



The Influence of Intrusive Marketing on Marketing Flexibility in the Airline Industry: An Employee Perspective

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ABSTRACT

In the competitive airline industry, intrusive marketing strategies such as behavioral tracking, targeted promotions, and stealth marketing are increasingly used to enhance marketing flexibility. While these tactics allow airlines to adapt quickly to market changes, they also raise ethical concerns and consumer resistance. This study examines the relationship between intrusive marketing and marketing flexibility using an online questionnaire targeting airline employees. The results indicate a statistically significant positive relationship, suggesting that intrusive marketing enhances flexibility. However, its impact depends on consumer trust, ethical considerations, and regulatory constraints. Findings highlight the dual nature of intrusive marketing—it improves responsiveness but may undermine brand credibility if overused. Managers should balance personalization with transparency to maintain engagement without alienating consumers.

KEYWORDS

Intrusive Marketing, Marketing Flexibility, Airline Industry, Consumer Trust, AI-driven Marketing.

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تأثير التسويق التّدخلّي على المرونة التسويقية في صناعة الطيران: منظور وظيفي

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الملخص

تُستخدم استراتيجيات التسويق التّدخلّي في قطاع الطيران التنافسي، مثل التّتبّع السلوكي، والعروض الترويجية الموجهة، والتسويق الخفي، بشكل متزايد لتعزيز مرونة التسويق. وبينما تُمكن هذه الأساليب شركات الطيران من التكيف بسرعة مع تغيرات السوق، إلا أنها تُثير أيضاً مخاوف أخلاقية ومقاومة من جانب المستهلكين. تبحث هذه الدراسة العلاقة بين التسويق التّدخلّي ومرونة التسويق باستخدام استبيان إلكتروني يستهدف موظفي شركات الطيران. تشير النتائج إلى وجود علاقة إيجابية ذات دلالة إحصائية، مما يُشير إلى أن التسويق التّدخلّي يُعزز المرونة. ومع ذلك، يعتمد تأثيره على ثقة المستهلك، والاعتبارات الأخلاقية، والقيود التنظيمية. تُسلط النتائج الضوء على الطبيعة المزدوجة للتسويق التّدخلّي، فهو يُحسن الاستجابة، ولكنه قد يُقوّض مصداقية العلامة التجارية في حال الإفراط في استخدامه. ينبغي على المديرين الموازنة بين التخصيص والشفافية للحفاظ على التفاعل دون تنفير المستهلكين.

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الكلمات الدالة

التسويق التّدخلّي، مرونة التسويق، قطاع الطيران، ثقة المستهلك، التسويق المُعتمد على الذكاء الاصطناعي.

1. Introduction

In the highly competitive airline industry, marketing strategies play a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions (Wang & Zhang, 2024). As traditional advertising becomes less effective due to media saturation, airlines increasingly adopt more aggressive and intrusive marketing techniques to capture consumer attention (Ahmed & El-Baz, 2023). Intrusive marketing encompasses various approaches, such as unsolicited digital advertisements, stealth marketing, and direct promotional campaigns, which often blur the line between consumer engagement and manipulation (Goodman, 2006). While these tactics can enhance brand awareness and engagement in the short term, they also raise concerns regarding consumer resistance, ethical implications, and regulatory challenges (Belanche, 2019).

One of the main challenges facing airlines is achieving marketing flexibility—referring to their capacity to adjust marketing strategies in response to shifting consumer preferences and dynamic market conditions (Prange & Bruyaka, 2016). Research indicates that intrusive marketing strategies can either enhance or hinder marketing flexibility, depending on their implementation (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004). On the one hand, aggressive digital marketing tactics allow airlines to respond swiftly to competitive pressures and market trends (El-Remedy & Ismail, 2023). On the other hand, excessive intrusion can breed distrust among consumers, undermining brand credibility and limiting the effectiveness of future marketing efforts (Han & Bai, 2022).

The ongoing shift toward digital platforms demands that airlines carefully manage their marketing strategies to ensure effectiveness and build consumer trust. The integration of data-driven personalization allows airlines to target customers with tailored advertisements. However, excessive personalization may be perceived as intrusive, leading to consumer resistance (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Finding the right balance between effective engagement and non-intrusive marketing is essential for fostering long-term brand loyalty and strategic adaptability (Camilleri, 2018).

