

**Does Traditional and Social Media Advertising
Affect Brand Trust and Impact Purchase Intention?
(The Cases of Delta Airlines and Turkish Airlines
Companies)**

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ABSTRACT

Social media has become the latest trend of the 21st century. Building on the foundation of Web 2.0, social media platforms and social networks have facilitated unprecedented growth of human interaction in modern times. Studies have shown positive associations between liking a brand trust and purchase intention, but studies of advertising effects via traditional and social media is scarce in the aviation industry sector. The purpose of current study is to investigate the effect of traditional and social media on customers' brand trust and purchase intention. This study took into consideration the two giants of aviation industry Delta and Turkish Airlines, and measured the effect of traditional and modern advertising on brand trust and purchase intention. Facebook has been widely recognized as a popular contemporary trend in marketing. Using a Facebook fan page can help a firm successfully establish and maintain positive consumer-brand relationships.

Population was customers of Delta and Turkish Airlines companies in the area of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and United States of America. Using an administrated questionnaire, 287 respondents were asked to answer the survey divided in the two countries. Analysis was performed using AMOS 22.0 and SEM. Results showed a significant positive effect for the followers of a brand's Facebook page on brand evaluations such as brand trust. Thus, brand trust playing a major role in affecting purchase intention. This provided evidence that following a brand's Facebook updates can cause positive changes in brand evaluations. The effects were explained by indicating the importance of conducting a cross-sectional advertising campaign. The results of structural equation modeling indicated that traditional

advertising and social media have significant impact on brand trust. Further, brand trust has a significant impact on purchase intention. The results indicated that the online marketing communications and advertising campaigns in online communities and online advertisement are effective in improving brand trust and purchase intention through Facebook and social media platforms.

Keywords: Traditional marketing, Social media, Facebook, Brand trust, Purchase intention, advertising, SEM, CFA, Delta Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Online advertising.

ÖZ

21 yüzyıldaki en hızlı deęişim ve eğilim sosyal medya kullanımı olmuştur. Sosyal platformların ve ağların Web 2.0 tabanı üzerine kurulması ile insanoğlunun iletişimi için beklenmedik ve umulmayan bir oluşum meydana getirmiştir. Yürütölen bilimsel araştırmalar marka güveni ve satın almaya niyet arasında pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Fakat, havacılık sektöründe reklâmın geleneksel ve sosyal medya üzerine etkisini inceleyen araştırmalara nadirdir.

Bu çalışmanın amacı geleneksel ve sosyal medyanın müşterilerin markaya olan güveni ve satın alma niyetine etkisini araştırmaktır. Çalışmamız dünyadaki iki büyük havayolu olan Delta havayolları ile Türk havayolları müşterilerinin geleneksel ve modern reklamcılığın marka güveni ile satın alma niyeti üzerine etkilerini incelemiştir. Delta havayolları müşterilerine Amerika Birleşik Devletlerinde, Türk havayolların müşterilerine ise Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyetinde sorular sorulmuştur. Her iki ülkede toplam 287 kişiden alınan cevaplar analize tabi tutulabilmiştir. İstatistiksel analizler AMOS 22.0 ve SEM kullanılarak yapılmıştır.

Çalışmanın sonucunda sosyal medyada (facebook) marka takipçileri için marka değerlendirmesinde önemli olan güveni etkilediği sonucuna varılmıştır. Dolayısı ile, markaya olan güvenin satın alma niyetini etkilediği bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır. Ortaya çıkan bu bulgu ise bize Facebook'taki güncellemelerin marka değerlendirmesini olumlu yönde etkileyeceğini göstermektedir. Çalışmada oluşturulan kavramsal model, yapısal eşitlik modellemesi ile test edilmiş ve reklam ile sosyal medyanın markaya

olan güven üzerine önemli etkisi olduđu sonucuna ulařılmıştır. Ayrıca, markaya olan güven, satın alma niyetini etkilediđi görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal medya, Facebook, Marka güven, satın alma niyeti, Çevrim içi reklamcılık.

*This thesis is dedicated to my
father Abdullah, my mother Rola,
and my siblings*

*For their unconditional love, support, and
encouragement.*

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Social media marketing has definitely changed the concept of traditional marketing. It has created a new type of connection between consumers and marketers. Social media created new opportunities and chances in the marketing world, those that have been discovered and grasped and other chances that are still open, thus trying to increase consumer brand awareness ([Comscore Media, 2009](#)). Nowadays, marketing specialists have started to use social networking websites in their advertisements to make their ads more appealing to consumers and grab their attention, in a more customized and tailored manner. Their goal is to try to create a way of achieving free advertising through allowing the consumers themselves to share the brand's advertisements and discuss it over different social media platforms. Accordingly, it is valuable to try discovering the reasons behind marketers' high expectations of using social media as a marketing tool, and what advantages Facebook might hold over classical marketing strategies and channels ([Waters, Canfield, Foster, & Hardy, 2011](#)).

Social media can be defined if we closely observe the previous traditional media paradigm. Traditional media tools are television, newspapers, radio, and magazines. They are considered as one-way static broadcasting technologies. For example, magazine publishers are large organizations that spend millions of dollars to

distribute expensive printed information to costumers, while advertisers in these printed forms of information must pay for the right of inserting their ads into those publications (Zarrella, 2010).

New Internet technologies made it possible for everyone with Internet access to create and distribute information. Whether it is a blog post, tweet, or YouTube video it can be posted online and viewed by millions of people for free. Now advertisers do not need to pay those publishing organizations large sums of money to include their messages in their prints; they simply can create their own interesting customized information that viewers may read and repost (Zarrella, 2010).

Social media may come in different forms, but for the purpose of the study, focus has been set to the most popular form of social networking (Facebook).

Businesses and firms might consider promoting on Facebook as a less expensive approach than risking their money in classic media channels such as TVs, radios, magazines, billboards etc. Dispatching information about brands via online platforms may increase the speed flow of information among consumers Kotler (1999). New studies are being carried out to investigate and measure the extent of efficiently using digital advertising to improve brand awareness and its impact on purchase intentions (Johns & Perrot, 2008).

Marketing as a general concept is all the advertisements that we see or hear everyday. While traditional marketing may refer to all efforts of promoting, advertising, or carrying out campaigns done by firms or organizations over years and still proved to be successful. Most traditional marketing methods fall into four types: broadcast,

telephone, print, and direct mail ([Valencia Higuera, Demand Media, 2015](#)). Methods of traditional marketing such as print advertisements can include billboards, flyers, and newspaper. Other popular well-known forms may include marketing-television channels, commercials, and radio.

Unlike watching TV or listening to radio stations, Social media especially Facebook provides high levels of interactivity. Costumers are not just recipients of information anymore; they are stimulated to take part in what is going on in the world surrounding them. Facebook gives more options to pass on information and supports increased personal control over posts, and higher interaction. Studies proved that higher levels of interactivity such as those on Facebook would lead to more involvement with the context posted or published ([Hill & Moran, 2011](#)).

The type of interaction created by Facebook between the two ends involved; on one hand the recipient; on the other hand the marketer, enables both parties to indulge in a two-way communication route with the original posting entity, it be a company or a person.

Comments expressed by users in social media, are considered as a profit for both customers and marketers. This is viewed as a new opportunity that can be beneficial for both parties ([Cha, 2009](#)). This high level of interactivity inspired some companies and service providers to engage in this virtual world of Facebook, and take advantage of the “likes, shares, and comments” to create a competitive advantage over other competitors ([Andriole, 2010](#)).

[Chaudhuri and Holbrook \(2001\)](#) define brand trust as “the willingness of the average

consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function”. Brand trust is created after a consumer has tried a company’s product or service and now can evaluate the company’s offerings. For instance, if an airline company promises safety, honesty, and reliable services to its customers; and fulfills its promises, customers eventually will place their trust in that company (Doney & Cannon, 1997). Thus, it is concluded that brand trust can be created and developed through consumers’ personal experiences. Brand trust is viewed as a long-term project to initiate and maintain with every consumer at a time.

Grewal, Monroe, and Krishnan (1998) defined purchase intention as: “The probability that lies in the hands of the customers who intend to purchase a particular product or service”. Other scholars added that a customer’s decision of whether to buy or service depends heavily on the value the product or service holds in the customer’s eyes in the first place, then on the judgments and reviews of other customers Zeithaml (1988) and Schiffman and Kanuk (2009, chap. 8, 9). Studies by (Hoy & Milne, 2010) showed that firms always keen to create ads that have a chance of going viral in order to create a voluntary wave among customers that find them trustworthy, thus influencing other neutral customers.

Majority of consumers that join a company’s group or follow it’s page on Facebook, start receiving information that may eventually influence their perception and purchase intention in the future (Zhao & Shanyang, 2008).

While consumers hold the power of increasing the views of a message, image, or video created by the advertisers; they become socially engaged in expanding the targeted segments to reach their contacts through reposting or sharing the message on

their own profiles (Rodgers, Melioli, Laconi, Bui, & Chabrol, 2013). When customers decide to join a company's group or page on Facebook, they view this page as a trusted root of information. This triggers opportunities and chances of creating an exclusive brand trust and free advertising platform (Holzner, 2008).

Turkey reached a 41.6% Internet penetration rate with approximately 30 million people using it (TUIK, 2010) (Erdoğan & Cicek, 2012). The country is ranked 12th among the rest of countries in the world in terms of the Internet usage. This created a motive for the researcher to take the Turkish Airlines as a case study in the research keeping in mind that Turkish Airlines has been chosen "Best Airline in Europe", "Best Airline in Southern Europe" and awarded "Best Business Class Onboard Catering", "Best Business Class Lounge Dining" in 2014 Skytrax World Airline Awards.

Additionally, Turkey ranked 5th globally in respect to the average hours of Internet usage per visitor per month (Read, 2010), with an average higher than France, UK, and USA. According to the TUIK's statistics (2010), it showed that Turkish people spend their time reading online news, real-time communication, and sending and receiving emails. Facebook also was recorded as the most commonly used social media site in Turkey, with a penetration of 90% among Internet users (STATCOUNTER, 2011; Google Trends, 2011). Given the above interesting information, the Turkish Airlines and Turkey provide a valid platform to examine social media and its impacts and conclude real and generalizable results.

Similarly, USA recorded an 87.4% Internet penetration according to the World Bank (2016) data, ranking second. Internet users in the US spend on average 58 minutes

watching online videos or surf the Internet daily, and that 78% of these Internet users reported that the information they obtain online influences their decision and intention of purchasing any product or service (PwC, 2010). Another fact is that 71% of adults in the US above the age 18 reported using Facebook. These figures also created another motive for the researcher to take USA as ground base platform to measure the impact of social media on brand trust and purchase intentions. In this case, Delta Airlines was chosen as the company to be examined because Delta Airlines is the number one airline company in Northern America and the world in respect to the numbers of passengers they fly annually, with more than 129 million passengers (The Economist, 2016).

