

**Gonca Telli Yamamoto**  
*Ph. D. in Marketing, Professor,  
Professor at the Department of Business Administration,  
Maltepe University, Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences,  
Istanbul, Turkey;*  
**Fehim Düzgün,**  
*Ph. D. in Social Sciences, Huawei,  
Istanbul, Turkey*

## PERFORMANCE OF SALES PERSON IN A SMARTPHONE MARKET IN TURKEY

**Abstract.** Smartphone market is growing very quickly with embedding new technologies. Many global and local brands are entering aggressively to Turkish market. In Turkey, there are different channels for this business; technology superstores', telecom retailer and mix retail channel. Mainly 3 technology chains have around 200 important shops. Telecom retail channel has around 8.000 shops with different operators and different owners which needs long-term investment, Mix channel also has around 11.000 independent stores which needs high field force investment to contact with all independent dealers. We may say that technology superstores seems more suitable for fast growing brands, Because technology superstore channel has only 200 stores with high capacity which can be controllable more easily.

All brands are looking for a way to raise their sales and make the correct sales activities to be able to compete in the competitive smartphone market. Due to sales person is one of the key points that faces the consumer in the shops and ends the sales, companies positioning sales person (promoters) in technology chain stores. Additional to positioning sales person, companies provide sales promotions to sales person as tool to increase sales performance. We may list sales promotions as; price discount, bundle gift, marketing activities -to attract customer to stores- sales person bonus incentive, in store marketing material and activities. Sales person is the first point that facing with consumer in the retail store. Furthermore we believe sales person's opinion is very valuable while defining sales actions for the companies in smartphone market. In this study, survey is executed with sales persons (sales staff, promoter) to find out sales person idea to improve sales performance and budget allocation about shop's sales activities. We believe this study will guide and help smartphone companies for planning their sales promotion & activities and sales budget allocation.

**Keywords:** personel selling, sales promotion, sales person, bonus, sales incentives, retail, smartphone, sales performance.

**JEL Classification:** L81, M31

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**Гонча Теллі Ямамото**  
*К.е.н., професор, професор кафедри бізнес адміністрування  
Університет Малтепе, Факультет економіки та  
менеджменту (м. Стамбул, Туреччина)*  
**Фехім Дюзгюн,**  
*к.соц.наук, Huawei (м. Стамбул, Туреччина)*

## РОБОТА ПРОДАВЦЯ НА РИНКУ СМАРТФОНІВ ТУРЕЧЧИНИ

**Анотація.** Ринок смартфонів зростає дуже швидко, використовуючи нові технології. Багато світових та локальних брендів активно впроваджуються на турецький ринок. У Туреччині для цього бізнесу існують різні канали: гіпермаркети техніки, роздрібні телекомунікаційні продавці та змішана роздрібна торгівля. Переважно 3 мережі з збуту техніки налічують близько 200 важливих магазинів. Телекомунікаційний роздрібний канал має близько 8000 магазинів з різними операторами та різними власниками, які потребують

довгострокових інвестицій. Змішаний канал реалізації також має близько 11000 незалежних магазинів, які потребують великих інвестицій для контактів з усіма незалежними дилерами. Ми можемо сказати, що гіпермаркети техніки видаються більш зручними для швидкозростаючих брендів. Оскільки гіпермаркети техніки мають тільки 200 магазинів з великим обсягом, який можна легко контролювати.

