



Research Article

Assessing the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign to retain customer loyalty

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ABSTRACT

In this research project, researcher will be explained about assessing the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign in order to retain customer loyalty. The purposes of this research are to examine the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign and to investigate the reasons why it can retain customer loyalty. The methodology chose by researcher is quantitative research where the survey will be conducted to collect data that will be extract to perform mathematical techniques. The data collected will be identified regarding the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign to retain customer loyalty and analysed using SmartPLS software. The results gain from this research is there will be a reason on why automated email marketing campaign is chose in order to retain customer loyalty. In addition, result also revealed that the variables used in effective automated email marketing campaign will gives difference data towards on how it can retain customer loyalty and it shows that the frequency and outstanding content have relationship between the customer loyalty. However, relevant database has no relationship between the customer loyalty. The implications and limitation will be explained further in conclusion.

Keywords: *Effectiveness; Automated Email Marketing; Customer Loyalty*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

A problem statement is the definition of a current issue that needs to be solved. It gives the scope for the research study and will be the concerns to be addresses by the research. By understand their problem statement, it will be easier for the researcher to analyze their research in the right track and allow it to be understandable. The research problem is the subject of every research. A good and powerful problem statement will let research to identify their actual purpose to start about the topic.

Nowadays, we all struggling in COVID-19 crisis especially for business owner where they need to make sure they retain customer loyalty. In addition, by working more intensely with customers during difficult times will give added value to the marketer to help their relationship become stronger and create bonds that will retain for years. In order to retain customer loyalty, the marketer need to make sure that they don't focus on one day business but they must to ensures that they always keep in touch with their customers.

Automated email marketing campaign is one of suitable strategy that can be used in order to retain their customer loyalty towards the brands.

Many researches have been done towards customer loyalty as this factor is the most crucial in order to make an organization or brand sustain in the market. The company indicates that it is important to take care of their customers rather than make a single sale. Jill Griffin (2010) emphasize that, it is compulsory to build loyalty between customers and understanding of the significance of customer loyalty to the organization. Different business firm have different alternative to come out with the customers in the global village as well as increased correspondence across various digital channels to establish a broad scale (Arifur & Aminul, 2017).

The main problems that will be highlight in this research is how to make the automated email marketing campaign become effective to retain customer loyalty. Marketing efficiency analysis is an important component of a full business measuring performance which allows businesses to adopt a marketing strategy through an overview of business performance (Krizanova et al., 2019). Marketers have faced lack of information to make their email marketing become interested to gain more attention from their customers. They mostly do not have a main variable in order to outlined their automated email marketing campaign become one of the most powerful marketing strategies in their plan to boost their sales and to increase their visibility, so that they also will get lack of customer loyalty towards their brands. Due to the extensive use of the modern email behemoth, many marketers have failed to adopt a successful email marketing campaign either they do not know enough to do it or still have not realized how effective it can be (Pankaj, 2020).

So, it is important for marketer to put their customers' loyalty first in order for company's brand to sustain during this time. Marketer really need to think on how to make sure that their automated email marketing campaign become effective as it will become a platform for the marketers to keep communicate with customers and at the end of the day, customers will feel that they are never forgotten. Pavlov, et al. (2008) as cited in Waheed and Jianghua, (2017) described that, email is reviewed as core component of the internet that will help marketing operations to deliver information and to manage their relationship with different consumers.

Abide from that, the purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between frequency and customer loyalty. It is crucial for the email frequency because as the more the brand create a content and deliver frequently to customers, they will be having more feeling in contact with the brand. Other purposes of this research are to investigate the relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty as it is important for the brand or company to have a relevant database in order to make sure that customers that they targeted will have more interest towards the brand.

Lastly, the purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty. As they brand want customers to retain their loyalty towards them, the brand needs to make sure that they develop an outstanding content that can make an eye catching from the customers and to ensure that customers will retain their loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

There will be explanations about all the independent and dependent variable used in this research. All the explanations are about the information that have been collected based on the previous research and have been cited in this research to support all the facts and reasons which will make the statements strong. Every independent and dependent variable used is based on the purpose of this research which is to investigate the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign towards customer loyalty. The cited information has been summarized into the table included at the beginning of the section This research study, researcher have chosen three independent variables which is frequency, relevant database and outstanding content. All of this variable is chosen because.

2.2. FREQUENCY

Table 1. Frequency

Author	Construct	Definition	Concepts
Pritha (2020)	Over-emailing	Deliver a huge number of emails will irritate subscribers.	Subscribers' engagement
	Under-emailing	Poor email frequency led to low inbox performance.	Email performance, lack of email
	Precise frequency	The precise frequency of sending email is not determined by any method	Exact frequency of email, precision in emailing
Aaron (2019)	Over-emailing	Sending many emails will dubbed as spammer.	Spam
eMarketer (2017)	Unbalance email	Deliver excessive huge email reduce participation, reduce the number of the database and contribute to least participation.	Participation towards email messages
Mischeaux (2011)	Frequency in emailing	Email frequency will affect the customer loyalty.	Loyalty, attraction, needs and wants
Zhang et al. (2017)	Frequency in emailing	Important to determine the exact number of to deliver email.	Preference, perception, requirement
Mischeaux (2011)	Frequency in emailing	Significance of the email frequency is much need to be take into consideration.	Customer loyalty

Frequency in emailing is one of important things to take care of in the way to make automated email marketing become effective in order to retain customer loyalty. In the term of to retain customer loyalty by make sure that marketers used the perfect frequency they need to be careful in setting up how frequent they want to keep update their email to deliver to the customers. When marketers deliver a huge number of emails, there is a large probability that subscribers might feel irritated and when the marketers keep moving on, the numbers of the subscribers can become lower, yet when the marketers are not sending emails, the subscribers may look for a replacement to the products and/or services and at the end of the day, they may forget about the brand (Pritha, 2020).

Aaron (2019) also stated the same idea regarding to the email frequency, when the marketers post so many emails it will be dubbed as a spammer who only bothers their users, prompting them to go unsubscribe. Besides, deliver very few updates will makes all the subscribers would be disconnected and the brands will be ignored. The productivity indicators are measured by the number of emails received. Delivering an excessively huge stock of email not just to overstates the outstanding balance, but also reduce the number of the database and contribute to least participation (eMarketer, 2017).

Either sending too few emails or too much email, both have their own effectiveness toward the automated email marketing campaign to retain customer loyalty. It is depending on the marketers how to handle it. It is important to be skillful in this area when the marketers want to make an automated email marketing campaign become useful and become one of the marketing strategies that can increase their sales. As written by Micheaux (2011), when determining email frequency requirements, marketers do not adequately consider the subscriber's perspective. The subscribers will feel they are under strong email marketing strain regardless of the number of emails delivered in which situation minimizing or adjusting the frequency in not acceptable. All of this matters because the frequency emailed by marketers will affect the possibility of customers to retain their loyalty.

The effect that can be seen towards their email effectiveness is due to the low frequent update can cause to lower of brand presence in subscriber's email. Regarding to this situation, it may lead to low memory towards the brands. This statement also agreed by Pritha (2020), when the email frequency is poor, subscribers can no longer notice or care to subscribe to the company and with a low inbox performance, the email campaign can harm the chances of succeeding and meet potential clients. She also written that on an average, more than six emails are sent everyday by an average subscriber and up to 50% of them are advertising emails.