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to understand the effect of traditional and social media advertising on brand trust from the perspective of consumers, and thus how would a positive brand trust attitude affect purchase intention. The general aim of this study is to take a step towards better understanding and exploring the indirect relationship between Facebook and purchase intentions through the mediator “brand trust”. Furthermore, this study focuses primarily on the aspect of Facebook advertising and its implications on the potential links between brand trust and purchase intentions of consumers. Liking a brand page exposes consumers to company messages and services information that they otherwise might have not encountered. For instance, a study that compared between Facebook followers of a certain page vs. non-followers customers' purchase behavior, found that the followers of the page spent more than non-followers customers (Mulvihill 2011). Also, followers of a retailer Facebook brand page spent almost 50% more than non-followers (Renfrow 2014).

1.3 Importance of the Study

This study tackles an important issue that calls for researchers' attention from the domain of advertising and brand equity development. Scholars and researchers have heavily reviewed that the connection between advertising and brand equity, and the literature about it is abundant. Nevertheless, literature about the effectiveness of advertising on brand equity measures such as brand awareness, image, loyalty, and trust is not as much reviewed in the aviation industry.

In addition to that, the online-interactive advertising has been growing in large scales that are certainly because of the spread of Internet and digital media. The social media advertising has opened many economical doors and brought in advancements to the marketers and researchers, but little research in the aviation industry has been done to study the particular effect of online advertising on brand trust and purchase intention.

Although there have been several theoretical models that explain the many phases of brand equity and its dimensions, but [Keller's \(1993\)](#) theory about the consumer-based brand equity and its dimensions remained one of the most notorious theories. Keller's model may be considered as the most eligible model of all brand equity studies to help examine and explain dimensions of brand equity such as brand trust that we examine in the current study.

The results of the study are expected to be significantly contributive to the practices and literature review in social media advertising in the aviation industry sector, especially that social media advertising is considered as a fresh growing platform for building customer-brand relationships. As every untraditional tool for advertising and

communicating with customers, social media is thoroughly researched and utilized by the airline companies. Therefore, the current research at hand is timely and needed to mark off and determine some direction in this probe.

Hypotheses proposed state whether traditional advertising and/or social media advertising have a positive significant effect on brand trust. Then another proposed hypothesis states whether brand trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase intentions.

The study was mainly limited by geographical boundaries. Firstly, the data collected in TRNC focused mainly on students in Eastern Mediterranean University. This directly leads another limitation, which is the limited demographic mixture of respondents that represent a sample of the society as a whole.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Facebook Overview

The emergence and introduction of media in general facilitated the reachability of a customer to the firm. A firm is able to target its customers no matter where they are. Certainly for the past decade the Internet proved to be the ideal way for airline industries to communicate, due to the characteristics of their services which are: 1) intangibility 2) production and consumption are inseparable 3) perishability (Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo, 2013). Nevertheless, the emergence of social media was the innovation of the century, introducing a revolutionized way of communication between a firm and its customers. Social media triggered a new mode of interaction in the world of communication. It not only facilitated the reachability of a firm to its customers, it also created a new easier way for consumers to communicate with each other. (Godes and Mayzlin, 2004) conducted a study that proved that social media is a cost-effective solution that serves as an option to access and collect information.

For decades, Marketers have been trying to find the perfect mix of communication channels to deliver the ideal advertisement with high impact level to reach their campaigns' goals. Marketers study every mix of channels carefully in order to achieve the attainable optimization reach and occurrence (Abernethy, Cannon, and Leckenby, 2002). It is true that TV commercials and ads increase interest and catches

the attention of TV audiences as proven in past studies (Voorveld et al., 2013). Stephen and Galak (2009) made a study about the effects of social media (such as weblogs) and traditional media (such as television) on sales; they discovered that both media forms have significant effects on the marketing performance of the firm. But we can't turn a blind eye to the reality that online advertising nowadays is the latest trend, and that the giant businesses of the world are riding this wave as it moves.

Building, creating, and maintaining a brand trust relationship with customers is one of the central keynotes of exploration for marketers on the long run. Marketers try to utilize all possible and available means at hand to sustain the brand trust relationship with their customers. Evans (2009) stated that: "online advertisement is over taking the traditional media in terms of accountability and interactivity". Managing commercial pages on social media is different from managing traditional marketing methods; therefore, it calls for exceptional attention and requires creating strategies that best suit the marketing firm's image to sustain a good relation with its customers and try to increase the level brand trust. Social media marketing and relationship marketing come hand in hand; thus, firstly a firm must understand its obligation to change its stand from a firm "trying to sell" to a firm trying to create bridges and "make connections" with its customers (Gordhamer, 2009).

Secondly, to remain competitive in today's world of business, a firm must be aggressive, operate fast, and most importantly prepare a rock-solid strategy when operating on social media. Firms tend to recruit professional advisors to build their social media pages, study their offers and future activities before taking it into application (Coon, 2010). These pages must be informative, descriptive, explanatory,

helpful, advisory, and forthcoming. E-Marketer (an independent market research company) conducted researches that showed that many customers refer to social media when they need updates about a firm's product, service, or promotional campaign (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Leggat, 2010). For instance, Coca-Cola and Pepsi created online customer loyalty programs to attract and drive customers towards more interaction with the firm's Facebook page by offering promotions, free CD's, free mp3 downloads etc. (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

Thirdly, one of the most vital strategies for a firm to continue existing on social media is to always provide relevant and updated content to its audience. Another factor that determines the popularity of a firm's social media page is the popularity of the platform it undertakes as its advertising tool, which encourages customers to engage with the firm in a more active manner. Now ever since, hundreds of social media platforms came into existence, it is almost impossible to participate in every single social network available. Therefore advertisers should know their target market well, and create a plan to participate in the most adequate network (Kim, 2011).

In today's world, everyone is busy and capable of withdrawing information almost about anything at any given time. Availability of information is no more exclusive to certain people only. This explains, that if a firm is not represented on social or traditional media, a customer may switch to another service or product. Therefore, all firms that own means of production must be attainable and available in some social media channels such as blogs, forums, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter (Gordhamer, 2009). Social media differs from traditional media in two main ways: 1- a shift in the mode of communication from a one-way communication mode to a two-way

communication mode (meaning greater interactivity) 2- a shift in the locus of power from the firm to the consumer.

Today, no one can deny the fact that Facebook is the world's leading social networking site, plus being the most successful site in general too. Facebook recorded 800 million users around the globe ([Facebook.com, 2011](#)), overpassing Google ([McCarthy et al., 2010](#)). Over the past few years, many airline service companies realized the need of engaging with Facebook as a platform to communicate with a large number of their existing and potential customers, as well as using Facebook as a significant tool for brand management ([Hsu, 2012](#)). As of November 2015, Qatar Airways ranked first on top of the list with the highest number of likes on its Facebook page with 10.3 million "likes", followed by KLM 9.8 million, Turkish Airlines 7.4 million, and Air France 5.3 million. At the first glance, these airlines may seem to be performing very good taking into consideration the number of followers on their pages. However, number of followers on a Facebook page is not a measurement of performance. Some customers may think twice before liking or joining a Facebook page if they had an unpleasant experience with that certain airline company before, and the page must be informative, active, and dynamic in interacting with its followers ([Preece et al., 2004](#)).

Word of mouth is most successful form of communication; it rates highest when measuring the impact of an advertisement on a customer's purchase intention. However, [Balakrishnan and Dahnil \(2014\)](#) explain that comments, reviews, and blogs are the online form of word of mouth. They act as a source of information for other customers. They include beliefs, experiences, and advices of customers that have previously tested the service of the firm. They also include the fact that the person

looking for information may also contribute with his own opinion and add to the existing information.

In 2013, the Fortune 500 companies list (an annual list assembled and published by Fortune magazine that ranks 500 of the largest U.S. corporations) showed that 70% of these companies were active on Facebook (Barnes, Lescault, and Wright 2013). Several other studies proved the existence of a positive correlation between social media activity of firms and variables like brand trust, loyalty, evaluation, and purchase intention (e.g., Bruhn, Schoenmueller, and Schäfer 2012; Dholakia and Durham 2010; Kim and Ko 2012; Naylor, Lamberton, and West 2012; Schivinski and Dakabrowski 2013; Turri, Smith, and Kemp 2013).

It is very important for firms to discover whether there exists a cause and effect relation between following the firm's Facebook page and inducing a positive brand trust and evaluation. This will only reassure the great importance of investing in Facebook. Such a relation sounds believable since previous studies showed that hitting the like button of a firm's page on Facebook increases the firm's exposure. Hitting the like button usually triggers positive brand related information with increasing number of followers which shows higher interest in the firm's services or products. This may lead to a positive effect on the firm's brand trust and evaluation (Beukeboom, Kerkhof and Vries, 2015).

2.2 Traditional Media

The first word that comes to people's mind when traditional advertising is mentioned is the word "ad". Some of the most popular types are print, radio, and television as they created the successful channels of gaining exposure to existing and new

businesses. These ways of advertising are described as traditional just to differentiate them from the new advertising options as online, viral, and e-WOM (Steinberg, 2007).

Traditional marketing is a highly competitive environment, which creates a fragile medium to retailers who still operate the old fashioned way (Wongleedee, 2015). Many factors may cause unprofitability to these old-fashioned operators in the markets, such as changes in tastes, values, changing lifestyles, purchasing behaviors, and competition from international firms. Some traditional marketers may lack the ability to offer attractive prices or advertising campaigns to hold onto their current customers or even prevent them from shifting to competitors (Constantinides, 2006).

A frequently presented brand placement through traditional marketing campaigns can have a positive effect on brand evaluations even if viewers may not recall the brand (Guennemann and Cho, 2014). Advertisements researchers also argued that traditional advertising still has many effects on consumers' perception and reaction to the advertisement's content. Factors affected could be brand loyalty, trust, involvement, mood, cognition, recall, and attitudes (Moorman et al. 2002; Tavassoli et al. 1995; De Pelsmacker et al. 2002). Thus the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1. Traditional marketing activities of the company have a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

Although some scholars may support the decline of traditional media theory, others argued differently, and stated that the idea of dying traditional media is not precisely accurate. Some technologies have been introduced to change the way television advertising is perceived, as a one-way communication channel. Consumers using

digital box packages may press on one advertisement being aired on television to view it independently simultaneously. This is a revolution in the world of television advertising; for example, customers interested in buying homes may enjoy a virtual walk through the home they intend to explore via their High-Tec television set. With the continuous increasing additions to traditional televisions, a new wave is created moving away from the traditional one-way advertising to a more interactive medium (["Razorfish Outlook Report", 2010, p.5](#)), ([Talafuse and Brizek, 2014](#)). Television has also taken a step into the digital world, with new technologies like television viewing from different digital devices. Additionally, some TV stations acknowledged the existence of a state of overloaded commercials and decided to shorten the period of commercials, limiting it to one commercial per brand for every show. People watching online television with networks like ABC, CBS, and FOX, has continued to increase over the past few years (["U.S. 2010 Digital", 2011](#)), ([Talafuse and Brizek, 2014](#)).