Всі бренди шукають спосіб збільшити свої продажі та зробити їх оптимальними, щоб конкурувати на ринку смартфонів. Завдяки продавцю, одним з ключових моментів, з яким стикається споживач в магазинах і закінчує продаж, це позиціонування компанії продавця (промоутера) в мережах магазинів техніки. Додатково до позиціонування продавця, компанії забезпечують стимулювання продажів для продавців як інструмент підвищення ефективності продажів. Основними джерелами стимулювання продажу, є: зниження ціни, подарунки до товару, маркетингова діяльність – для залучення клієнта до магазину – бонусне заохочення продавця, торгівельний маркетинговий продукт тощо. Продавець є першим, з ким стикається споживач у роздрібному магазині. Крім того, думка продавця дуже цінна при придбанні товару для компаній на ринку смартфонів. У цьому дослідженні, виконуються опитування серед продавців (співробітників відділу продажу, промоутерів), щоб дізнатись ідеї продавця про підвищення ефективності продажів та бюджету розподілу щодо торговельної діяльності магазину. Дослідження спрямоване допомогти компаніям продавцям смартфонів стимулювати продажі та підвищити ефективність діяльності, а також розподілу бюджету продаж.

**Ключові слова:** персональна продаж, просування продажів, продавець, бонус, стимулювання продажу, роздрібна торгівля, смартфони, торгівельна діяльність.

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*Гонча Телли Ямамото*

*К.э.н., профессор, профессор кафедры бизнес администрирования  
Университет Малтене Факультет экономики и  
менеджмента (г.. Стамбул, Турция)*

*Фехим Дюзюн,*

*к.соц.наук, Huawei (г.. Стамбул, Турция)*

## **РАБОТА ПРОДАВЦОВ НА РЫНКЕ СМАРТФОНОВ ТУРЦИИ**

**Аннотация.** Рынок смартфонов растет очень быстро, используя новые технологии. Много мировых и локальных брендов активно внедряются на турецкий рынок. В Турции для этого бизнеса существуют различные каналы: гипермаркеты техники, розничные телекоммуникационные продавцы и смешанная розничная торговля. Данное исследование направлено на помощь компаниям смартфонов для стимулирования продаж, а также распределения бюджета продаж.

**Ключевые слова:** персональная продаж, продвижения продаж, продавец, бонус, стимулирования продаж, розничная торговля, смартфоны, торговая деятельность.

Формул: 0; рис.: 1; табл.: 7; библи.: 21.

**Problem Statement in general form.** Smartphone brands have increased their sales over the years. Especially starting from 2009 first quarter 35 million smartphones were sold worldwide in present day (in the first quarter of 2017) 432 million smartphones sold to end users. Total sales reached almost 1.5 billion in 2016 [18]. According to IDC report; Smartphone shipments have been forecasted to reach 1.53 billion units in 2017 and grow to 1.77 billion in 2021 [15].

Parallel to global smartphone market status, Turkey also becomes a potential market for smartphone business due to “monthly smartphone sales” exceeds the 1 million in average [19]. Thus, new global brands are entering to the market and competition is getting tough day by day in smartphone market in Turkey. Due to high competition in the market, brands are looking for a way to raise sales with efficiency [6].

In Turkey, there are different channels for this business for instance technology; superstores', telecom retailing and retail channels. Technology superstores' channel seems more suitable for fast growing brands based on the characteristics of these two channels. Mainly 2-3 technology chains are with around 200 important shops. Telecom retailing channel needs long-term investment. Lastly smartphone retailer channel works around with 11.000 shops with different operators and different owners, which requires a successful franchise system.

In technology stores, sales person recommendation is one of the key factors that affect customer purchase decision. Retail sales people performance is an important tool to create value for consumer and match the provided service or product with consumer needs in shops [6]. Hence, brands allocate sales person in these chain stores to catch and attract consumer for their products. These allocated sales persons make better sales deals in these stores. Because technology stores' own staff are not concerned deeply for the customers of a specific brand.

Sales person is also the first point that facing with consumer in the retail store. Furthermore we believe sales person's opinion is very valuable while defining sales actions for the companies in smartphone market. So, aim of this study is; find out sales person idea to improve sales performance and budget allocation about shop's sales activities.

**Analysis of recent research and publications** Smartphone is a high valued complex product, which needs guidance and detailed explanation. Additionally, we may say that competitive market condition increases importance of personal selling on smartphone market.