The frequency of sending email to customers is different based on their customers behavior and how important for them to check the advertising email frequently. Therefore, there is no final results on how frequent a company should send their automated email marketing campaign as they need to do try and error or to make some research about their customers. Based on study by Zhang et al. (2017), even though optimum number of emails is important to delivered, but the jackpot number is a very daunting problem to a company because subscribers not only have multiple inherent requirements for email, but they also have their own preference and perceptions which is vary from one and another.

To summarize, the optimum number of emails to be sent will vary between users. This research also supported by Pritha (2020), the precise frequency of sending email is not determined by any method. Various types of user accounts have varying email capacity tolerance limit. Trying various email frequencies sent to each email address form will help the company to select the correct amount to boost the return of investment (ROI). The approach helps to achieve consistency and keep lost opportunities and dissatisfied clients under control.

In addition, the level of frequency is not as necessary as the level of relevance email that marketer need to send to keep their visibility in customer's mind. It is not worth it if marketers keep sending email to their subscribers if the email is about the same things that considered as lame and not up to date. Customers will get bored and will start to ignore the email delivered even the email is about the fresh and new information. It is about the click possibilities of the subscribers to the sending emails. Micheaux (2011) studied that, the management involvement and intent of this inquiry is to demonstrates the volume that need to be handled from the customers perspective rather than the drive' perspective of an advertiser and what have found is, the frequency is not only the things that necessary to worry, but the significance of the email frequency is much need to be take into consideration.

2.3. RELEVANT DATABASE

Table 2. Relevant Database

Author	Construct	Definition	Concepts
Charles (2017)	Relevant database	Collect database from the email address of engaged customers. Database will improve automated email marketing campaign.	Engagement, names, email address Improvement, useful information
	Methods to collect database	Various ways to access email addresses to the email marketing database.	Email address, website, webpage
Fariborzi & Zahedifard (2012)	Customer loyalty	Retain customer loyalty by deliver email updates to their existing or former clients.	Customer loyalty, customers retention
Zirhang & Rudra (2014)	Weak database	A weak database results in inadequate marketing campaign or a loss in return on investment (ROI).	Lack subscribers, customers/subscribers' behaviors, ROI
Digital Marketing Institute (2015)	Relevance subscribers	Practice the skills of purpose where the specifics of people who are truly involved in the brand.	Relevancy, branding
Chris (2007)	Strong database	Marketers need a strong database to take advantage of email classification.	Potential clients
Mehdi et al (2013)	Important of subscribers	It is extremely essential to build and maintain the subscription list	Spamming, email approval
Vriens, Hiek & Hoekstra (1998) cited in Vy & Phuong (2018).	Importance of database	Objective of email marketing is to build a strong partnership and communication with their clients.	Partnership, communication

A database for email is a registry of names and email addresses of existing and target audience which can be collected through the compilation email addresses of individuals who are engaged in the business or brand and individuals who buy products from the marketers (Charles, 2017). Database is compulsory thing in order to launch the automated email marketing campaign. Through leveraging the email database to classify subscribers, marketers will have useful information and improve the automated email marketing campaign (Charles, 2017).

Thus, it is necessary because marketers can keep their potential subscribers or target audience to keep update on the company's email regarding their product's advertising and promotion. According to Fariborzi and Zahedifard (2012), this also can be considered to retain customer loyalty by deliver email updates to boost a seller's connection to their existing or former clients. Moreover, marketers will deliver emails to potential audience and convince existing customers to quickly do a buying activity.

In order to start a strong automated email marketing campaign, a marketer need to be ready in terms of the target audience that will subscribe to the brand's email and they also need to carefully investigate and make some research about their potential customers. They need a sufficient relevant database which can lead to a successful email marketing campaign. Zirthing and Rudra (2014) analyzed that a weak database and information about the behaviors of subscribers also results in inadequate marketing campaign or a loss in return on investment (ROI). Marketers must initiate promotions for a particular demographic related to their curiosity and importance in order to prevent those issues. They, also investigated that, through observing the flow of the activity of a website page by a subscriber and integrating data with the brand, insight on brand exposure is derived from a campaign.

In the meantime, gaining a powerful of database for boost the subscribers of the automated email marketing campaign is a bonus mark and can give a strong impact of the effectiveness of this type of marketing. The more effective the automated email marketing campaign, the higher customers can retain their loyalty and the more visible the brand or the company itself. Marketer can develop a database in a variety of ways. Nevertheless, to draw up a list of subscribers of relevance, marketer have to practice the skills of purpose where the specifics of people who are truly involved in the brand, product/service or content will be identified (Digital Marketing Institute, 2015).

Chris (2007) also admits that marketers need a strong database to take advantage of email classification and they also must consider what data of organization and email marketing systems will operates if marketer create a strong database. It is also crucial channel if potential clients are acquired and default email users are met who might not be reached. So, a marketer needs to do an analysis about their purpose of doing automated email marketing campaign and make some research about type of subscribers or email users that they want to proposed or who actually their target customers. In addition, they also need to understand the theme of their business or their area in marketing. To be summarize, they need to classifies the existed customers in market to pairing with the theme of their business.

Besides, most of the marketers who are using the automated email marketing campaign as their marketing strategy usually will put a heavy load in figure out about their content for the campaign. Yet, they are forgetting about there is no point if they are not put a strong database as their compulsory starter pack. These two things need to be balanced to ensure that the automated email marketing campaign attempted succeed. Mehdi et al (2013) also claimed that, there is a great deal of reliance on email marketing materials, but it is extremely essential to build and maintain the subscription list. Moreover, marketers can

only deliver an email to a client if they approved to do so. If marketers not yet request approval, users will potentially categorize the email as spam which may harm the email marketing campaign and disrupt the credibility as the owner of automated email marketing campaign.

The importance of database to the automated email marketing campaign also supported by Vriens, Hiek & Hoekstra (1998), where they emphasized that the objective of email marketing is to build a strong partnership and communication with their clients.

The organizations will have their own databases to connect with clients and this helps the two sides to meet frequently. The database itself plays a vital role in email marketing practice and should be fully established the campaign (Vriens, Hiek & Hoekstra,1998 as cited in Vy & Phuong, 2018). Therefore, marketers need to create a team that can specially manage the automated email marketing campaign as part of their organizational chart in order to keep their strategic plan on track and powerful parallel to the best needs of effective automated email marketing

In this case, Charles (2017) identified that, various ways to access email addresses to the email marketing database. One of the great methods to do this is to attach the website to a webpage or another feature where users might insert their email address if they would like more detail about the brand, exclusive offers and so on. Marketers may also invite their brand loyalists to subscribe for the mailing list by connecting them via links to social media sites. Another method also suggested by Mehdi et al. (2013):

- The use of the bot for searching email addresses on websites
- Inserting the customers details manually
- Adding subscription page for the reception of email ads on the AESSwebsite.

This method can collect a contact needed by the marketers and the contact information (email subscribers) required should be recorded in a database which include people's email address, name expertise etc. (Mehdi et al., 2013).

2.4. OUTSTANDING CONTENT

Table 3. Outstanding Content

Author	Construct	Definition	Concepts
Fariborzi & Zahedifard (2012)	Outstanding content	A powerful deals and useful content that can make a significant difference to the buyer.	Relevant email
Eastlack and Rao (1989), Lodish et al. (1995) cited in Sahni et al. (2018)	Impact of content	The advertising will boost the sales if the content success to be interested.	Sales
Radu & Carmen (2015)	Outstanding email	The topic of the email should correspond to the email material, must be convincing and allow the subscribers interested and eager to view and learn about the email.	Convincing content

An outstanding content means the content that create for automated email marketing campaign must be powerful and can attract subscribers to read and boost their interest to know more about the content that want to be delivered to the customers. A good content for email marketing will boost the percentage of subscribers that intent to open up the

email delivered. Generally, a marketer also needs to explore how to reconcile the demographic details and based on the customer's purchasing activities. Marketers need to analyze what is the best content to highlight their product and how their subscribers can accept it by just looking at their automated email marketing campaign.