Whether television advertising is still effective or not, is now subject to questioning due to several reasons, (1) consumers can't skip commercials by fast-forwarding, thus they feel bombarded by commercials (2) customers admitted that they prefer watching TV without interruption (3) time length of commercials per one hour TV program is conveyed as too long to customers (4) customers watch TV and multi-tasking, even reported not watching when commercials are being shown ([Talafuse and Brizek, 2014](#)).

Traditional marketing can be described in different ways, but in order to explain its low level of interactivity, we must understand its nature. Advertising the traditional way, denies customer from the ability to control the amount, type, and order of

information they are about to receive. This is called a linear mode of communication. Customers are thus considered recipients, put in place to read or view a wave of predetermined sequence of ads (Avery, Calder & Lacobucci, 1998). Considerably presenting information in a linear form or sequence opposes the logic of interactivity (Bezjian-Avery et al., 1998).

(Speck and Elliott 1997) explained that the more a customer receives ads through traditional channels, the more the ads will be avoided. Because of the repetitive nature of ads, customers are able of identifying ads automatically, thus increasingly ignoring it. For instance, a customer is no more concerned with the content of an ad, as soon as it is automatically identified as repetitive. In order for a TV commercial to be a success, it is not enough only to be entertaining, and firms that don't realize this soon enough are subject to failure, Speck and Elliott (1997). Ratings of network television are down, and television-advertising costs are on the rise (Thomaselli 2004).

Another traditional marketing medium that is subject to dangers nowadays is the radio. Both New York Times and Wall Street journals reported that the 30-seconds advertising tradition on radios is in severe doubtfulness (Manly 2005; Steinberg 2004). According to a survey published by the Yankelovich Center for Social Studies, 65% of costumers feel attacked by too many advertising messages, and that even 60% of those have started to take some opposing sides to that. Another 60% also found that these ads were totally irrelevant to them, forcing media marketers to work heavily on better dividing the markets to better target the public.

Questions that have been always circulating the marketing world are; is marketing

the traditional way still profitable? Is it still alive? Is it affordable? However, some studies showed that businesses that weren't engaged in marketing campaigns were the ones struggling or suffering. A dollar spent in the right place in marketing will drive success to the business (Lavinsky, 2013). With the penetration of online and social media marketing, many managers pose the question, is traditional marketing still worth it? "Remain confident, yes it is", says (Lavinsky, 2013).

Traditional methods of marketing typically involve advertising through Newspaper, magazines, radios, televisions, and direct mail. Advertising via one of the mediums corresponds to a fee that is measured by the size of the ad and the medium it is published through. One can't argue that solid media marketing channels are shifting towards an online existence (Lavinsky, 2013). Popular magazines also adapted and moved onto the Internet era lifestyle, most of these magazines witnessed less sale figures. Some magazines were forced to embrace the change or quit the business, thus this decreased the chances for business owners to seek success in placing ads in magazines (Lavinsky, 2013).

There is always an opportunity and a chance, though chances have decreased, but room is always open. A firm might consider investing the traditional way embedding some relatively small investments in the online virtual world, in order to diversify its portfolio and reduce loss risks (Lavinsky, 2013). Firms and local business owners can take the step and sponsor local and regional sportive, educational, or social events to be only rewarded by acknowledgement and respect by the local community. This is only one way to spread the firm's name without paying loads of cash. Bigger marketing options also exist, such as local radio, cable TV stations, and billboards. More options that never died are windshield and door flyers or direct mail (Lavinsky,

2013).

When customers recognize a firm's name off of a computer's screen, it suddenly becomes a reality that that firm is not only a virtual entity that could be ignored with a click. A firm that advertises on TV or in a print is a firm affirming that it is a brick and mortar company. In addition to that, people who are less likely to be online, often have a greater chance to be reached by ads the traditional way (Steinberg, 2007).

It is true that traditional advertising methods may be a lot more expensive than the online alternatives. Therefore, advertisers must always consider planning ahead before taking any step. A well-prepared plan must include general goals as increasing sales, as well as specific goals of figures and volumes of sales to achieve. The plan should also include a study of the financial resources, a realistic short-term study of returns on investments (Davis, 1998). An advertiser should first define the audience to figure out where are they. For instance, if a firm sells boats and yachts then their target customers are most probably subscribed to sportsman and marine specialized magazines. This traditional way of advertising could also be the route into marketing to that segment of customers to join the firm's website (Davis, 1998).

2.2.1 Newspaper

Several options are out there for advertising the traditional way. Newspaper is one, as it is widely spread, and almost most offices, businesses, and companies are subscribed for newspapers. An advantage of advertising via newspaper is that it almost includes every aspect of the daily life, sports, politics, fashion, business etc. Another fact about the newspapers is that its ad heavy, people expect in advance to find deals and promotions in the newspaper. In addition, newspapers offer many styles and deal on advertising that come in different sizes and placement in the paper

itself (Cook, 2001).

2.2.2 Magazines

Magazines are one surprising way of advertising that many marketers are falsely mistaken to see it as a dead channel of marketing. Advertising the trade-specific way has developed tremendously over the past few years (Cook, 2001). Bookshelves everywhere now include magazines specialized in trades or hobbies from fishing to creating new businesses. One advantage of advertising in magazines is the high quality print and design provided. Another advantage is the relatively long shelf-life span, where a magazine may reside on a shelf for some time longer than a newspaper. Lastly, is the opportunity to buy a small ad in a high-sales magazine, which might be better than a large ad in a low sales magazine (Cook, 2001).

2.2.3 Radio

Since the creation of Internet and satellites, it has been highly controversial if radio commercials are still effective or not. This is a sound allegation, but when taking into consideration the ratings of some popular radio channels, it is possible to say radios still attract a considerable number of listeners, which still validates radios as an official advertising traditional mean (Cook, 2001).

A major advantage of radio advertising is the high level of customer/listener engagement with the commercial, knowing that the listener is only able to imagine the ad, instead of seeing it; this increases the level of attention on the customer's side.

2.2.4 Television

According to *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, watching TV was the leading leisure activity practiced that occupied the most of free time (2.8 hours per day) in U.S.A, occupying more than half of leisure time for those aged 15 and above. Socializing,

such as visiting with friends or attending or hosting social events, was the next most common leisure activity, accounting for only 43 minutes per day respectively.

Many people spend a lot of time watching television than any other medium. TV has the power to extend your reach to millions of people nationwide. Obviously, television advertising can be very expensive, but with the advantages it holds, it may be effective and profitable.

In Summary, undoubtedly traditional advertising is very expensive, but creating a plan that best suits a given budget with predetermined objectives will create a profitable outcome.

2.3 Social Media

Different scholars defined social media in several ways. (Berthon et. al., 2012) defined social media as: “the series of technological innovations in terms of both hardware and software that facilitate inexpensive content creation, interaction, and interoperability by online users. Safko and Brake (2009) defined social media as the set of “activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media”.

If used effectively with the right amount of time and resources; social media marketing gives firms the advantage of communicating better with customers triggering a chance of creating a brand trust relationship (Jackson, 2011; Akhtar, 2011).

Introducing Internet into the aviation- industry allowed airline firms to obtain a competitive advantage, offering lower advertising costs, higher customer satisfaction,

marketing success rates, and competitiveness (Tsai et al., 2005). Online advertising first appeared in 1994 when simple banner ads were published on Hotwired website (Adams, 1995). Ever since then, banner ads became the most common method of advertising online.

The arrival of social media has created new channels for firms and brands to interact with their customers. Many firms today would count social media as a strategic component of their communicational strategy. Despite this fact, it is still unclear whether including social media as a marketing strategy is effective and would influence positively customers' brand trust and purchase intentions (Weinberg and Pehlivan 2011). Several studies executed by researches such as (Dholakia and Durham 2010; Kim and Ko 2012; Naylor, Lamberton, and West 2012) argue that firms using social media do receive a beneficial effect. These studies also revealed a positive correlation between social media and variables like brand trust, brand evaluation, and purchase intention. Thus the following hypothesis was proposed: **H2**. Social media marketing activities of the company have a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

Social media characteristics may be countless; but we will focus on three characteristics, that encompass the greatest impact on advertising. Interactivity, reach, and cost are considered as the major three features of social media advertising.

2.3.1 Interactivity

Interactivity is a social media's feature that grants users greater access to information and provides more control over indulgence in a certain discussion. If information published online is attractive to the user, higher levels of interactivities occur with the provider of the information (Liu et al., 2002). In this sense, interactivity also creates a

two-way communication channel between the advertising firm and its customers, bringing them closer together. The advertising firm is now able to respond in a quicker manner. Facebook is the most interactive social network online, due to its high popularity (McCarthy et al., 2010), further studies were even conducted by Bruyn and Lilien (2008) to study the effect of customers' communication on purchase intentions and decision making in the field of virtual marketing. Social media sites are viewed as a service channel by customers, they can interact with business on a real-time basis, and prefer to read updated content all the time (Leggat, 2010).

Liking a firm's page and following up its posts and updates may be considered as the first step into a new form of customer engagement. Van Doorn et al. (2010) defined customer engagement behavior as a customer interested in a certain brand or firm, beyond purchasing products or services level, as a result of a motivational driver. Liking a firm's page requires very little effort and includes no risk, but it serves several personal and social purposes. When a Facebook user likes a certain page, the user is exposed to content and information created by the page's manager, hence creating increased level of interaction and enforcing the existence of a two-way channel of communication (Van Doorn et al. 2010).

Levels of participation in online pages can be divided into two types, as discussed by several previous marketing studies (e.g., Äkkinen and Tuunainen, 2005; Kozinets, 1999; Ridings et al., 2006). They can be mainly divided into two parts as active or passive Burnett (2000) and Preece et al. (2004). Active members participate engage in activities taking place on the page, such as liking, sharing, commenting, in other words creating content and messages, redistributing information, and providing

support; whether it be negative or positive to other members (Ridings et al., 2006). Customer-brand communication is facilitated through active online participation, which simplifies the flow of information among customers themselves, accordingly enriching a higher level of brand trust (Flavián and Guinalú, 2006). While passive members are considered “lurkers”, a term used to describe people who benefit from the offers posted by the page, but still do not contribute to the page itself, more seen as neutral standbys (Preece et al., 2004). Even being a passive user as for example simply browsing the firm’s page hosted on Facebook showed a relation to a higher purchase intention in a study by Pöyry, Parvinen, and Malmivaara (2013).