Personel selling has been seen as personal communication of information for persuasion of the customer by several researchers: Kotler P. [11] Adesoga A.[1], Futrell C. [7]. AMA takes it an oral presentation for potential buyers in purpose of sales [8]. In order to realize sales role, sales person performs several job functions during personal selling [17].

Sales person is the first point of contact in business wise relationships and customer satisfaction activities which creates long lasting business relationship that will create high retention and profit. If there is a good compensation of the sales person this would make a positive impact on positive customer feedback, customer retention, and increased sales from current customers that would be beneficial for the company [12].

Several authors also suggests the nature of personal selling such as marketing in Kotler P. [10], personel selling evolved to four eras; production, sales, marketing, and partnering. In each of these eras, the role of salespeople differs and salespeople engage in different activities and need different sets of knowledge, skills and abilities to be effective [21].

Personal selling performance is more related personal capability and technical expertise as [9]. Sales person performance became critical important for the company performance to able to make this value for the customers [14]

Despite the high demand for smartphones, the smartphone market is very dynamic and always have the need push to customers with promotions. The brands use sales promotions so that the products may differentiate themselves from their competitors and be more preferable for the consumers.

Sales promotions are typically viewed as temporary incentives that encourage the trial of a product or service in Kotler P. [10]; Webster F. E. [20] in DelVecchio D., Henard D.H. & Freling, T.H. [5], Cummins J.&Mullin R. [4].

The well-known definition of sales promotion was provided by Shrimp T.A.[16]; "the use of any incentive by a manufacturer or service provider to induce the trade (wholesalers or retailers) and/ or consumers to buy a brand and to encourage the sales person to aggressively sell it".

Sales promotion has also been defined as "a direct inducement that offers an extra value or incentive for the product to the sales person, distributors, or the ultimate consumer with the primary objectives of creating an immediate sale" [2]. Blattberg R.C. and Neslin S.A.[3] has defined a sales promotion as "an action-focused marketing event whose purpose is to have a direct impact on the behavior of the firm's customer."

**Setting Objectives.** Smartphone products have complex technologies which needs to be explained to buyers during buying process. Firms are allocating sales person to their brands which

will increase the sales performance. Even individual performance can be linked personality and other factors however in our research we mainly focus how sales person thinks which promotion tool -how much - affect to their sales performance. So we want to find out the factors from point of sales person view for smartphone products and how sales person can improve their sales performance.

**Presentation of the main research material.** Sales and sales force performance measurement studies generally focus on perceptual studies in the literature. Most of study do not rely on practice to measure sales performance. In our study we aim to get to know sales person sales performance with sales person approach and idea. We believe the findings of this research will be useful for planning of the sales actions in smartphone and other sectors.

Our research model is Sales Performance Model (SPM) as Figure 1, We did not focus each action (bundle gift, discount and sales push) one by one, we just put each sales promotion in the survey and get to know sales person preferences for each application.