Therefore, Fariborzi and Zahedifard (2012) have investigated about a powerful deals and useful content that can make a significant difference to the buyer. Encourage people by finding out the value of any relevant email. There are some terms that cannot be used by marketers in creating their content form email where by using those terms, the email will be categorized as spam. The terms are including "free, afford, opportunity, save, earn money and debt". To be clarified, the boost of sale by using automated email marketing campaign as platform is possible if the marketers can manage it well and following all the rules align by the email.

Furthermore, based on the database collected by marketers and after the research and identification of customers behavior have done, marketers will have an overall observations and results towards what does their customers need and interested to see. Whatever the marketer plan to implement in their automated email marketing campaign, they need to finalize based on their customer's interest. Mostly subscribers are more interested in some content than others. Abide from that, marketers need to classify their database based on interest and ensure that marketers provide exclusive offers following the subscriber's interest and engagement. Marketers need to observe the plans and ideas in order to come out with the content that related to the suitable content and the email need to clarify directly about the deals and why it is relevant to the subscribers.

Others, the reason why email marketing can be a place for improve the sales is because of the outstanding advertising content who can deliver an information and have courage to retain customer loyalty. This also supported by Eastlack and Rao (1989), Lodish et al. (1995) cited in Sahni et al. (2018), the advertising will boost the sales if the content success to be interested. Sahni et al. (2018) also reported that, the impact of less informative content is relying on how well the users assesses the amount of content in the commercial. Thereby, their findings about the whole content of the advertisement must need to be considered in order to be success towards automated email marketing campaign followed by timing and frequency where it is normally integrated in market demand models.

In addition, Radu and Carmen (2015) have developed about the content of the email that can make it outstanding. They described about the topic of the email should correspond to the email material, must be convincing and allow the subscribers interested and eager to view and learn about the email. However, in order to be viewed accurately on smart phones, five to seven words should be sufficiently compelling. It also has been suggested to displayed the descriptive image of the advertised product/service as well as it captions in the actual message format and also the clickable link to the homepage to provide more detail.

2.5. CUSTOMER LOYALTY

The engagement of customer loyalty is known as one of the most convincing business metrics (Arifur & Aminul 2017). For email marketing, the loyalty program is a crucial action that should be kept in mind in order to build brand awareness in the minds of customers. Loyal customers are beneficial in themselves as a stable, ongoing stream of revenue. KPMG (2019) found that, "...52 percent of the consumers surveyed say they will buy their favourite brand even if it is cheaper and more convenient to buy a rival product is further proof that loyalty endures". Loyalty is many-sided concept that comprises of attitudinal and behavioural components and manifests the desire of the customers to maintain the desire of the client to maintain the relationship, repurchase actions and supportive referrals (Bell et al., 2005; Scheer et al., 2009 as cited in Nora & Heikki, 2017).

Automated email marketing campaign is one of the most effective ways to retain customer loyalty where these ways make the marketers seems always keep in touch with their customers. Arifur & Aminul (2017) emphasized that one of the main forms of innovative advertising methods known as email marketing that integrates the distribution of personalized communications to target customers on schedule. Hartemo (2016) stated that, "E-mail marketing can be used to empower consumers by sending e-mails based on permission, by making consumers active participants in the communication process and by making e-mails relevant for the recipients."

This kind of campaign still effective until now because most of the time people will always check their email. Based the result survey created by Jacinda (2020), it stated that "99% of us check our email every day and some of us check our email as much as twenty times a day." More than half of us even check our email before we do something else online or maybe even before we get out of bed. The reasons why automated email marketing still relevant and effective in order to retain customer loyalty is because customers can stay up to date about the information that will be sent by the marketer. Peter (2014) evaluates that, by delivering emails dependent on approval, allowing consumers to engage effectively in the communication process and making e-mails meaningful to recipient can encourage customers in the used of email marketing.

2.6. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

There are three hypotheses based on research that have been align based on the independent variables and dependent variable. The hypothesis mentioned in order to relate with the frequency, relevant database and outstanding content of automated email marketing campaign to retain customer loyalty. Hence, researcher has constructed hypothesis to support the goal of this study by evaluating the frequency, relevant database and outstanding content which can make the automated email marketing campaign effective to retain customer loyalty.

2.6.1. Relationship between frequency and customer loyalty.

In the research study, a hypothesis formulates and analyzes the relationship between frequency and customer loyalty. Therefore, there is a relationship between relevant

database and customer loyalty. Researcher examines the alternative hypothesis by observing the database of customers for the automated email marketing campaign. When the alternative hypothesis is verified and proven to be accurate by using a data, a relationship between frequency and customer loyalty is accepted. Salo (2012) as cited in Sami (2015) emphasized that there is no final ideal or incorrect moment to deliver the email marketing campaign. When marketers are capable of reading their email, it is still crucial to try to reach their customers. He added that while fundamental rules for managing email messages exist, only marketing efforts can be conducted effectively for their clients based on experience and testing.

However, the frequency of email will be delivered to the customers which can enhance the way customers will assume that the email is not spamming them but make them stay loyal with the brand. Marisavo & Raulas (2004) stated that online marketing previous studies and customers engagement suggested that continuous touch with customers helps marketers to increase customer loyalty. Another part of understanding how communicating effectively can improve the loyalty of customers is how marketing campaign and brand engagement shape brand perceptions. Therefore, it has been shown that the customer loyalty is affected by frequency of email delivered.

H1= There is a relationship between frequency and customer loyalty

2.6.2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELEVANT DATABASE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY.

Based research study, a hypothesis formulates and analyzes the relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty. There is a relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty. Researcher examines the alternative hypothesis by observing the database of customers for the automated email marketing campaign. When the alternative hypothesis is verified and proven to be accurate by using a data, a relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty is accepted. A relevant database is also crucial to choose the most quality customers that can ensure that it can contribute to the increase in sale. In order to gain a relevant database, many information that need to take a look into. This statement is supported by Goulart (2014) as cited in Ana (2014) where she mentioned that marketers need to obtain more data relating the potential customers, not only their names and email addresses. For efficient targeting and consequently performance, database segregation is vital.

The database can be related to retain customer loyalty because it is one of the reasons of the automated marketing campaign gain their recipients to send all the email regarding the products. One of the purposes of email marketing are to build relationships, especially long term, with customers. Organizations that are using their own database for communication with clients, and thereby allows the both parties to communicate often. The database thus plays a vital function in the email marketing practice and should be appropriately developed (Vriens, 1998 as cited in Vy & Phuong, 2018).

H2 = There is a relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty.

2.6.3. Relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty.

Regarding the research study, a hypothesis formulates and analyzes the relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty. There is a relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty. Researcher examines the alternative hypothesis by formulating a different content delivered to the customers. When the alternative hypothesis is verified and proven to be accurate by using a data, a relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty is accepted. Customers probably will be more encourage to stay loyal if the content of the email can be more outstanding and relevant. This supported by Sami (2015) where he stated that the content of the email marketing campaign issued must be interesting and relevant to anybody who receives it in order to retain their loyalty as customers.