This study aims to investigate the influence of intrusive marketing strategies on marketing flexibility in airlines from the perspective of employees. The study examines this relationship to explore how intrusive marketing can contribute to achieving strategic flexibility, as well as the challenges associated with its implementation. Therefore, this research contributes to the broader discourse on marketing effectiveness in the airline industry.

The findings provide valuable implications for marketing managers seeking to optimize their strategies in an increasingly competitive and consumer-driven market.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Intrusive Marketing

Intrusive marketing has become a prominent strategy in the airlines industry, characterized by aggressive and often unsolicited promotional tactics aimed at capturing consumer attention (Dwivedi et al., 2021). This marketing approach seeks to bypass consumer resistance through unconventional promotional techniques that influence purchasing decisions, sometimes without consumers being fully aware of the persuasive intent behind these tactics (El-Reemody, & Ismail, 2023). The

evolution of intrusive marketing can be attributed to the growing saturation of traditional advertising channels and the increasing difficulty in capturing consumer engagement. As Worldmetrics (2024) suggests, modern consumers are exposed to thousands of marketing messages daily, leading to heightened skepticism toward direct advertising efforts, which has pushed companies to adopt more subtle yet intrusive strategies.

Stealth marketing represents one of the most prevalent forms of intrusive marketing, leveraging covert promotional techniques to subtly influence consumer behavior. Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) identified several stealth marketing methods, including celebrity endorsements, brand pushers, bait-and-tease strategies, and viral marketing, all designed to create organic engagement without overtly appearing as advertisements. Roy and Chattopadhyay (2010) describe stealth marketing as a method that enters markets "in a sneaky, secretive, or unnoticeable way," effectively blending marketing messages into everyday consumer experiences. Similarly, Gigi & Jahnavi (2020) highlights the ethical implications of such practices, arguing that stealth marketing deliberately obscures the true nature of promotional content, making it difficult for consumers to distinguish between genuine recommendations and paid endorsements. However, research demonstrates marketing's inherent ethics substantially impact these relationship assets. As one of the most environmentally exposed operations, marketing falls prey to unethical pressures that erode trust if left unaddressed (Hassan et al., 2024).

The rise of digital marketing has further intensified the use of intrusive marketing techniques, particularly through personalized advertising, retargeting, and unsolicited digital campaigns. El-Remedy and Ismail (2023) point out that digital intrusion has become a major concern in the airlines industry, where companies track consumer behavior online to deliver highly targeted advertisements, sometimes without explicit consent. Han and Bai (2022) argue that while personalized marketing can enhance consumer engagement, excessive targeting often leads to consumer resistance, as individuals become wary of how their data is being used for commercial purposes. Kotler & Keller (2016) further emphasize that intrusive digital marketing, such as pop-up advertisements and excessive email promotions, can result in negative consumer perceptions, ultimately diminishing brand trust and marketing effectiveness. Despite its effectiveness in generating immediate engagement, intrusive marketing carries significant risks, particularly regarding consumer trust and brand reputation. Martin and Smith (2008) found that aggressive marketing tactics often lead to skepticism, reducing consumer confidence in brand messaging and increasing the likelihood of negative word-of-mouth. Ethical concerns surrounding intrusive marketing further complicate its application, as Goodman (2006) notes that such tactics may infringe upon consumer autonomy, leading to concerns about manipulation and deception. Hani and Fadil (2019) highlight the lack of clear regulatory guidelines governing intrusive marketing practices, which raises questions about the ethical responsibilities of companies that employ these tactics.

The airline industry frequently utilizes intrusive marketing techniques to maintain a competitive edge, often employing exaggerated promotional strategies to attract customer attention. Esther and Rabiyyathul (2020), found that airlines commonly use brand promoters, celebrity endorsements, and viral marketing techniques to enhance

brand visibility and influence consumer decisions. While these tactics can be effective in the short term, they must be carefully managed to prevent potential consumer negative repercussions. Excessive reliance on intrusive marketing may lead to diminished customer loyalty, as consumers become increasingly resistant to aggressive advertising methods and seek brands that prioritize transparency and authenticity (Ismail, 2024).