A page could be described as successfully popular if it has a large number of “lurkers” because the count of “lurkers” is read as online traffic, “lurkers” also contribute to the number of “likes” the page has.

2.3.2 Reach

Businesses set up their online social pages with one major aim, which is creating and supporting a communicational channel with customers, and providing a virtual meeting point for people with harmonious interests (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001).

While marketing on Facebook, a company or organization may increase its reach out to a huge number of existing and potential customers. Other few characteristics of Facebook are the ability to reach consumers beyond geographical boundaries, time difference obstacles, and spreading enormous amounts of information, which only supports and increases the reachability of marketing through Facebook.

Facebook is deeply knowledgeable of their users’ demographic, employment and interest information, and is able of analyzing all the information fed by its millions of

its users into their databases. An owner of a Facebook business page may pay money in return for access to those analyses, and then may use this information in a more targeted advertising strategy ([The State of Queensland Report 2014](#)). For instance, Delta Airlines may use Facebook to learn how many travelers over a certain age in a particular city have listed 'traveling' as their interest. Then they may develop an advertisement or offer and pay for it to appear on the pages of that group of people only.

Another similar study published by the [Adweek magazine](#) conducted by [Justin Lafferty](#) on [Feb 2014](#) shows that Facebook is 197% more effective than online advertising websites (portals). In Q4 2013, Facebook labeled as social by the study through the report, was the most effective social network in the reachability factor by a wider range than most of the other networks considered in the study. According to the study, Facebook also recorded 52% higher than the average at delivering high quality advertising.

Facebook allows users to create general brand pages or groups ([Boyd and Ellison 2007](#); [Zaglia 2013](#)). Facebook pages or Facebook fan pages as they were called until a recent update in Facebook's policy, pressing a simple like button is enough to receive content and information on a user's News Feed or Home Page. While joining groups is more limited to the admins of the group, that can grant access to users of their choice. However, Facebook pages are more popular and common than groups. ([Edison Research 2012](#)) also showed that Facebook pages are more frequently used by brands as a communication channel to reach customers. The reach of pages is definitely higher than groups, where some brand pages reached a number of 34 million (Pepsi) or even celebrities 108 million (Cristiano Ronaldo). A recent study by

(Edison Research 2012) also showed that one third of American consumers of those who hold a Facebook or Twitter account; follow at least one brand, mostly on Facebook.

2.3.3 Cost

Nowadays, many consumers prefer to search online for products instead of going out the traditional way “brick and mortar”. Online purchasing is another trending wave penetrating the virtual world (Morrison et al., 2005). The advantages that online purchases bring are convenient as price reductions, and product diversity (Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo, 2013). Social media created a way to enroll in a live and direct conversation with customers at reasonably low costs with higher levels of efficiency than those that may be reached via traditional communication means. This is more convenient for multinational corporations and even SME’s. (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Online purchases do not only entail zero cost for the customer but also a series of benefits, such as offers of free delivery and easier payment methods such as payment on delivery (Venkatesh et al., 2012).

The main advantages of marketing on Facebook are cost-related (Weinberg, 2009). Prices or charges of advertising on Facebook are less compared to other social networks. Facebook users may access their Facebook pages, join networks, create profiles or pages, use Facebook messenger, and even post data free of cost. While advertising through TV, radios, and newspapers may cost up to millions of dollars. Facebook even provides advertisers with tools; free of charge, to better help manage, and administrate an advertising campaign. One of the undoubtable things about is that a firm can advertise on Facebook even if given a relatively small budget, because

when comparing small costs to the fact of reaching thousands of customers that are spread around the globe, with the ability to target a specific class of customers; is for sure a profitable argument.

A question may rise, as how much would it cost to advertise on Facebook? As marketers need to predict their ROI before taking any further step. Facebook explains on its help and support page that Facebook advertising principles are divided into 4 different sections: CPC, CPA, CPM, CPL ([Facebook, 2015](#)).

1. CPC (cost-per-click): advertiser is only charged when someone clicks on the Facebook ad.
2. CPM (cost-per-mille): or cost-per-impression, advertiser pays for a number of times the ad will show up on Facebook users' page.
3. CPA (cost-per-action): allows the advertiser to track how much does it cost to get a user to click on the ad and transfer to an independent private website.
4. CPL (cost-per-like): allows the advertiser to track how much does it cost to get a user to "like" their page ([Facebook, 2015](#)).

Level of control over Facebook advertising campaigns is very detailed and high. A firm may set limits to its budget spending per day or per lifetime span of the campaign. The minimum amount to spend on Facebook advertising per day is as low as \$1, and the minimum per click is 1 cent ([Facebook, 2015](#)). However, with such a very low budget, advertisers are very likely to find zero clicks on their ads. On average US advertisers will spend \$24 to get 100 clicks or \$24 to show their ad 36,000 times. ([Data from Facebook Ads Benchmark Report From Sales-force Marketing Cloud](#)).

2.4 Brand Trust

Scholars as [Chaudhuri and Holbrook \(2001\)](#), define brand trust as the “the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function”. In general also, academics have agreed that a customer trusts a brand when in an uncertain and risky environment, when the customer is not certain of the outcome of a decision but still that decision is of relevant importance ([Matzler et al. 2006](#)). Academics describe brand trust through customer relationship, which is the alternative of a human-company contact ([Sheth and Parvatyar, 1995](#)). Several academics also studied brand trust ([Lau & Lee, 1999](#); [Harris & Goode, 2004](#); [Ballester & Aleman, 2005](#); [Kim et al., 2008](#); [Mohammad, 2012](#)). They proclaimed that brand trust is a valuable mediator in studying customer behavior pre-post purchasing and purchase intentions, and helps create and maintain a long-term loyalty relationship.

Former studies showed that when customers involve themselves with a brand in social media, a positive assessment of the brand is reflected. Followers of fan pages on Facebook or Twitter of international airlines, showed positive feedback scores higher than non-followers ([Dijkmans, Kerkhof, and Beukeboom 2015](#)). However, customers that reported positive feedback about a firm’s posts on social media also showed a direct positive relation with positive brand attitude and higher purchase intentions ([Schivinski and Dabrowski 2013](#)).

Brand trust is a process; more than a spontaneous, immediate, momenta emotion. Building brand trust requires thoughtful, designed, and well-considered process of creating a relation between a customer and the brand ([Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001](#)).

Though exists a difference between brand trust and loyalty, brand trust is still viewed as a variable that has great influence on purchase intentions (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Halim, 2006; Sung & Kim, 2010). Brand trust directly influences brand loyalty, and is of extreme relevance when a customer decides to change a certain brand because of high-perceived risk and obscurity levels (Ibanez et al., 2006). Trust; not only acts as a key variable with respect to brand loyalty and purchase intentions, but also other components such as market share and price flexibility (Gommans et al., 2001).

From the former studies, we can safely conclude that brand trust is a crucial variable to study purchase intentions, thus we used brand trust as a mediator in the model. Brand trust may be evaluated as the lung of a healthy relationship between a firm or a brand and its customers (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

Ha and Perks (2005), defined brand trust as a point when a customer believes that a certain brand or firm will perform as promised or expected upon consuming. Garbarino and Johnson (1999) added that when customers experience positive repeated consumption or interaction with a firm's product or service over time, a brand trust relationship is developed. When this type of relation is continuous, a customer is convinced that the firm or brand will meet the preset expectations or even exceed them (Deighton, 1992).

Whenever a product is linked with perceived risk and creates an uncertain environment to the consumer, but is still of relevant importance to the consumer, brand trust becomes essential in determining the behavior of the consumer (Hess and Story, 2005). Customers are always looking for a brand worth investing their trust in,

to avoid products or services intrinsic risks (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán, 2000). Due to the intangibility of services provided by airline companies or hospitality products, online fan pages act as subjective and personal reference for customers to learn about the experiences of others (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán, 2000; Drury, 2008).

Once a feeling of trust is initiated between a customer and a product or service, a customer will feel attached or committed to the brand or firm (Beatty and Kahle, 1988). Customers may identify themselves with a certain firm through participations on the firm's social media's page. This leads later on to a sort of emotional dependence and dedication to the firm (Kim et al., 2008).

2.5 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is referred to as the personal assessment by consumers reflected in a general intention to buy products or services. Several statements can be derived from this explanation such as: 1- willingness to buy, 2- future buying intentions 3- repurchase decisions (Hsu, 1987; Dodds et al., 1991; Shao et al, 2004).

Fandos and Flavian (2005) defined purchase intention as the promise a consumer makes to himself to repurchase a product or service. This is considered crucially important for companies, because companies aim at increasing their sales and maximizing profits. Kang et al., (2014) explained that there are four consumer behaviors related to purchase intentions (1) the assured plan of buying the product (2) thinking undoubtedly of purchasing the product (3) considering buying the product in the future (4) definitely buying the specific product. Halim and Hameed (2005) explained purchase intention as the short-term linear behavior of customers to

repeatedly buy a certain product.

Creating a positive purchase intention behavior is a process rather than a quiet immobile action. At the beginning a consumer collects information about the desired product and evaluates its quality through the benefits received after personally experiencing the product. At this point, if the consumer experiences satisfaction from that product or service, they would definitely consider repurchasing that product or brand, or even at least show enthusiasm towards that particular product. This process is now called “purchase intention”, while the repurchasing action itself is called “purchase behavior”. Purchase intentions are affected by several variables as: product knowledge, product quality, brand image etc. (Tariq et al., 2013)

Everard and Galletta (2006) conducted a laboratorial experimental study to review the influence of brand trust of online purchase on consumers’ purchase intentions. Results showed a positive relation between online created brand trust and purchase intentions. Aghekyan-Simonian et al.'s (2012) researched online purchase intentions, results demonstrated that brand trust positively influenced purchase intentions through reducing the level of perceived risk. Mansour et al. (2014) also performed a similar study with a more complex combinatory approach to reveal the causes and outcomes of online brand trust, and concluded that online brand trust does affect purchase intentions. Ling et al.'s (2011) were also supporters of the claim of a positive relationship between brand trust and purchase intentions. Chong, Yang, and Wong (2003) presented brand trust as a key mediator to test purchase intention. Thus the following hypothesis was proposed: **H3**. Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

According to the theory of planned behavior set by (Ajzen, 1991), purchase intention is defined as a consumer's intention to repurchase from a seller residing in the market. While brand trust plays a major role in creating a positive purchase intention reaction, it also helps consumers in reducing unwanted or uncertain perceived risks in an online purchase transaction (Jarcenpaa, Tractinsky, & Vitale, 2000). This also inspires customers to build a positive "purchase intention-behavior" (McKnight et al., 2002). Positive purchases intentions help minimize social complexity and fragility. (Godes et al., 2005) suggested that customers' attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs can be influenced by socially interacting with acquaintances, friends, family, and mostly previous purchasers of the product or service, especially when taking a purchasing decision. When customers are shopping online, they find it hard to affirm information provided by the selling party; however, they heavily rely on former customers who have purchased that product or service before, for extra supportive information (Cialdini, 2001).