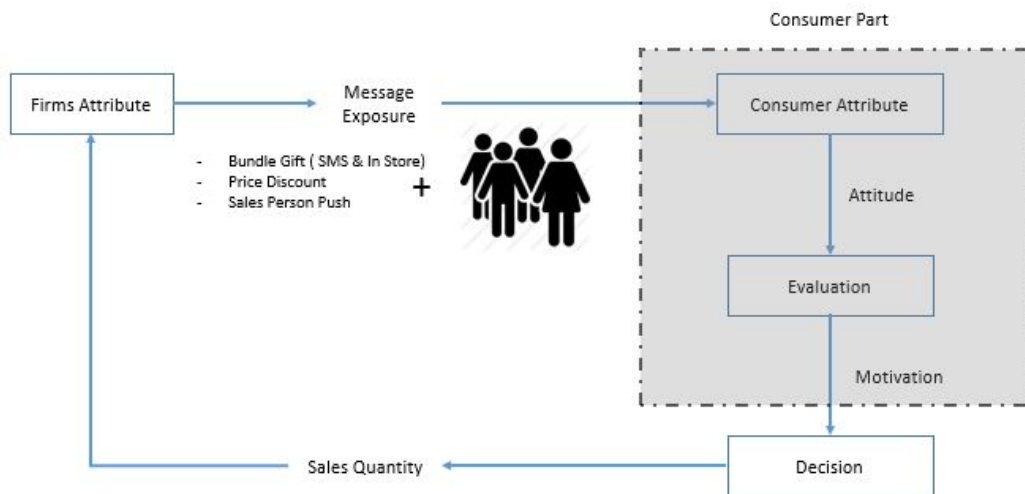


Figure 1. Sales Performance Model (SPM)

Source: Based on our research model

- Firm is making the message exposure to consumer through:
  - SMS and in store communication (through sales person) for the bundle gift promotion.
  - with price discount in the stores.
  - with pushing consumer through sales person in the stores.
- After consumer gets message exposure for different sales applications, we observed and check the sales person's own ideas for allocation for their sales performance.
- This will affect the sales quantity.

Limitation of our Sales Performance Model (SPM):

- Model is not considering consumer behaviour (consumer part in the model- gray colored).
- Model's assumption is other factors which affect sales performance are constant.
- Promotion tool efficiency is not considered in the model.
- Promotion actions are not applied in this research, only asked as question in the survey.
- These results are the preferences of the sales person's which means decisions are definitely not represent the companies.

As explained previous sections, smartphone brands are allocating their own sales person in retail channels to catch consumers in stores which is competitive sales field. Around 500 sales persons are allocated by smartphone brands in technology superstores retail channel in Turkey. In our research we have made non-random sampling among 500 promoters (sales person) as

population and applied survey to 84 selected sales persons who are located in in retails stores Vatan, Medimarkt and Teknosa retailers.

Survey is applied with below questions:

*If you have a 100 TL / Unit budget, how you will allocate to the below activities:*

*Q1.....TL for brand marketing (ATL, BTL, Digital),*

*Q2.....TL for channel marketing (In store visibility),*

*Q3..... TL for sales person bonus incentive,*

*Q4 .....TL for price discount,*

*Q5.....TL for Bundle promotion (smartphone case or accessorise),*

*Q6.....TL for Mobile marketing as SMS communication,*

*Q7..... TL other please specify;*

*Q8 Participant age: .....*

*Q9 Experience: .....*

*Q10 Education: .....*

*Q11 Level of training.....*

*Q12 Name Surname.....;*

Our findings of survey results are below.

84 sales people joined the survey, so we may say our result validity is good enough.

Table 1

Number of Sales Person in Survey

N	Valid	84
	Missing	0

As given in the below table, almost half of sales person education level is over undergraduate level. This may increase reliability of this research.

Table 2

Education Level of Sales Person in Survey

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary School	1	1,2	1,2
	College	42	50	51,2
	Undergraduate	17	20,2	71,4
	Graduate	24	28,6	100
	Total	84	100	100

Age, experience and level of technical training status of survey joined sales person status is below, average experience is 6 years, average age is 27 and they got 8 times training in average.

Table 3

Age, Experience and Level of Technical Training Status in Survey

	Experience	Age	Level of Training
N	Valid	84	83
	Missing	0	1
Mean	6,36	27,46	8,45
Std. Deviation	3,747	4,052	8,402
Minimum	1	20	0
Maximum	18	41	40

We may say that 6 years average experience is a high number due to sales person (promoters) age scale is low and turnover rate is very high accordingly. However, 8 times average training level show us expertise level of sales person (promoters) is good enough.

The summary of answers for questions is below.