Intrusive marketing remains a powerful yet controversial strategy within the airline industry. While it offers companies a mean to capture consumer attention and drive engagement, its aggressive nature raises ethical concerns and risks alienating customers who perceive such tactics as manipulative. The long-term sustainability of intrusive marketing depends on its careful implementation, ensuring that promotional efforts remain engaging without undermining consumer trust. Future research should explore the evolving role of intrusive marketing in the digital era, examining how airlines can balance aggressive marketing tactics with consumer expectations for transparency and ethical advertising practices.

2.2 Marketing Flexibility

Marketing flexibility is a crucial capability that enables organizations to adapt to dynamic market conditions and evolving consumer demands. It reflects a firm's ability to respond proactively to external shifts by reallocating resources efficiently and adjusting strategic priorities in real-time (Shahhoseini & Ramayana, 2015). This adaptability is especially vital in industries characterized by rapid technological advancements and fluctuating consumer preferences, such as the airline sector.

Awwad (2009) defined marketing flexibility as an organization's ability to analyze external environmental changes and reallocate resources accordingly to maintain customer satisfaction and market relevance. This flexibility allows firms to introduce new products in a timely manner, form strategic alliances, and modify existing offerings based on shifting market trends. Research by Bock et al. (2018) emphasized that marketing flexibility provides firms with a competitive advantage by enabling them to remain proactive in product and market development, which is particularly crucial in industries where consumer preferences are constantly evolving.

The concept of marketing flexibility has been closely associated with marketing ambidexterity, which integrates both exploration (seeking new market opportunities and innovations) and exploitation (leveraging existing resources for maximum efficiency) (Josephson et al., 2015; Panda & Rath, 2016). Firms that balance these two strategies are more likely to sustain long-term competitive advantages by continuously innovating while optimizing existing operations. Marketing flexibility plays a pivotal role in this balance by enabling firms to adapt their strategies dynamically without losing operational efficiency.

Al-Kahtani (2018) further highlighted that marketing flexibility is essential in industries where businesses must cater to diverse customer segments across multiple markets. It allows companies to swiftly respond to shifts in consumer preferences, adapt product features to maintain relevance, and seize emerging opportunities before competitors. This is particularly relevant for airlines, where external factors such as economic fluctuations, regulatory changes, and technological disruptions necessitate continuous strategic adjustments.

In the airline industry, marketing flexibility manifests in several ways, including adaptive pricing models, personalized promotions, and geo-targeted advertisements that dynamically adjust based on consumer behavior (El-Remedy & Ismail, 2023). Airlines that incorporate real-time digital engagement techniques, such as predictive analytics and AI-driven marketing, can swiftly modify their strategies, ensuring continued relevance in a volatile market. Additionally, airlines that adopt flexible marketing approaches are better positioned to respond to crises—such as fluctuating fuel prices, regulatory constraints, or global disruptions—by adjusting pricing strategies, service offerings, and digital engagement tactics (Prange & Schlegelmilch, 2009).

2.3 The role of intrusive marketing in Marketing Flexibility

Research has shown that intrusive marketing strategies contribute to both opportunity exploration and opportunity exploitation, two fundamental components of marketing ambidexterity (Ho & Lu, 2015). Opportunity exploration involves identifying and leveraging new market trends, consumer preferences, and technological advancements, while opportunity exploitation focuses on refining existing marketing strategies based on accumulated knowledge and consumer behavior (Josephson et al., 2015). Airlines, for example, employ intrusive marketing techniques such as behavioral retargeting, digital tracking, and personalized promotions to explore emerging consumer trends while optimizing current engagement strategies (Prange & Schlegelmilch, 2009).

The digital transformation of marketing has further intensified the impact of intrusive marketing on marketing flexibility. Digital stealth marketing, including AI-driven content recommendations and geo-targeted advertisements, enables firms to adjust their marketing strategies in real time based on consumer interactions (Bardhan & Kroll, 2007). Airlines leverage predictive analytics to tailor marketing messages, ensuring that promotional efforts align with individual consumer preferences, thereby enhancing marketing adaptability (Ge & Gretzel, 2022).

