three capabilities to affect Generation Z consumer decisions and capture value through their journey, which are automation, proactive personalization, and contextual interaction. Moreover, the results indicate that email marketing is a valuable strategy to form a loyal relationship after purchasing. The finding proves that email marketing could not positively contribute to the consideration and evaluation stage of the journey, and further research is needed on elements for promotional emails to affect Generation Z consumer decisions. However, considering the fact that consider and evaluation process is less important with the new Consumer Decision Journey, it is clear that email marketing has positive effects on driving Vietnamese Generation Z purchasing decisions.

In addition, email marketing can have effects on several touchpoints based on Vietnamese consumer desires such as personalization, personal privacy, professional but friendly appearance, extra value, and knowledge about company ethics and social and environmental contribution.

After answering all sub-questions, the author will move to the main research question.

How could email marketing affect the consumer decision journey of Vietnamese Generation Z (15-26)?

Generation Z is considered as the first generation being fully raised in the digital advanced world. The boundaries between the digital and physical world are blurry. They are given the ability to access a wide range of information. Therefore, the people from generation Z are well-educated and form new characteristics. To approach and drive Generation Z consumer decisions, email marketing should focus on affecting touchpoints generated based on the preferences in their decision journey.

Marketers are recommended to generate an email strategy that keep consumer engage with the brand while managing to keep the number of emails as low as possible to avoid the annoying experience. Through experiment, attractive headlines together with short, clear, and interesting content to generate easy-to-read emails are the first element to form a first impression and brand awareness for further engagement. Generation Z values individualizing the experience. Companies that sent personalized emails in age, interest, and time will be more likely to gain trust from Generation Z consumers. However, further personalization that contains sensitive insight may affect their personal privacy desire, which may cause leaving or even a bad reputation to the company. Generation Z consumers are more likely to engage with companies that have a social and environmental contribution. Moreover, the same things happen with companies that are willing to share the ethics of brands. Emails containing that information should be considered to form a relationship with Generation Z consumers. The survey, greeting, and thank you emails are valuable to Vietnamese Generation Z consumers, and they generate a good post-purchase experience. Automated transactional emails such as confirmation, order delivery, and cart reminder are proved to generate a good consumer experience and encourage them for the next purchase.

6.2 Validity and reliability

Validity is the possibility to generate a precise outcome of what the research is measuring. Validity refers to the accuracy of the thesis. (Middleton 2021.) The aim of the research is to answer the research questions. Answers to the main research question and sub-questions

were discovered. The information of the research was collected from both primary data and secondary data. Primary data were collected through conducting an online survey among the target population with 104 respondents. The survey was distributed through a Facebook friend list of the author and shared among the respondents. Therefore, the main group of respondents was 20-22 years old (63 respondents), followed by 29 respondents at the age of 17-19. The answer to the research question may be slightly different for the rest of the age group from the target sample (15-26). However, since the survey has gathered a decent sample size, the author believes the results from the empirical research are still applicable to answer the research question for the target group of the study. Secondary data were collected from books and articles. The outcome of the study is considered partially valid since the data should be generalized to all age groups of the target population to receive a more concise conclusion.

Reliability is the possibility of reproducing the results of the study under the replicated condition. Reliability refers to the consistency of the study. (Middleton 2021.) The data collection and methodology of the research are described in plain sight with details. The thesis is consistent, in which the information and finding of the research are collected to serve the final conclusion. The research is considered reliable.

6.3 Suggestions of further research

The thesis aims to find out what are the possible effects of email marketing on consumer decision journeys and form a strategy to capture value and form relationships with Vietnamese Generation Z consumers. However, in the research process, promotional email is considered to have more elements to affect the consumer purchasing decision. Therefore, more research could be conducted on the elements of a promotional email that affect the consumer decision journey.

Furthermore, the study focuses on Vietnamese Generation Z consumers. Considering the generation that has the most buying power as Millennials, another research about this generation should be done to form a strategy for this age group.

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Appendix 1. Thesis survey form In English

Thesis Survey Form

Email marketing and Consumer Decision Journey

 kuzinpro9x@gmail.com (not shared) [Switch account](#) 

* Required

How old are you? *

Your answer _____

What is your gender? *

Male

Female

Other: _____

How often do you check your mailbox in a week? *

Less than once a week

Once a week

Once a day

More than 2 times a day

More than 10 times a day

What purpose do you use email for?