There are always impact between the content that are outstanding with the customer loyalty. This is especially when the content delivered has achieve when the marketers able to find out what customers really want to see from the email they received. Goulart (2014) as cited in Ana (2014) stated that the more the content is meaningful, the greater the response from customers.

H3 = There is a relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty.

2.7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

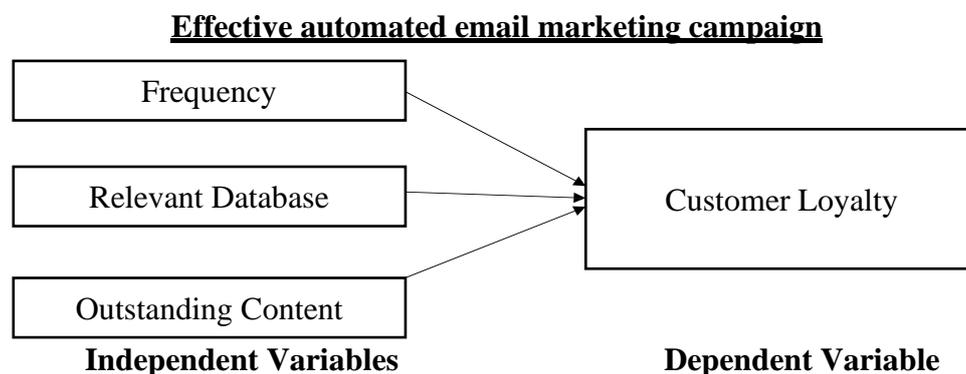


Fig. 1. Framework Model

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

arget population is including the entire population or community that concerned by a researcher in order to perform research study and survey of a sample size based on the target population chose. In this research study, the target population is from Malaysia which is the estimated population is around 32,718,703 based on the source from Department of Statistics Malaysia Official Portal.

This population is chosen in order the broaden the location and area of the research study and the probability of population that have email account or have interest in automated email marketing campaign cannot be trace. So, researcher decided to take the whole

population in Malaysia to fulfill the purpose of this research which is to investigate the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign to retain customer loyalty.

In this research the target respondent is all the email users in Malaysia. This is because they are more opened to the automated email marketing campaign as they will subscribe and sign up their email to the shopping platform. A method used to determine sample size from a general population is based on Krejcie and Morgan Sampling Method. From the target population determined, the sample size of the research is 384 which structured on the Krejcie and Morgan table sample size list.

3.2. INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

In this research, the instrument development that have been chosen is quantitative research. This is because the researcher will test theories as an explanation to answer the research problem. Han et al., (2014) describe that, "However, before answering the research questions, the data obtained usually data from a large sample of participants need to be analyzed by means of statistical procedures.

In quantitative research the researcher will collect data then will be extract and perform mathematical techniques for analyze the next stage of study. Researcher also will examine the relationship between variable which can be measured numerically and a selection of statistical and graphical methods will be used to analyze.

This quantitative research is about the situation that happening now or in the past. Automated email marketing is about something that have happened since then until now. This marketing strategy still become a favorable by most marketer as a tool to retain their relationship with customers. A mono method quantitative study will be used in this research by collecting single data which is questionnaire.

The questionnaire conducted will be able for the researcher to collect data about the effectiveness of automated email marketing to retain customer loyalty. It will be stated in the questionnaire about the respondent's point of view towards this marketing strategy to retain their loyalty.

The questionnaire needs to be suitable for most of the respondent to understand and able to respond to the question. Abide from that, the researcher chooses to design the questionnaire in English version. The questionnaire also will provide the brief information and details of the specific terms in order to give the respondents a clear understanding purposes and specific terms on the research attempt. 300 respondents are involved to the survey form. The content of the questionnaire specifically about the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign to retain customer loyalty and the satisfaction of customers towards automated email marketing campaign in Malaysia. The questionnaire design has been presented in table 4.

Table 4. Table of design questionnaires.

Construct	No. of Ques.	Reference	Original Questions	Revised Questions	Scale
DE MOGHR AP HIC	5		1. Name. 2. Age. 3. Do you have any email account? 4. Status of employment.	1. "Name" is not required. 2. Age. 3. Do you have any email account? 4. Status of employment.	Multiple choice & 5-point Likert Scale
IVI: FREQUENCY	6	Fahim & Imran(2017) Rattie & Brum(2001) Merisavo & Raulas (2004) Susanne & Hanna (2013) Rattie & Brum(2001) Hanudin et al.(2013) Fahim & Imran(2017)	5. You tend to purchase online via email marketing. 1. I would like a way to block all unwanted text messages from being delivered to my phone. 2. How important is it to you that brand X is regularly in touch with you? 3. That I won't be spammed, meaning they update too much. 4. Unsolicited text messages would annoy me. 5. Many of advertising are annoying. 6. You receive SMS regarding products at appropriate times.	5. I tend to purchase online via email marketing. 1. I would like to allow all email messages being delivered to my email. 2. It is important for the brand to regularly in touch with me. 3. It is important to subscribe brand email that won't be spammed or update too much. 4. Unsolicited email messages would not annoy me. 5. There are too many advertisements in the mailbox and I am not getting annoyed. 6. I receive email regarding products at appropriate times.	5-point Likert Scale
IV2: RELEVANT DATABASE	4	Rattie & Brum(2001) Brandal & Kent(2003) Fahim & Imran(2017) Juan et al., (2019)	1. It would be acceptable to receive advertising text. 2. I trust that a company is using my personal data to my advantage. 3. It is a pleasure when websites send messages with your name in different platforms 4. What is the importance of the actions of Capturing users in Digital Marketing?	1. It would be acceptable to receive advertising email messages from businesses with whom I am not subscribe yet. 2. I trust that if a company is using my personal data, it is for my own advantage. 3. It is pleasure when websites send email with my name. 4. It is important to capturing database in the email marketing campaign.	5-point Likert Scale
IV3: OUTSTANDING CONTENT	6	Hanudin et al.(2013) Brandal & Kent(2003) Fahim & Imran(2017)	1. It is a convenient source of product information. 2. Permission-based emails often have interesting content. 3. E-Mail marketing contributes to enhance product awareness.	1. Email marketing is a convenient source of product information for me. 2. I prefer permission-based emails that have interesting content. 3. Email marketing contributes to enhance	5-point Likert Scale

Construct	No. of Ques.	Reference	Original Questions	Revised Questions	Scale
DV: C U S T O M E R L O Y A L T Y	4	Fahim & Imran(2017)	4. You trust on that information which is sent to you via the E-Mail marketing.	product awareness through their content. 4. I trust on the information which is sent to me via email marketing.	5-point LikertScale
		Fahim & Imran(2017)	5. You think that information you receive via the E-Mail marketing is exciting and attractive.	5. I think that information I receive via email marketing is exciting and attractive.	
		Fahim & Imran(2017)	6. You show a great deal of interest in messages disclosing discounts and special offers.	6. I show a great deal of interest in messages disclosing discounts and special offers.	
		Chong et al, (2015)	1. I say positive things about the airline to other people.	1. I say positive things about the brand that I've purchased to other people.	
		Claudia et al.,(2012)	2. I recommend this brand those who ask me advice.	2. I will recommend thebrand that I've purchased to those who ask myadvice.	
		Claudia et al.,(2012)	3. I intend to buy other products from this brand.	3. I intend to buy other products from the same brand.	
Claudia et al.,(2012)	4. I would encourage friends and relatives to use the website.	4. I would encourage friends and relatives to buy same brand that I havebought.			