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection and Sampling

The data collection process went through a pilot study phase prior to the final cross-sectional survey. Based on the outcome of the pilot studies, a preliminary questionnaire was formulated. The initial questionnaire was distributed to a total of 21 graduate students majoring in business or marketing management at the Eastern Mediterranean University in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Students were asked to review and make commentaries. Feedback returned positive and showed high level of clarity. The questionnaire included Likert-type questions. Respondents were randomly selected and included a number of people who are professionals on the subject, such as employees or managers of travel agencies. The questionnaire was used to examine the impact of traditional and social media advertisements on brand trust and its effect on purchase intention.

The statistical sample population included 287 respondents divided in two countries, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and United States of America, respectively (164, 123) respondents. Two filter questions were employed as to assure that the respondents were qualified to participate in the research. If the answers to both questions were positive, then the respondents were given the questionnaires and asked to carry on participating in the research.

3.2 Measurement

All measurements of constructs were carried out by statements adopted from previous studies. At the beginning of the questionnaire, some demographic questions were asked to participants such as (gender, age, monthly income etc.) and the second part consisted of questions about their perception of advertising as presented on social media in general and Facebook in particular. 25 five-point Likert scale questions (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) were selected to record their perceptions of variables such as (traditional media advertising, social media-Facebook advertising, brand trust, and purchase intention). In order to assess the content and validity of the questionnaire, some professionals on the subject were asked to contribute into the research through filling questionnaires to reduce biasness.

The first part of the survey covered the traditional media advertising perception level (Tsiros et al., 2004) and (Abzari et al. 2014). While social media advertising perception questions were adopted accordingly from (Tsiros et al., 2004) and (Abzari et al. 2014) and (Dehghani and Tümer, 2015). Part three of the questionnaire posed questions concerned with brand trust among online community members adopted from (Kang et. al, 2014). Fourth part of the questionnaire dealt with the purchase intentions of customers, whether are they still willing to repurchase, recommend, or stop dealing with the examined airline company, elements under purchase intention included intention to increase interaction with the surveyed airline company, intention to recommend the company to friends (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012) and (Abzari et al. 2014) and (Dehghani and Tümer, 2015).

3.3 Reliability and Validity of Measurement Model

Factor analysis and reliability testing were carried out to ensure that all research constructs were valid and reliable. According to [Henson and Roberts \(2006\)](#), factor analysis reduces the complexity of research constructs to ensure that minimal latent constructs explain the shared variance of measured constructs used in a questionnaire. In addition, Cronbach's alpha (i.e., reliability testing) was computed to ensure consistency of the survey data.

To evaluate the performance of the measurement model, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the four constructs measured in this study using AMOS 22.0 through maximum likelihood estimation. As this estimation method relies on data normality, the distribution of the collected data was examined. Normality is attributed to both skewness and kurtosis. While skewness tends to impact analysis of means, it is kurtosis that severely influences tests of variances and covariances ([Byrne, 2009](#); [DeCarlo, 1997](#)), which is the basis for SEM. Using this threshold as a guide, an inspection of the kurtosis values produced by AMOS suggests that no item to be substantially kurtotic, therefore satisfying the assumption of maximum likelihood estimation of SEM.

Construct validity examines the extent to which a scale truly measures a construct of interest, including convergent and discriminant validity ([Peter, 1981](#)). Convergent validity refers to the degree to which items measuring their corresponding construct are correlated ([Anderson and Gerbing, 1988](#)).

3.4 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Statistically, SEM represents an advanced version of general linear modeling procedures and is used to assess “whether a hypothesized model is consistent with the data collected to reflect theory” (Lei & Wu, 2007).

Structural equation modeling is a multivariate analytical approach used to simultaneously test and estimate complex causal relationships among variables, even when the relationships are hypothetical, or not directly observable (Williams, Vandenberg, & Edwards, 2009). Concurrently combining factor analysis and linear regression models, SEM allows the researcher to statistically examine the relationships between theory-based latent variables and their indicator variables by measuring directly observable indicator variables (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014).

We tested the constructs by structural equation modeling and found the coefficients of the independent and dependent variables. Because of the latent features of our constructs as brand trust and purchase intention, structural equation-modeling approach was used to try to confirm the validity of the model, and estimate the relation between latent constructs.

3.5 Hypotheses Testing

Because of the latent constructs traditional and social media advertising, brand trust, and purchase intention, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed for the data analysis (SEM algorithm, AMOS 22.0).

The aim of this study is to understand the effect of traditional and social media advertising on brand trust from the perspective of consumers, and thus how would a positive brand trust attitude affect purchase intention.

As Figure (1) below shows, the important variables of this research include traditional and social media advertising as the independent variables, brand trust as the mediating variable, and purchase intention as the dependent variable.

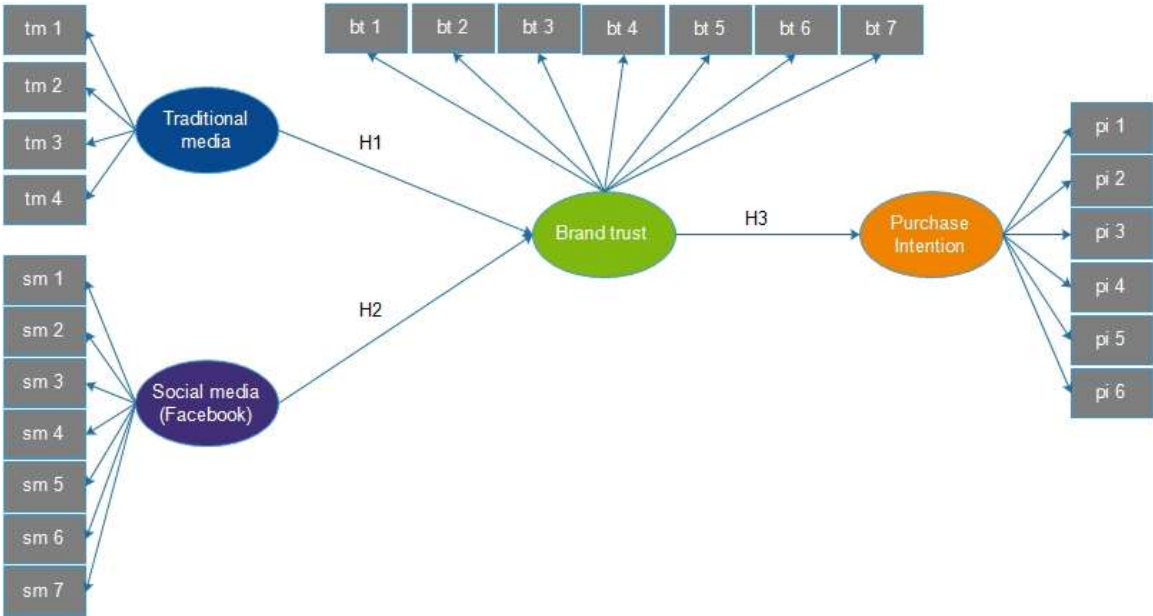


Figure 1: Structure Model

3.6 Hypotheses Development

H1. Traditional marketing activities of the company have a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

H2. Social media marketing activities of the company have a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

H3. Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Descriptive Results

At the beginning of the questionnaire, a descriptive analysis was performed to identify the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents by sex, age, relationship status, income etc. With regard to the respondents' sex, 52.6% were males (n = 151) and 47.4% were females (n = 136). For age, the majority (88%) of the respondents were below the age 40. For relationship status, the majority (61%) of respondents were single. About (60%) of them were studying, and (18%) were working. The second part consisted of questions about their perception of advertising on brand trust as presented on traditional and social media in general and Facebook in particular. 25 five-point Likert type scale questions (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) were posed.

Table 1: Summary of Respondents' Socio-Demographic Profiles

Socio-Demographic Variable	Description	Frequency (n)	Percentages %
Sex	Male	151	52.6
	Female	136	47.4
Age	Below 20	67	23.34
	21-30	134	46.69
	31-40	54	18.82
	41-50	20	6.97

	Above 50	12	4.18
Marital Status	Single	175	60.98
	Married	66	23
	Divorced	19	6.62
	Living Together	27	9.4
Employment	Studying	173	60.28
	Working	98	34.15
	Retired	11	3.83
	Unemployed	5	1.74
Income TRNC	Below 400\$	56	19.51
	400-800\$	66	12.20
	800-1200\$	22	32.52
	Above 1200\$	20	35.77
Income USA	Below 150\$	24	34.14
	1500-2000\$	15	40.24
	2000-2500\$	40	13.42
	Above 2500\$	44	12.20
Frequency of Annual Flights	1-3 times	184	64.11
	4-5 times	72	25.08
	6 or more	29	10.1
Facebook account	Yes	282	98.25
	No	5	1.75
Facebook visits	Everyday	204	71.08
	3 times/week	32	11.15
	Once a week	37	12.89
	Once a month	14	4.88
Membership of Facebook brand page	Yes	183	63.76
	No	104	36.24

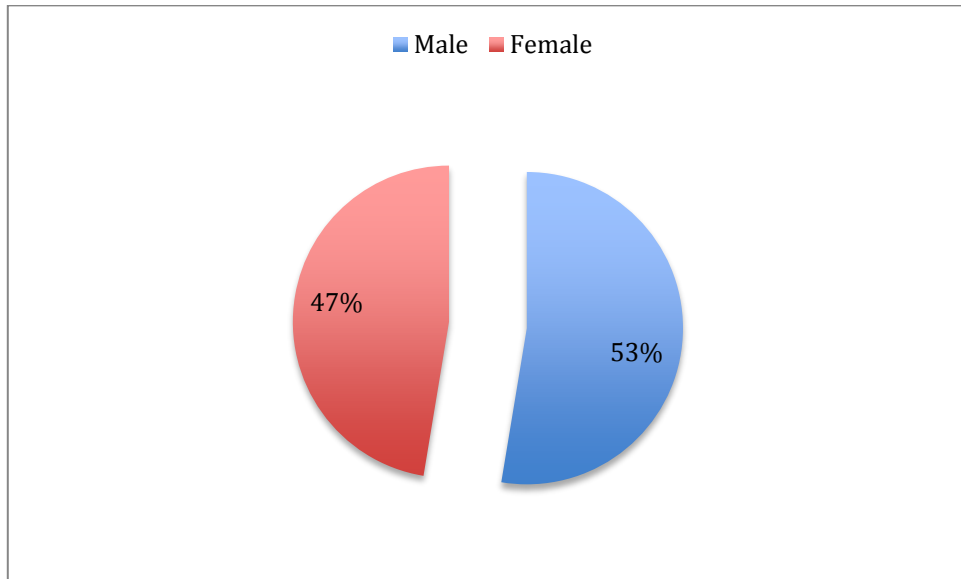


Figure 2: Gender Distribution

Figure 2 shows that sample population gender was divided into 53% males and 47% females.