Table 4

## Summary of Survey Responses

		Budget for brand marketing	Budget for in store marketing	Budget for sales person bonus incentive	Budget for price discount	Budget for bundle promotion	Budget for SMS marketing	Others
N	Valid	84	84	84	83	83	84	81
	Missing	0	0	0	1	1	0	3
Mean		28,25	11,68	22,63	13,05	8,94	6,12	7,43
Median		30	10	20	10	10	5	5
Std. Deviation		15,007	6,918	13,29	7,86	5,621	6,829	11,278
Skewness		0,104	0,701	1,304	1,418	0,435	3,411	3,268
Std. Error of Skewness		0,263	0,263	0,263	0,264	0,264	0,263	0,267
Minimum		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maximum		60	30	80	50	25	50	70
Percentiles	10	10	5	10	5	0	0	0
	90	50	20	40	20	18	10	19

Table 5

## Friedman Test for Survey Answers

Ranks	Mean Rank
Budget for brand marketing	5,04
Budget for in store marketing	3,24
Budget for sales person bonus incentive	4,55
Budget for price discount	3,46
Budget for bundle promotion	2,69
Budget for SMS marketing	2,01

Table 6

## Test Statistics

N	83
Chi-Square	179,01
Df	5
Asymp. Sig.	0

Source: Friedman Test

We have compared the two main investments based on sales person preference, brand marketing and sales person bonus incentive as below with T test. The reason of doing this test is to understand whether preference of brand marketing and bonus incentive has a significant difference or not.

Table 7

## T-Test for Brand Marketing and Sales Person Bonus Incentive Preference in Survey

## Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Budget for brand marketing	28,25	84	15,007	1,637
	Budget for sales person bonus incentive	22,63	84	13,29	1,45

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Budget for brand marketing & Budget for sales person bonus incentive	84	-0,394	0

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Pair 1	Budget for brand marketing - Budget for sales person bonus incentive	5,62	23,639	2,579	0,489	10,75	2,18	83	0,032

According to paired test results, we may say that there is a significant difference between brand marketing and sales person bonus incentive budget allocation.

**Conclusions from this study and prospects for further developments in this area.** An aggressive competition has been occurred in the Turkish smartphone market with the entrance of global brands. There is a special position of the sales person in this market because of the building a good relationship with customers and the explanation need of the smart phones. We have questioned, if they were given spending authority based on their personal decision, how they allocate the budget for the given promotions;

Budgets for brand marketing: 28%, sales person bonus incentive: 22%, for price discount: 13%, for in store marketing: 11%, bundle promotion: 9%, others: 7%, for SMS marketing: 6%

According to results %28 budget preference is for brand marketing and %22 is for sales person bonus incentive is selected by sales person. Sales person has been effected by push and pull strategies. Survey results showed us that, brand marketing communication is critically important to these pull strategy that effects sales person performance.

After the sales person bonus incentive, respectively price discount and in store marketing activities are preferred by sales person for budget allocation. The lower budget has been allocated for SMS marketing which only %6 of total budget has been allocated.

According to survey result, we may say that price discount and in store marketing has a mid effect to sales performance comparing to sales person bonus incentive and brand marketing investment.

If we sum up with brand marketing with in store marketing due to both of them create pull effect marketing for customer, total may consider 28+11: %39 which pointed as very important. The light of that result (%39) and approach, sales persons mostly prefer pull effect to make easy sales comparing to sales person bonus incentive which needs their additional effort. If the marketing were constant, they would have mostly preferred sales person bonus incentive to make push strategy as expected. We can also say sales person bonus incentive may be used for new growing brands which has limited budget to make expensive brand marketing investment.

According to the results, general applications to improve sales people's performance are brand marketing (pull effect and easiness of sale) and sales person bonus incentives (push effect, additional income for sales person). We actually thought that the bonus incentives would be more effective in this type of situations, but it turned out that would be less effective than pull marketing in our study Due to brand marketing investment may need high budget and long time of period, companies may start to allocate small amounts but should have continued & sustainable brand marketing investment. But at the same time they should allocate the budget for sales person bonus incentive to improve sales person's sales performance.

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