4. RESULTS

4.1. ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

The background information of respondents is one of crucial parts in the research that need to be gathered by the researcher in the questionnaires and the questions is included in the section A which is demographic information. Variables that used by the researcher is age, availability of email account, status of employment and tend to purchase. All of this variable is related with the research proposed. The demographic profiles that have been gathered and analyzed will be discussed in details.

4.1.1. Age

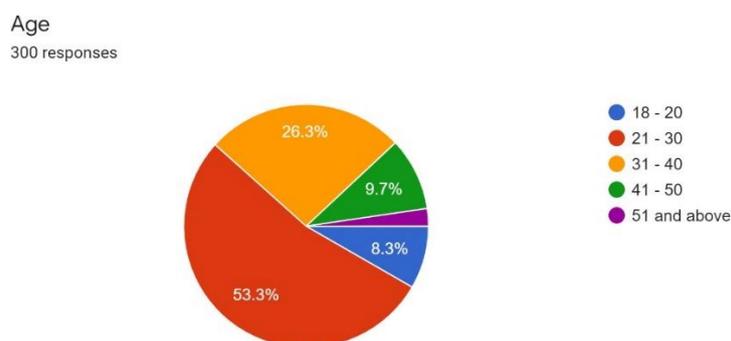


Fig. 2. Respondents by age

Fig. 2 shows the ratio of age among the respondents of this research. Table 5 shows that there are 25 respondents in the age group of 18 – 20 which resulted in 8.3% while in the age group 21 – 30 has 160 respondents resulted in 53.3% where it shows the highest amount of respondent. Other than that, there are 79 respondents in the age group 31 – 40 which resulted in 26.3% while in age group 41 – 50 there are 29 respondents resulted in 9.7% while there are 7 respondents in the age group 51 and above which resulted in 2.3% and it is the lowest number of respondents that completing the questionnaires.

Table 5. Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 – 20	25	8.3
21 – 30	160	53.3
31 – 40	79	26.3
41 – 50	29	9.7
51 and above	7	2.3
Total	300	100

4.1.2. Owned an Email Account



Fig. 3. Respondents by Email Account Owner

Fig.3 shows that the ratio of the respondents that have email account. The total amount of respondents that have an email account shows that all of them have email account. This represents the total of 300 respondents which resulted in 100%.

Table 6. Respondents by Email Account Owner

Owned email account	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	300	100
No	0	0
Total	300	100

4.1.3. Status of Employment

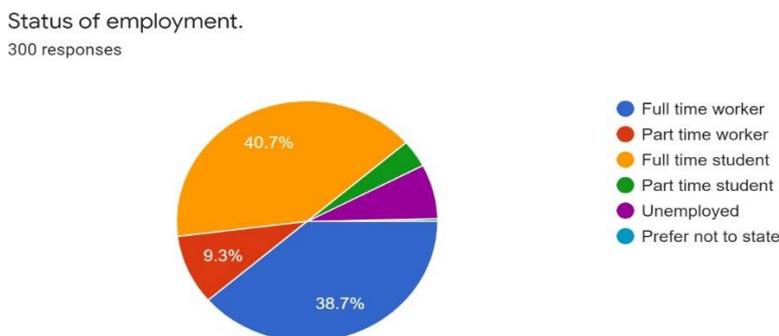


Fig. 4. Respondents by Status of Employment

Fig. 4 shows that the ratio of the status of employment that involved in the data collection in the research. There are 116 of the respondents that are a full- time worker which resulted in 38.7% while there are 28 respondents that are a part time worker which resulted in 9.3%. Other than that, the number of respondents that are a full-time student is 122 which resulted in 40.7 and it is the highest number of respondents in this part. Next, the part time student has shown the total number of respondents which is 11 respondents which resulted in 3.7% and it is the lowest number of respondents. Last but not least, there are 22 respondents that are in unemployed category which resulted in 7.3% while there are no respondents that choose prefer not to state their status of employment.

Table 7. Respondents by Status of Employment

Status of Employment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Full-time worker	116	38.7
Part-time worker	28	9.3
Full-time student	122	40.7
Part-time student	11	3.7
Unemployed	22	7.3
Prefer not to state	0	0
Total	300	100

4.1.4. Tend to Purchase



Fig. 5. Respondents by Tend to Purchase

Fig. 5 shows that there are 167 respondents that are strongly agree that they are tend to purchase via email marketing which resulted in 55.7% while there are 79 respondents that are agree which resulted in 26.3%. Next, the number of respondents that are more or less agree that they tend to purchase via email marketing is 39 respondents which resulted in 13% while in the disagree shows there are 10 respondents which resulted in 3.3%. Lastly, there are 5 respondents that are strongly disagree that they will tend to purchase via email marketing and it resulted in 1.7%.

Table 8. Respondents by Tend to Purchase

Tending to purchase	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	167	55.7
Agree	79	26.3
More or Less Agree	39	13
Disagree	10	3.3
Strongly Disagree	5	1.7
Total	300	100

4.2. ASSESSMENT AND GOODNESS OF MEASUREMENT MODEL

In this section, latent variables and the indicators is using a measurement model to investigate their relationship. In order to detect a contribution of confirmed items of constructs to the proposed model, these objects were examined using confirmatory factors analysis. There are internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity as the evaluation of the measurement model. For convergent validity, it consists of factor loadings, average variance extraction (AVE), and composite reliability (CR), while discriminant validity consists of Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Fig. 6 below shows the measurement model of this research.

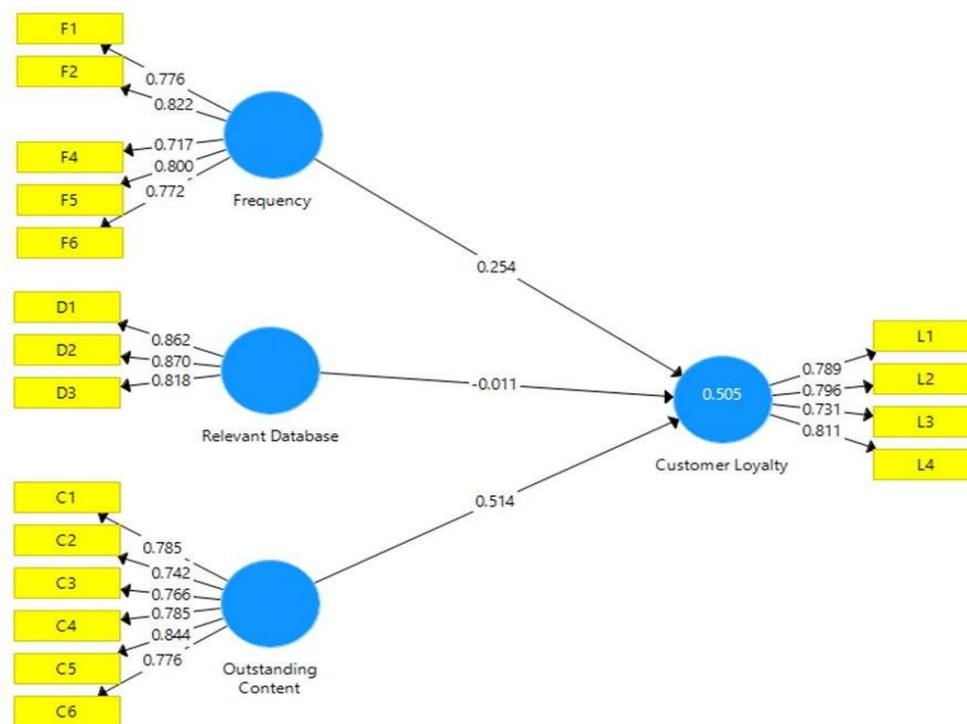


Fig. 6. Measurement Model

4.2.1. Convergent Validity

In order to assess the link between two measures convergent validity is required. For the convergent validity of this research, three components need to be taken into account: outer loading factor of the indicator, average variance (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). The value of the indicator should be exactly 0.7 or more than 0.7 for the outer loading factor to ensure the items are loaded considerably on the construct. In the meanwhile, measurement errors must be at least 0.5 for AVE or greater than 0.5. The acceptable values are 0.7 and above for composite reliability (CR).