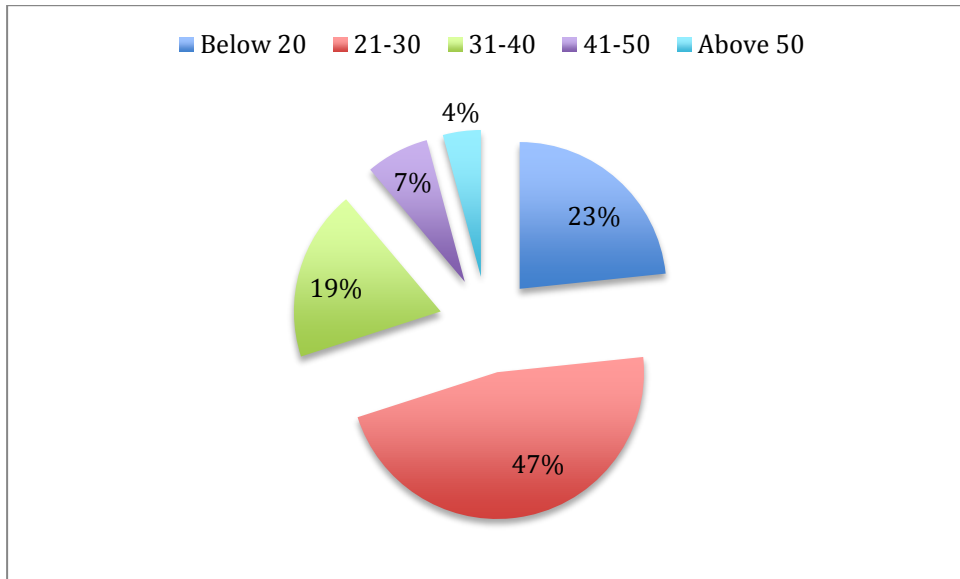


Figure 3: Age Distribution

Figure 3 explains shows that the ages of the respondents were divided as follows: 4% below 20, 47% between 21-30, 19% between 31-40, 7% between 41-50, and 4% above 50.

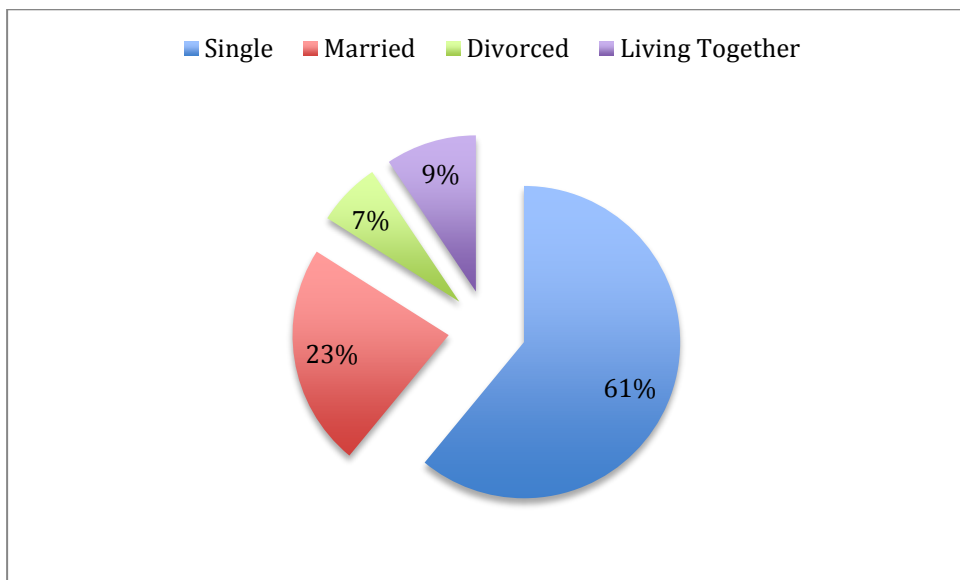


Figure 4: Marital Status Distribution

Figure 4 shows that 61% of respondents were single, 23% were married, 9% were living together with partners, and 7% were divorced.

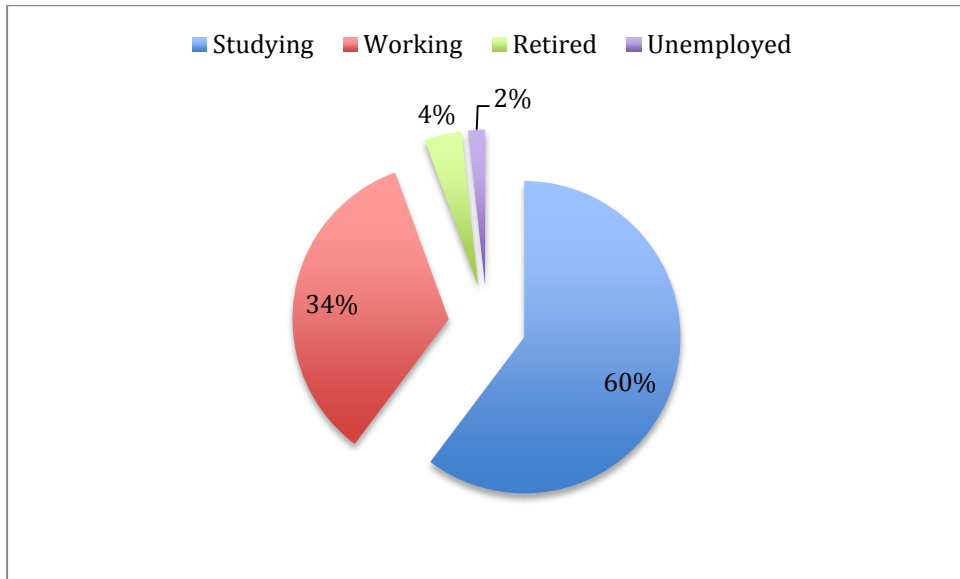


Figure 5: Employment Distribution

Figure 5 shows that 60% of respondents were studying, 34% were working, 4% were retired, and 2% were unemployed.

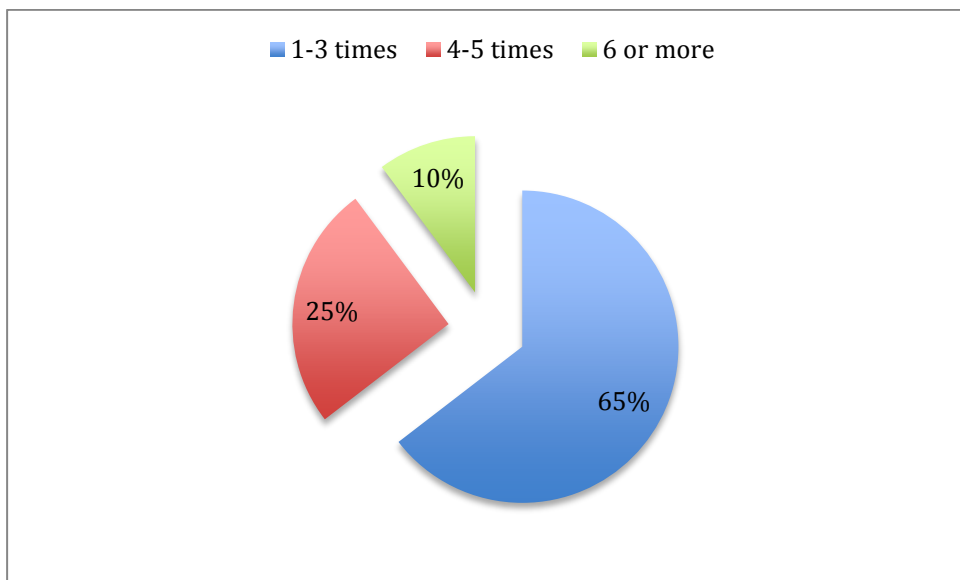


Figure 6: Frequency of Annual Flights

Figure 6 shows that 65% of respondents fly 1-3 times annually, 25% 4-5 times annually, and 10% fly 6 or more times every year.

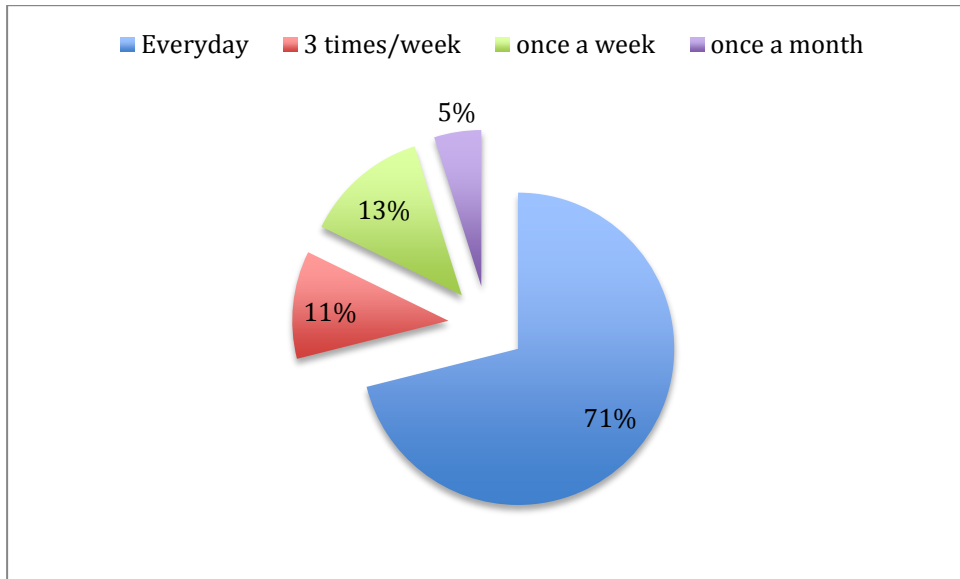


Figure 7: How frequent is Facebook visited?

Figure 7 shows that 71% of the respondents use Facebook on a daily basis, 11% would check Facebook 3 times a week, 13% once a week, and 5% once a month.