Work

Study

Contact

Other: _____

How many emails from brands do you typically receive in a week? *

Less than 10

10-40

More than 40

None

How many of emails from a single brands that likely annoy you? *

One per week

2-6 per week

Everyday

More than 2 times a day

Choose one answer the describe the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following sentences: *

	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree
I am more aware of the brand after receiving emails right after giving the company my email address	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have received useful information from brands through emails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often end up to purchase something after receiving email from brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emails including promotion codes or exclusive deals help me to make final decision of the purchase.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confirmation and order delivery emails from brands make me want to make another purchase in future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to receive cart reminder emails from brands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Product recommendation emails from brands make me want to make purchase.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to receive promotion emails about products/services at the time I consider purchasing them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want emails from brands look authentic, professional, and trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important that brand protects my personal privacy when I give them my email address.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want the email from brands are sent based on my own interest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want emails from brands that give information about the company ethics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to receive emails from brands about their opinions toward environmental and social issue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emails from brands are well displayed on mobile device.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Survey/greeting/thank
you emails make me
think that I am
valuable customer.

I want emails from
brands to add emojis
in their message
because it sound
friendlier

Rate your overall experience with emails from brands/company *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Good



How companies could improve email marketing? (optional)

Your answer

Appendix 2. Thesis survey form in Vietnamese

Thesis Survey Form

Email marketing and Consumer Decision Journey

 kuzinpro9x@gmail.com (not shared) [Switch account](#) 

* Required

Bạn bao nhiêu tuổi? *

Your answer _____

Giới tính của bạn là gì? *

Nam

Nữ

Other: _____

Bạn kiểm tra hộp thư điện tử của mình bao lâu một lần? *

Ít hơn một lần mỗi tuần

Một lần mỗi tuần

Một lần mỗi ngày

Nhiều hơn 2 lần mỗi ngày

Nhiều hơn 10 lần mỗi ngày

Bạn dùng email mục đích để làm gì?

- Công việc
- Học tập
- Liên lạc
- Other: _____

Bạn thường nhận được khoảng bao nhiêu email từ các thương hiệu trong một tuần? *

- Ít hơn 10
- 10-40
- Nhiều hơn 40
- Không nhận được

Bao nhiêu email gửi từ một thương hiệu sẽ làm phiền bạn? *

- Một lần một tuần
- 2-6 lần một tuần
- Hàng ngày
- Nhiều hơn 2 lần mỗi ngày

Choose one answer the describe the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following sentences: *

	Hoàn toàn không đồng ý	Không đồng ý	Trung lập	Đồng ý	Hoàn toàn đồng ý
Tôi nhận thức về thương hiệu rõ hơn sau khi nhận email chào mừng ngay sau khi cung cấp địa chỉ email cho công ty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi đã nhận được kiến thức có ích từ thương hiệu qua email	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi thường mua thêm một thứ gì đó sau khi nhận được email quảng cáo từ thương hiệu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email có đính kèm mã giảm giá hoặc ưu đãi độc quyền giúp tôi đưa ra quyết định cuối cùng để mua hàng	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email xác nhận hay					

Email xác nhận hay email thông báo gửi đơn đặt hàng khiến tôi có trải nghiệm tốt và muốn mua hàng trong tương lai	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi sẵn sàng nhận email nhắc nhở giỏ hàng từ các thương hiệu.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email giới thiệu sản phẩm từ các thương hiệu khiến tôi muốn mua hàng.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi muốn nhận email quảng cáo về các sản phẩm / dịch vụ chỉ tại thời điểm tôi cần mua chúng	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi muốn email từ các thương hiệu trông chân thực, chuyên nghiệp và đáng tin cậy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thương hiệu phải bảo vệ quyền riêng tư cá nhân của tôi khi tôi cung cấp cho họ địa chỉ email của mình là rất quan trọng	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi muốn email từ các thương hiệu được gửi dựa trên sở thích của riêng tôi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi muốn email từ các thương hiệu về giá trị và tiêu chuẩn đạo đức của công ty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tôi muốn email từ các thương hiệu về quan điểm của họ với vấn đề về môi trường và xã hội	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Email từ thương hiệu có thể hiển thị tốt trên thiết bị di động (không bị lỗi font hay thiết kế)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Khảo
sát/email tri
ân/email cảm
ơn từ thương
hiệu làm tôi
thấy bản thân
là khách hàng
có giá trị

Tôi muốn
email từ các
thương hiệu
thêm biểu
tượng cảm
xúc vào tin
nhắn của họ vì
nó trông thân
thiện hơn

Đánh giá trải nghiệm tổng thể của bạn với email từ các thương hiệu / công ty *

1 2 3 4 5

Rất tệ

Rất tốt

Làm thế nào các công ty có thể cải thiện tiếp thị qua email? (không bắt buộc)

Your answer