4.2.1.1. Outer Loading Factor

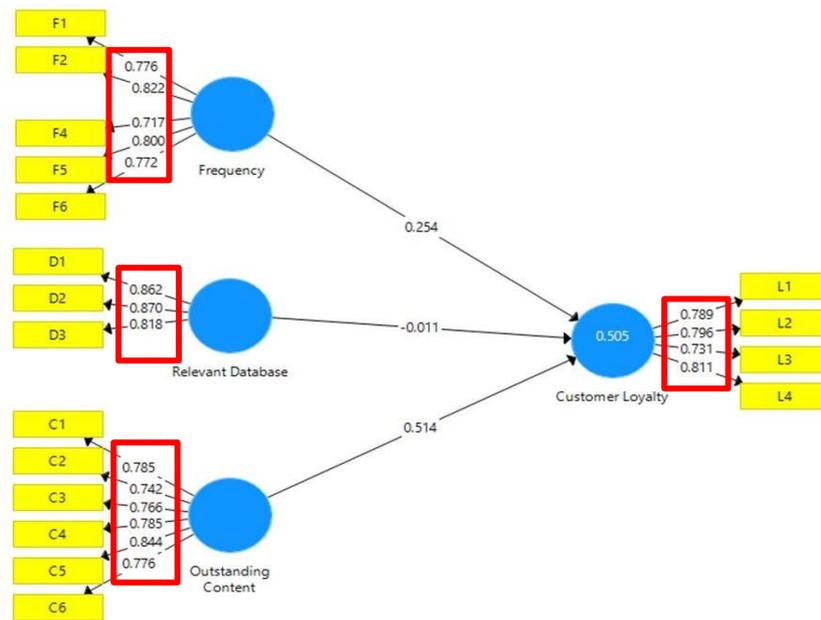


Fig. 7. Outer loading of the measurement model

Fig. 7 above shows the outer loading figures of this research in the measurement model. The relationship of the latent variable to its indicator must be estimated using outer loading. Outer loading variables 0.7 or greater than 0.7 should be considered highly satisfactory, while outer loadings with a value of 0.5 should be considered acceptable and a value of less than 0.5 should be dropped. The outer loading values of the measuring model are shown in Table 9 below. Item F3 is deleted because the value of outer loading is lower than 0.5. While item D4 is deleted will be explained in the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) part.

Table 9. Outer loading of the measurement model

	CustomerLoyalty	Frequency	OutstandingContent	RelevantDatabase
C1			0.785	
C2			0.742	
C3			0.766	
C4			0.785	
C5			0.844	
C6			0.776	
D1				0.862
D2				0.87
D3				0.818
F1		0.776		
F2		0.822		
F4		0.717		
F5		0.800		
F6		0.772		
L1	0.789			
L2	0.796			
L3	0.731			
L4	0.811			

4.2.1.2. Average Variance Extraction (AVE)

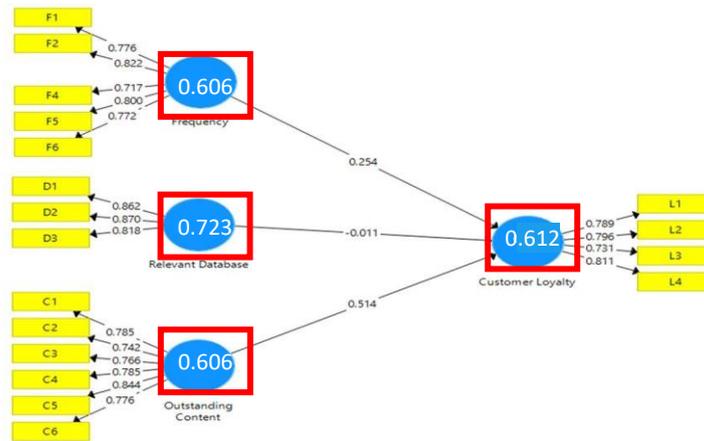


Fig. 8. Average Variance Extraction (AVE) of all variables

Fig.8 above shows the measurement model with Average Variance Extraction (AVE) values of the variables. AVE describes the convergent validity indicator that quantifies the difference between the amount of the construct and the variance amount of the measurement error.

As noted before, AVE requires a value of 0.5 or higher that is sufficient to show that the constructions are convergent. It is known that the error variance is larger than the explicit variance when it is less than 0.5, thus it is not acceptable. The average variance extraction value for all constructs is shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10. Average Variance Extraction (AVE) of all variables

Construct (Variables)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Frequency	0.606
Customer Loyalty	0.612
Outstanding Content	0.614
Relevant Database	0.723

4.2.1.3. Composite Reliability



Fig. 9. Composite Reliability (CR) of all variables

Fig. 9 shows the values of composite reliability (CR) of all the variables. Composite reliability (CR) provides the internal consistency of the composite of indicator variables relating to all construct. Cronbach's alpha, rho A and composite reliability are the other elements for reliability testing. The CR values are 0.7 and above. The reliability values for all variables are shown in Table 11 below and the value is between 0.885 and 0.905 indicating that all the constructs are reliable sufficiently.

Table 11. Reliability values of all variables

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Extracted (AVE)	Variance
Frequency	0.837	0.844	0.885	0.606	
Customer Loyalty	0.789	0.793	0.863	0.612	
Outstanding Content	0.874	0.876	0.905	0.614	
Relevant Database	0.808	0.810	0.887	0.723	

4.2.2. Discriminant Validity

The validity of discriminatory structures is to measure the differences of the models and to establish the links between overlapping constructs (Hair et al., 2014). It is necessary to determine which constructs are not connected and the constructs are distinct. The researcher used Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) as the measurement to conduct this discriminant validity test.

4.2.2.1. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

A novel approach to measure discrimination in the least part squares modeling of the structural equation, one of the main elements for model evaluation, is the HTMT (heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations). When discriminant validity is not proven, it cannot be ensured by researchers whether the data supporting predicted structural pathways are actual or simply statistical differences. Item D4 need to be deleted because the value of HTMT for relevant database is high. This is because, there are probability that some of the construct have similar meaning with another construct. The construct that mentioned here is the question for the questionnaire. Researcher need to track which of the item that are causing the problems by deleting the item and calculate again and repeat the same step until the HTMT value become relevant.

Table 12. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

Construct	Customer Loyalty	Frequency	Outstanding Content	Relevant Database
Customer Loyalty				
Frequency	0.746			
Outstanding Content	0.826	0.837		
Relevant Database	0.697	0.894	0.895	

4.3. ASSESSMENT OF STRUCTURAL MODEL

The measurement model evaluation phase is the evaluation of the structural model, also known as the inner model. The structural model assessment process is, according to Hair et al. (2014), designed to examine the model's predictive capabilities and links between the structures. Structural models show the relationships between latent or model variables. It

helps to estimate the relationships between variables, which in this research are dependent and independent. There are many criteria which may be used for estimating and assuming the link between the variables: the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and path coefficients.