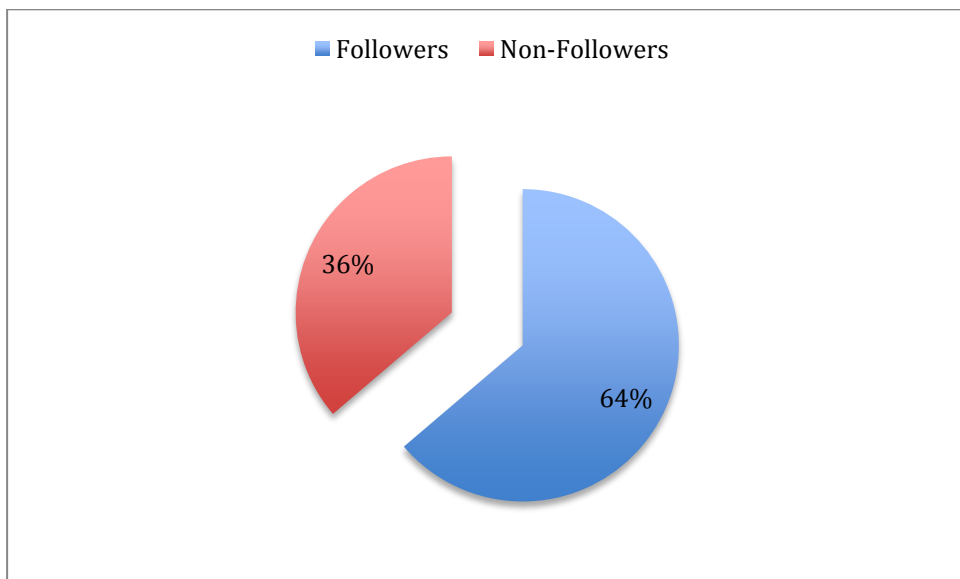


Figure 8: Members of Facebook Airlines' pages followers

Figure 8 shows that 64% of respondents are followers of either Turkish or Delta Airlines' Facebook pages, and the remaining 36% do not follow their pages.

4.2 Reliability and Validity of Measurement Model

Following Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a two-step approach was adopted, which consisted of examining individual measurement models and then the structural model. To check reliability and validity of each measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis was performed, using AMOS 22.0. A reliability test checks the internal consistency of measurement items per variable in different settings and conditions (Vitolins et al., 2000). The composite reliability estimates of all factors were between .772 and .860 as shown in Table 3, suggesting acceptable reliability (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

Researchers also suggested a cutoff point of 0.5 for factor loadings to exhibit good measurement (e.g., convergent validity) of the research construct (Kline, 1998; Roostika, 2011). Table 2 presents the results for the complete factor solution and reliability statistics. Notably, the results of the factor analysis showed that each measurement used in this study had a single dimension, in which some factor loadings were above 0.5, and others were below. Furthermore, the reliabilities of the researched constructs as indicated by Cronbach's alpha indicated that all constructs had good internal consistency. In addition, the validity and reliability of each scale were examined. Reliability coefficient of the questionnaire is 0.898 through Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

This is the correlation between the latent variable and the indicators in its outer model. It is assumed that for indicators reflective measurement is used. Just like all other marketing research, it is essential to establish the reliability and validity of the latent variables to complete the examination of the structural model.

Scale reliability was evaluated with Cronbach's coefficient alpha. As Table (2) indicates, all four factors achieved the recommended level of construct reliability (> .70) (Hair et al., 2006), with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .798 to .864.

Table 2: Summary of factor loadings and constructs' reliability

Items	Factor Loadings	Reliability
Traditional Media		0.864
I am satisfied with the advertising campaigns of Delta Airlines on traditional media: such as radio and television.	0.82	
The intensity and volume of the advertising campaigns of Delta Airlines using traditional media such as radio and television have met my expectations.	0.82	
Compared to the campaign of other airlines on traditional media such as radio and television, the campaigns of Delta Airlines are acceptable.	0.82	
I feel motivated by Delta Airlines' TV ads.	0.68	
Social Media		0.798
I am satisfied with received information of other customers about Delta Airlines on social media.	0.68	
Information received from other customers in social media has met my expectations.	0.77	
Compared to other received information from other sources, the received information on social media about Delta Airlines is acceptable.	0.70	
I like, comment or share any of Delta Airlines' pictures or videos on Facebook.	0.37	
I feel motivated by Delta Airlines' posts, videos, or images.	0.54	
I find Delta Airlines' page useful or informative with respect to keeping me up-to-date about new offers.	0.60	
The Airlines' posted information improves my awareness about the buying options and decisions.	0.54	

Reviews and comments of previous users on Facebook about Delta Airlines help me take a better future decision.	0.40	
Brand Trust		0.805
Delta Airlines is a professional airline company.	0.64	
Delta Airlines always fulfills its commitments.	0.77	
I trust the employees of Delta Airlines for service provision.	0.59	
Delta Airlines try to keep the information of its customers secure and anonymous.	0.68	
Others' opinions on Facebook do not change my preference or trust in Delta Airlines.	0.47	
I feel that I can trust Delta Airlines completely.	0.62	
I prefer to fly Delta Airlines' even if they're not highly active or visible on Facebook.	0.53	
Purchase Intention		0.818
I prefer to buy Delta Airlines' tickets more than any other available airlines.	0.71	
I am willing to recommend others to buy from Delta Airlines.	0.81	
I intend to fly again with Delta Airlines in the future.	0.84	
I would strongly recommend this airline to everyone.	0.78	
I would like to come back to Delta Airlines in the future.	0.76	
Negative reviews of other Facebook users about Delta Airlines decrease my purchase intentions.	0.21	

4.3 Convergent Validity

In the following, we examine convergent validity, or the extent to which blocks of items converge in their representation of the theoretical construct. It requires each measurement item to correlate strongly with its related construct, and prior research

suggests that the item coefficients should equal at least 0.70. All the items in our study achieved this threshold.

The convergent validity test could be passed if factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) are above the threshold of .5 (Hair et al., 2010). All constructs showed satisfactory convergent validity, as factor loadings ranged from .798 to .864 and all AVE values were larger than .5. Our model showed that all construct reliability values were greater than the average variances, and ranges of average variances were between .528 and .608 which also satisfies $>.5$.

4.4 Discriminant Validity

The correlation of the latent variable scores with the measurement items needs to show an appropriate pattern of loadings, one in which the measurement items load highly on their theoretically assigned factor. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest that the square root of AVE in each latent variable can be used to establish discriminant validity, if this value is larger than other correlation values among the latent variables. To do this, table (3) was created in which the square root of AVE is manually calculated. The correlations between the latent variables are copied from the “Latent Variable Correlation” section of the default report and are placed in the lower left triangle of the table. The square roots of the AVE (on the diagonal) are greater than any other values, in support of the discriminant validity of the measurement scales.

Table (3) shows that the square roots of AVE values were all greater than their corresponding inter-construct correlations, indicating acceptable discriminant validity. Discriminant validity of the measured constructs was tested in two ways.

First, the test suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) was conducted to compare the correlations of the factors with the square root of the average variance extracted for each of the factors. Discriminant validity can be established if the square root of the average variance extracted for each one of the factors is greater than the correlations among the factors. As Table (3) shows, the square root of the average variance extracted for each factor is greater than its correlations with other factors, providing evidence for discriminant validity. Then all maximum squared variance and average squared variances were respectively lower than their corresponding average variances.

Table 3: Fornell-Larcker Criterion Analysis for Checking Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	BT	TM	SM	PI
BT	0.772	0.565	0.542	0.432	0.752			
TM	0.860	0.608	0.442	0.316	0.665	0.780		
SM	0.773	0.528	0.412	0.295	0.559	0.642	0.727	
PI	0.848	0.585	0.542	0.265	0.736	0.304	0.401	0.765

4.5 Structural Model

After securing the reliability and validity of individual measurement models, the overall model fit was assessed afterwards by conducting structural equation modeling (SEM).

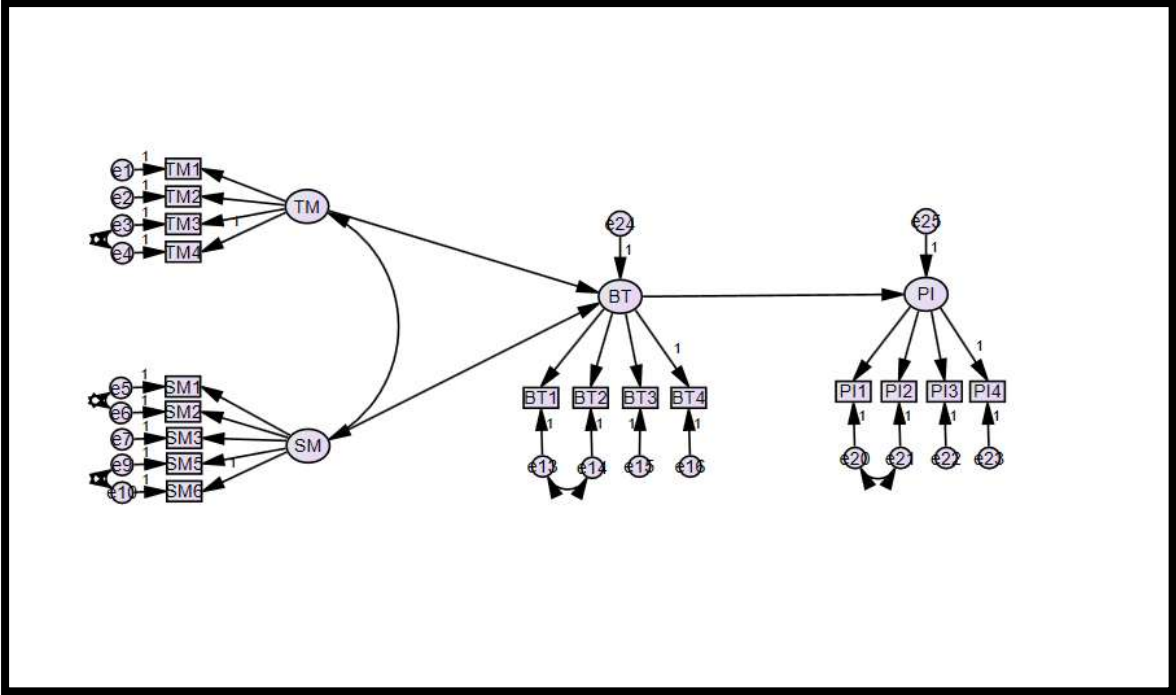


Figure 9: Structural Model

The regression analysis involves the use of AMOS 22 to find out how intense the influence of brand trust on purchase intention is. The preliminary analysis results show that the tested fit indicator of the overall model is $P = .000$, $CMIN/DF = 4.186$; $GFI = .763$; $NFI = .706$; $IFI = .759$; $CFI = .757$; $RMSEA = .106$. This denotes that the research framework has partially met the criteria of the goodness of model fit. After conducting the confirmatory factor analysis, we extracted the factor loading ratios after running the model by our data, then eliminated all factor loading below 0.5. After the results showed a poor-fit model, we checked the covariance ratios between the observed variables, and another confirmatory factor analysis was performed as shown in Fig.9 and the following results were obtained. The analysis results show

that the tested fit indicator of the overall model is $P = .000$, $CMIN/DF = 2.924$; $GFI = .885$; $NFI = .874$; $IFI = .913$; $CFI = .912$; $RMSEA = .078$. This denotes that the research framework has met the criteria of the goodness of model fit. In addition, the sample-estimated data are also all conforming to the standard values.

