
Relationship marketing replicates small-world experiment

Sarat Chandra Das

U-Asia, London, UK

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Abstract

Relationship Marketing, which is at the heart of marketing management, inherits a [small-world-type network](#) characterized by short path-lengths. At a strategic level the discipline can gain from modelling on Stanley Milgram's small-world experiment on average path length for social networks.

The relationship marketing can consciously map the 'average number of steps' along the shortest paths for all possible pairs of social network nodes to configure a model that can measure efficiency of achieving a certain response from the task of information-sharing emphasizing on customer retention and satisfaction and even a transaction value. These efforts are expected to design innovative collaborative and social communication channels to push the agenda of relationship marketing by developing and implementing appropriate marketing plan to stimulate referrals (referral marketing). It also can create certain demographic and customer service data pervading all the spaces of referral marketing covering internal markets, influence markets, and customer markets and supplier markets. Thus, the sub-markets, for example government regulators and consumer associations falling under influence markets, can be better targeted with a laser-precision.

The research explores the complexities in designing such a model based on Milgram's small-world experiment combined with other inspired models such as Metcalfe's law, Scott Feld's friendship paradox, Kevin Bacon's six degrees of separation or a 'material-semiotic' method developed by Bruno and Call on which come to be known as 'actor-network theory', or even the Erdos number which measures the collaborative distance between individuals.