4.3.1. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

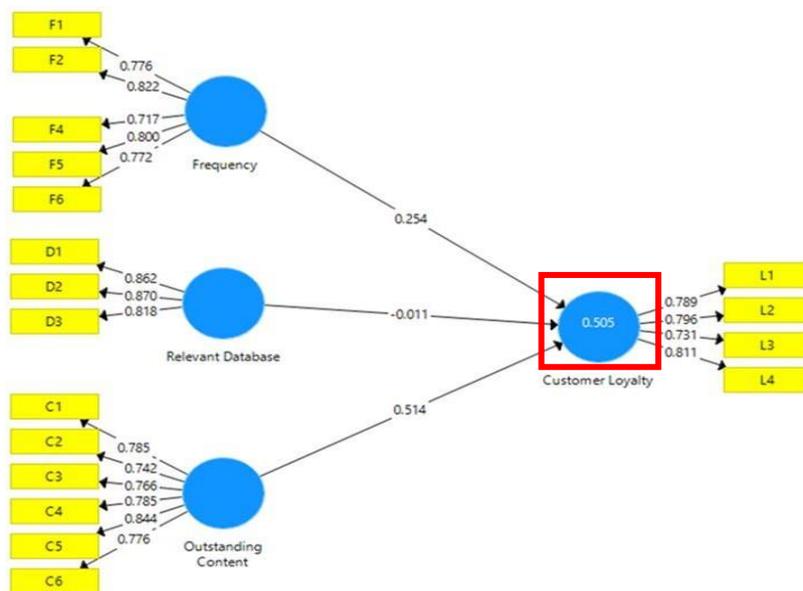


Fig. 10. Coefficient of Determination (R^2) endogenous constructs

Fig. 10 shows the values of R^2 for endogenous constructs. Coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to analyze the differences of the variables which can be explained by a difference in the other variable. It is also a key output of regression analysis. To be more specific, R^2 indicates the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable which predicted by the predictor variable, also known as the independent variable. Table 13 shows the values of R^2 for endogenous constructs.

Table 13. Coefficient of determination (R^2)

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Customer Loyalty	0.505	0.5

To identify the level of predictive ability of the structural model, it requires a greater value of R^2 . The range of R^2 is from 0 to 1. From the table 13 above, the results of the current research indicate that R^2 value for customer loyalty is 0.505 which means 50.5% of the variance of the effective automated email marketing affected customer loyalty which is frequency, relevant database and outstanding content. Fig. 11 and Fig. 12 below show R^2 and R^2 adjusted for this research.

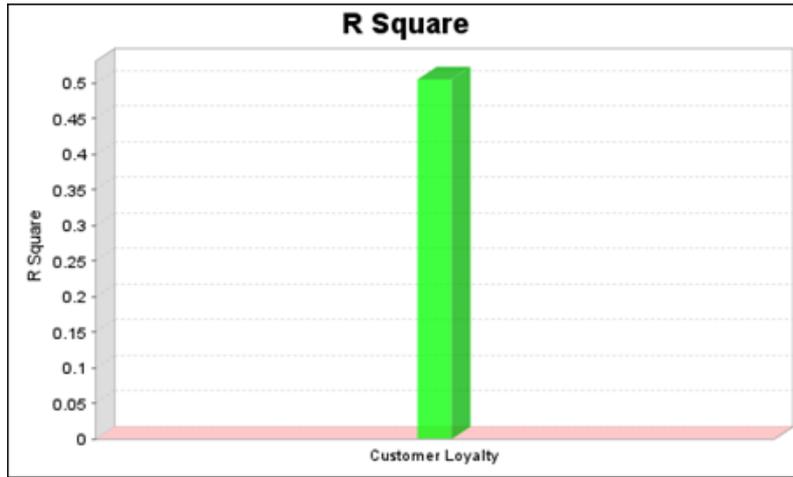


Fig. 11. R square graph

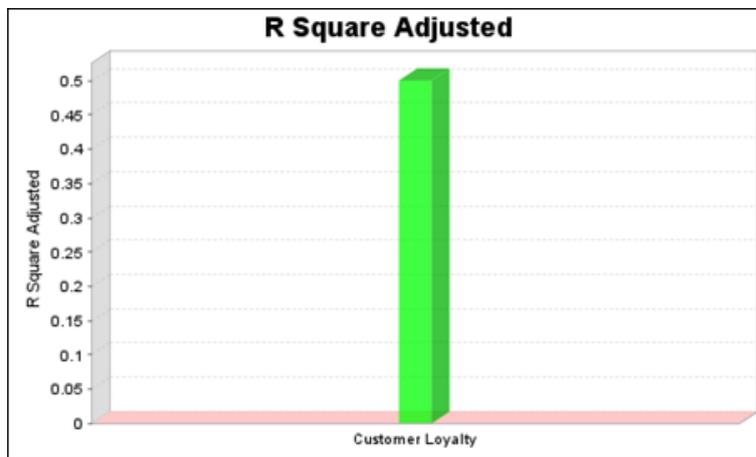


Fig. 12. R square Adjusted graph

4.3.2. Effect Size (f^2)

The effect size is one of the criteria to evaluate the suitability of the model of this research used to evaluate the effect size of a predictor latent construct of the structural model. The effect size contains a concept to measure the relationship strength of variables on a numerical scale. For this research, the effect size is measured by using Cohen's f^2 , which $f^2 = R^2 \div (1 - R^2)$ is the equation to calculate, where R^2 is the squared multiple correlations. The substantive effect of eliminating the construct on the endogenous constructs is determined using f^2 . According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the values of f^2 that less than 0.02 are considered as essentially zero effect size, values between 0.02 and 0.15 is small effect size, ranging from 0.15 to 0.35 is considered as medium effect size, and values above 0.35 are large effect size. Table 14 below shows the f^2 values for each path.

Table 14. Values of effect size (f^2)

	Customer Loyalty	Frequency	Outstanding Content	Relevant Database
Customer Loyalty				
Frequency	0.051			
Outstanding Content	0.199			
Relevant Database	0			

4.3.3. Path Coefficients

The path coefficient is used to evaluate strength and significance of hypothesized relationships between the latent constructs in Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). A standardized evaluation result can be shown in the range of -1 and +1 to determine the relationships between the variables. The nearest value to +1 is a strong positive relationship, whereas the values are strongly negative when the value is nearest -1. Fig. 13 below shows the path coefficients of the model of this research.



Fig. 13. Path coefficients of the model

Table 15 below states the highest value of the path coefficient occurred between customer loyalty and outstanding content with a value of 0.514. For the lowest path coefficient value, it is -0.011, which appeared between customer loyalty and relevant database where the value represents a strong negative relationship.

Table 15. Values of path coefficients

Construct	Customer Loyalty
Frequency	0.254
Outstanding Content	0.514
Relevant Database	-0.011

4.4. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

In order to evaluate the PLS-SEM estimation results, the bootstrapping technique can be used to identify t-values, standard errors, p-value, Beta coefficients and confidence intervals. For each hypothesized relation it was used to give an importance level. The bootstrapping technique in the SmartPLS program is used for determining the hypothesis relationships of variables to indicate the t-value of these research path coefficients. There are crucial relations between the variables as they influence business decision-making. Fig. 14 shows the outcome of the structural model with t-values of each relationship.