Table (4) presents the results of the individual tests of the significance of the relationship among the variables. Traditional media had a positive and significant impact on brand trust, with $\beta = 0.449$, $t = 4.567$, and $p = 0.000$, indicating that advertising efforts of the company were an important antecedent of brand trust. Social media also had a strong positive effect on brand attitude ($\beta = 0.266$, $t = 2.784$, $p = 0.005$). Finally, brand attitude was the main determinant of purchase intention in the context of airline industry ($\beta = 0.710$, $t = 8.628$, $p = 0.000$), supporting H3.

Table 4: Hypotheses testing and coefficients

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Path Coefficient	Standard Coefficient	Standard Error	t	P
H1	Traditional Media	Brand Trust	0.449	0.361	0.079	4.567	***
H2	Social Media	Brand Trust	0.266	0.251	0.090	2.784	0.005
H3	Brand Trust	Purchase Intention	0.710	0.932	0.108	8.628	***

4.6 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was performed to determine whether the proposed hypotheses are supported or not supported. Table 5 lists the results from the test. All three proposed hypotheses (i.e., H1–H3) that emerged from the literature review are supported on the basis of the results from the structural equation analysis.

Table 5: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Supported/ Not Supported
H1. Traditional marketing activities of the company have a positive and significant effect on brand trust.	Supported
H2. Social media marketing activities of the company have a positive and significant effect on brand trust.	Supported
H3. Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.	Supported

4.7 Discussion and Implications

H1 indicated that traditional marketing activities would have a positive effect on travelers' brand trust. The results were significant ($\beta = 0.449$; $p = .000$), and thus H1 is supported. This finding implies that the traditional media marketing activity practices employed by the company are imperative in influencing travelers' trust. This result validates the declarations in the works of [Moorman et al. \(2002\)](#); [Tavassoli et al. \(1995\)](#); [De Pelsmacker et al. \(2002\)](#) that traditional marketing has a positive influence on consumers' brand trust. Thus, airline companies should adopt strategies that increase the level of satisfaction for the travelers and reinforce positive brand trust. In particular, services offered should be in line with the expectations of the customers.

H2 proposed that social media marketing activities would have a positive effect on travelers' brand trust. The findings confirmed that value ($\beta = 0.266$; $p = .005$) is positively related to brand trust toward the airline company. Thus, H2 is verified. The positive trust notions toward the airline company reflect consumers' beliefs that the examined airline company would honor its promises, fulfill its commitments, and maintain its level of professionalism in offering its services and conducting its

business. Thus, by aligning their service offerings with the values consumers hold, airline companies can stimulate customers to form positive attitudes and strong positive intentions toward flying again with the same airline company. This supports the work of [Dholakia and Durham \(2010\)](#); [Kim and Ko \(2012\)](#); [Naylor, Lamberton, and West \(2012\)](#). Given this orientation, airline companies should ensure that the images and messages portrayed to customers during via social media are in accordance with what customers believe a delightful flight experience is. Because most customers believe that delightful flight experience should be safe, relaxing, and agreeable.

H3 posited that brand trust would have a positive effect on travelers' purchase intentions toward the airline companies ($\beta = 0.710$; $p = .000$). The data provide support to H3 ($p < .01$). This finding suggests that the brand trust consumers put into the airline company simultaneously reflects on their purchase intentions. This may be explained by stating, that if travelers trust the examined airline company, they are more likely to repurchase its services, and vice-versa. Thus, if airline companies can help enhance consumers' trust and make them feel satisfied, customers will form positive attitudes and intentions and fly again with the company. This result is in accordance with those of [Everard and Galletta \(2006\)](#); [Aghekyan-Simonian et al.'s \(2012\)](#); [Mansour et al. \(2014\)](#); [Ling et al.'s \(2011\)](#); [Chong, Yang, and Wong \(2003\)](#).

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

Results of current study can be helpful for managers of Delta and Turkish Airlines. As discussed in the literature review and as results showed in chapter 4, social media proved to influence customers' brand trust that in turn affects purchase intentions and decisions to repurchase the services offered by the airline companies. This could be reflected through focusing on improving the service's quality and providing the clients with fair prices in an attempt to satisfy them. Satisfied customers would have positive attitude towards the company and they would spread positive word of mouth in factual life and positive e-WOM in social media.

The study concluded that campaigns, offers, information, and follow ups on social media are significant drivers of brand trust, followed by the concernment of the content and its popularity among the clients' social networks. Another fundamental finding of the study is that; in contrast to what many people might think, traditional media advertising still plays a major and very essential role in affecting brand trust and purchase intentions of customers.

This study has investigated the effects of traditional and social media advertising on brand trust. It has been shown that there is a positive significant effect of both types of advertising on brand trust, which plays a strategic role in influencing the purchase

intentions. This study was conducted with a sample from both the American and North Cypriot society that are characterized by a high level of Internet and social media penetration, creating the perfect grounds to conduct the study. The aim of this study was to understand the effect of traditional and social media advertising on brand trust from the perspective of consumers, and thus how would a positive brand trust attitude affect purchase intention. Three hypotheses were proposed and tested to explain the above-mentioned aims.

Our findings are valuable because they provide primary evidence that following an airline's Facebook updates and page has the potential positive effect on important brand evaluations, and suggest that it is beneficial to invest in social media advertising activities.

5.2 Recommendations and Suggestions

Firstly, companies that intend to implement an effective social media advertising campaign should consider the benefits, values, and advantages they can offer to their clients. Then study what are the drivers of brand trust to their customers. Customers' brand trust is affected positively not only by social media advertising, but by traditional advertising campaigns also. Successful cross-media advertising campaigns might hint that customers request creative ads, bigger variety of ads, and more unique ads to create a motive to start an interactive relationship with the company. Thus, companies are urged to work on creating more attractive, active, entertaining, stimulating content or pages and applications. Airlines' advertisements should be entertaining and fun, innovative in creating content that other competitors did not do yet.

Secondly, relevancy of advertising content is a very important factor affecting brand trust, therefore companies should always pay attention to what their clients are expecting from their purchases. Airline companies should also conduct individual researches or observations to better understand their clients' needs and translate this knowledge into a higher quality service and customer satisfaction, thus increasing the brand trust and finally positively affecting purchase intentions.

Finally, an advertisement that is popular and viral among friends increases brand trust among clients. The impact of WOM and e-WOM cannot be disregarded in advertising whether online or the traditional way (Gruen et al., 2006). Therefore, companies can provide incentives to its social media users to share and spread their presence, campaigns, ads, and contents on social media among their networks, by offering discounts or a free ticket to a selected number of the page followers that would share their content. Companies can also hire opinion leaders or celebrities in their target markets to advertise their campaigns and influence the public and attract people to purchase their services.

This research contributes to explaining how traditional and social media advertising contributes to brand trust, then how does brand trust play a major role in defining the behavior of customers and enhancing their purchase intentions.

Given the results obtained, the greater the consumer felt satisfied and motivated by the advertisements whether they were via traditional channels or social media, the higher the brand trust level was. Then the higher the level of brand trust was, the more likely that the consumers were positively influenced and more willing to repurchase the services of the airline company. Therefore, it is suggested that Turkish

and Delta airline companies should formulate advertising strategies that create higher satisfaction and meet the expectations of the consumers, thus achieving positive purchase intention attitudes from consumers.

This implies that in order to increase sales via direct purchases from their ticket sales offices or online ticketing, airline companies should advertise on social media (Facebook) and in other more traditional media about the different usage contexts and occasions. Examples of usage contexts and occasions (weekend trips, summer holidays, business trips, presents for friends and family) would be the purchase of an airline ticket. Also, airline companies should offer, as well as other promotions, a discount on the next ticket purchase (loyalty programs).

Now price saving can be said to be a variable that plays a major role as a direct driver of purchase intention. This means that the greater the amount of money saved by the consumer in obtaining the best offer for a given price with high perceived benefits, will more likely result in greater positive purchase intentions and higher positive attitude towards flying the same company over and over again.

Performance expectancy or perceived usefulness, which represents practical and functional feature, is a major driver of purchase intention. Airline companies should be aware of the importance of providing after-sales customer care telephone to receive complaints, social media client communication channels such as Facebook and Twitter, and an option of presenting boarding passes by SMS not only by paper.

This illustrates the importance of diversifying the advertising plan of an airline company via traditional and social media, in order to inform the consumers about

offers and promotions. Airline companies could also add free customer care call centers, email, and an active Facebook presence.

5.3 Research Limitations and Future Research

This study contained several limitations. Firstly, the present study investigated only the effects of traditional and social media on brand trust and purchase intentions. Additional dimensions such as brand equity, brand loyalty, and brand commitment could be added to the study to validate the effectiveness of utilizing cross-media advertising plans as a tool to impact consumer purchase intentions. Secondly the questionnaire distributed in TRNC included a majority of university students below the age of 30, which explains their high usage of the Internet in their daily life. It would be helpful to enlarge the sample examined to a larger more generalizable sample. For instance, clients above the ages of 30/40 or people with lower educational backgrounds may seek different benefits from young highly educated customers.

Our findings were obtained from real clients of the Turkish and Delta airline companies, where ~64% of them were followers of the Facebook pages of the examined airline companies using their personal Facebook accounts and were exposed to the companies' posts, which greatly enhances the external validity of the research. Yet, a few limitations should be taken into consideration. As in most researches studies, participants were aware that they were participating in a study. It might be that this alarmed their memory of online posts that they were exposed to before, or ads they have seen. We do not believe that such a potential increase in attention can necessarily change the direction of evaluating the airline company. Although it may not be a practical error, but future studies may be able to recruit

participants without informing them beforehand about the survey, thus avoiding such a potential effect.

Effective and successful social media advertising can affect brand trust as illustrated in this research, but positive brand trust and purchase intention attitudes are not only the result of only being exposed to the contents of the Facebook pages followed by customer. Brand trust and purchase intentions are also heavily affected by the way the company presents itself on Facebook and the level of interactivity and quick response rate to its followers' posts. Therefore, to enhance the understanding of the best effective social media advertising activities for airline companies, future studies may include a greater number of airline companies and study the way they represent themselves on Facebook and focus on the effects of these specific behaviors such as interactivity or e-WOM. Even may include some tools to measure the interactivity level or other dimensions based on some criteria.

Future research in the field of social and traditional media's effect on brand trust and purchase intention concerned with the aviation industry sector shall not solely replicate the findings of the current study, but also try to expand the knowledge of the early effects in the rapidly changing world of advertising with newer and more technological innovations invading the marketing world.

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