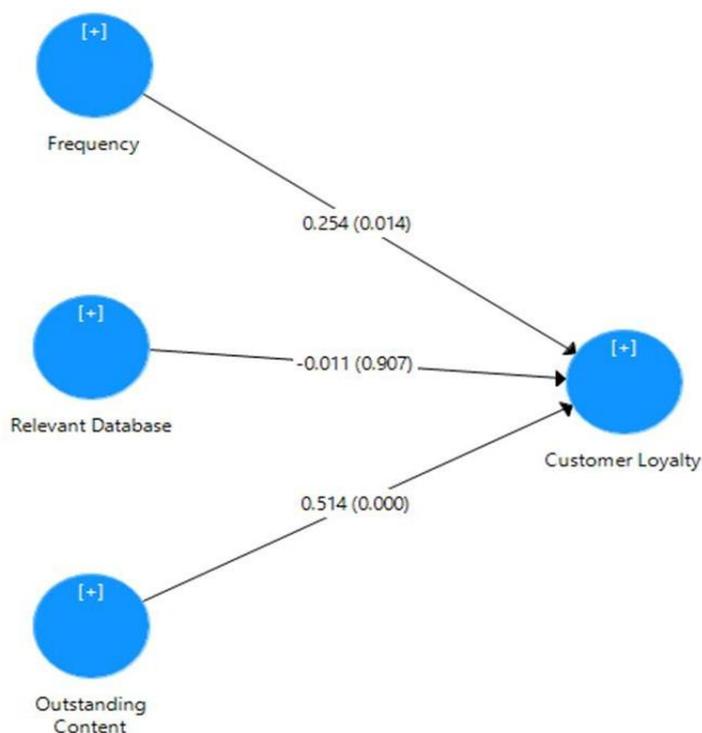


Fig. 14. The structural model with t-values

Table 16 below indicates the sum-up of the hypothesis testing with the values of the path coefficient, the sample mean, standard deviation, t-value (T statistics), and P-value.

Table 16. The summary of the hypothesis testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Frequency -> Customer Loyalty	0.254	0.25	0.103	2.469	0.014
Relevant Database -> Customer Loyalty	-0.011	-0.007	0.09	0.117	0.907
Outstanding Content -> Customer Loyalty	0.514	0.523	0.093	5.538	0

In this research study, researcher has recommended three hypotheses among the variables. Hypothesis 1 (H1) stated that H1 is accepted because there is relationship between frequency and customer loyalty. It is because frequency is effective in automated email marketing campaign to retain customer loyalty. The table 16 has clearly stated that the structural model that path coefficient for Frequency → Customer Loyalty was reported as 0.254 and the t-value were 2.467. The P-value of this hypothesis was 0.014. The value of t and p is both under permissible threshold values. Therefore, H2 is accepted. Thus, frequency has a relationship to a customer loyalty.

Next, for the hypothesis 2 (H2) stated that there is a negative relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty. It is because it is proven that the relevant database can minorly affect the customer loyalty. The value of the path coefficient stated in table 16 for Relevant Database → Customer Loyalty is -0.011, 0.117 for the t-value and 0.907 for the p-value. The t-value is supposed to be bigger or same with 1.96 at 95% confidence level while

the value for p must smaller or same as 0.05. Based on this value, it's indicates that the H2 is rejected. Thus, there is no relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty.

Lastly, the hypothesis 3 (H3) stated that there is a relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty. Based on the value recorded in the table 16, the value of path coefficient for Outstanding Content → Customer Loyalty is 0.514 and the t-value is 5.538 while the p-value is 0. All of this value is lying under an acceptable range. Hence, H3 is accepted. Thus, the study established there is a relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty.

5. CONCLUSION

The first objective of this research paper is to investigate the relationship between frequency and customer loyalty. Based on the data analysis, the results have shown that this objective is accepted and it is proven that there is a relationship between frequency and customer loyalty towards the effectiveness of email marketing campaign. Marko and Mika (2004) stated that, in consequence, frequent e-mail contact may be predicted to have comparable favorable impacts on customer loyalty, especially among highly loyal customers. Although there are some previous researchers stated that the frequency of email that need to be send to the customer does not rely on any method, but it still effective to retain customer loyalty. Pritha (2020) agree that the precise frequency of sending email is not determined by any method.

Moreover, in order to get maximum effect of automated email marketing to retain customer loyalty, marketers need to make sure that they need to approach their customers frequently. A number of research studies have thus advised that marketers and advertisers take greater frequency into account when they desire best results for customer loyalty (Rizwan et al., 2019). The frequency of the e-mail engagement and its perceived usefulness affect customer loyalty through repetitive purchasing behavior (Ron, 2015). Thus, the researcher justified that the relationship between frequency and customer loyalty is accepted.

The second objective of this research study is to investigate the relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty. Based on the results and findings stated, it is proven that there is a negative relationship between relevant database and customer loyalty towards the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign. This is because, relevant database cannot give an effect to customer loyalty towards automated email marketing campaign. Relevant database seems no effective in retaining customer loyalty as the database that some the marketers maybe very limited especially for small company that newly started the automated email marketing campaign. So, they need to use a random database of the customers that they want to deliver the advertisement or their content. Abide from this situation, the email users that have interest to react to the advertisement will click or subscribe while users that does not have interest will just ignore the advertisement so there is no relationship with the customer loyalty.

The needs and wants of the customers are changing, same as their preferred brands. If the marketers stay focus on their database that they assume that it is relevant to their

marketing, they will lose track if the customers suddenly have changed their preference to other brands. This will lead to major problems if the marketers only have a limited relevant database for their automated email marketing campaign and their customers is unsubscribed them, so they need to find more database to make sure that they can continue with these types of marketing strategy. Although, there are many research conducted from previous study that show the relevant database can affect the customer loyalty, but based on the data collected shows that relevant database did not have relationship with the customer loyalty for nowadays. To be clear, a relevant database can be no effective to the retaining customer loyalty if the customers behaviors keep changing.

The last objective for this research study is to investigate the relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty towards the effectiveness of automated email marketing campaign. According the results and findings, it is proven that there is positive relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty. The information content which tends to operate in favor of loyal consumers is more educational and engaging in nature than promotions and discounts (Merisavo & Raulas, 2004). A content that needs to be highlighted by the marketers need to be outstanding because it is proven that the content can affect the customer loyalty in automated email marketing campaign.

The diversity in content that need to be chosen and arrange need to be taken seriously by the marketer in order to make sure that the customers can retain their loyalty towards the brand. According to Rizwan et al., (2019), the information content which tends to operate in favor of loyal consumers is more educational and engaging in nature than promotions and discounts. A brand loyalty categorization is important for targeting various customers more accurately. Hence, it can be summed up that based on the previous research and the findings claimed that there is a positive relationship between outstanding content and customer loyalty.

5.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are some recommendations that the researcher want to suggest in improving the research and to enhance the quality of the research study for future research puposes. Researcher recommend that the future researcher can broaden the topic by adding the mediator and independent variables in order to makes this topics become relevant in this era. The three independent variables experimented by the researcher which are frequency, relevant database and outstanding content is not enough to prove that the automated email marketing campaign can be effective to retain customer loyalty. Future researcher can add a more items based on more updated technology demand from the customers preference. Besides, since one of the independent variables is rejected which is relevant database, future researcher is recommended to discuss more on the relevant database to prove that it is accepted. This is because, the researcher believe that results and findings of the research study conducted is not perfect enough since the data is purely from the respondents who the researcher does not aware how far is their honesty in answering the questionnaire. Maybe, future researcher can use another types of research methodology and type of data collection like interview the respondents in order to gain more honest and relevant data for the research study.

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