Moreover, intrusive marketing allows firms to mitigate risks associated with traditional advertising campaigns. By subtly integrating promotional content into consumer experiences, airlines can test new strategies without the financial burden of large-scale advertising campaigns (Akyol & Tokatli, 2019). This approach ensures that marketing messages remain adaptable to changing consumer expectations while minimizing potential negative backlash from overt promotional tactics (Rotfeld, 2008).

Despite its advantages, intrusive marketing must be carefully managed to avoid consumer resistance. Research suggests that overly aggressive marketing techniques can lead to decreased consumer trust, necessitating a balance between strategic intrusion and consumer acceptance (Goodman, 2006). Companies that successfully integrate intrusive marketing into their broader marketing flexibility strategies are more likely to sustain a competitive advantage in rapidly evolving markets (Prange & Bruyaka, 2016).

Intrusive marketing plays a critical role in shaping marketing flexibility, particularly in dynamic and competitive industries such as the airlines. The ability of firms to rapidly adapt their marketing strategies in response to consumer behavior and market shifts is essential for maintaining a competitive edge. Stealth marketing, a subset of

intrusive marketing, has been identified as a key driver of marketing flexibility due to its ability to subtly influence consumer decisions while allowing firms to adjust their promotional tactics in real time (Roy & Chattopadhyay, 2010). In light of this discussion, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H1: There is a significant relationship between Intrusion and Marketing flexibility.

Generally, intrusive marketing enhances marketing flexibility by enabling firms to explore new market opportunities while refining existing engagement strategies. Its role in opportunity exploration, risk mitigation, and digital adaptability makes it a crucial component of modern marketing strategies in industries like aviation. However, firms must implement these strategies responsibly to maintain consumer trust while ensuring long-term effectiveness. Figure (1) indicate the theoretical framework of the study.

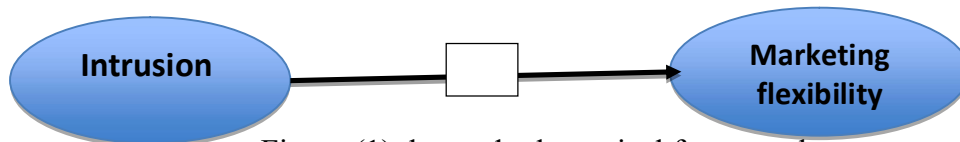


Figure (1) the study theoretical framework

3.Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive analytical approach to examine the impact of intrusive marketing strategies on marketing flexibility in airlines. This method allows for an in-depth exploration of relationships between variables (Khalifa et al., 2025) and provides insights into how airlines adjust their marketing strategies in response to evolving market dynamics. To achieve this, a questionnaire was directed to airline employees to gather their perspectives on the effects of aggressive marketing tactics on marketing flexibility. Given the increasing reliance on such strategies in the airline industry, understanding their influence on flexibility is essential for strategic decision-making.

Moreover, intrusive marketing allows firms to mitigate risks associated with traditional advertising campaigns. By subtly integrating promotional content into consumer experiences, airlines can test new strategies without the financial burden of large-scale advertising campaigns (Akyol & Tokatli, 2019). This approach ensures that marketing messages remain adaptable to changing consumer expectations while minimizing potential negative backlash from overt promotional tactics (Rotfeld, 2008). The study measured **intrusion** using the scale developed by Atae and Akelaby (2016), which provides a structured framework for assessing consumer perceptions of intrusive marketing tactics. Similarly, **marketing flexibility** was evaluated based on the scale proposed by Saleh et al. (2023), ensuring a reliable assessment of an airline's ability to adapt its marketing strategies in response to dynamic market conditions. These validated measurement tools enhance the study's credibility by providing a standardized approach to analyzing the relationship between intrusive marketing and marketing flexibility.

Airlines were chosen as a sample for this research because they deal daily with marketing offers and promotions for their services and customers from all over the

world more than any other sector (Mohamed & Al-Azab, 2021). The study targeted employees in the Egyptian airline industry, focusing on individuals engaged in marketing activities and strategic planning. Due to difficulties in obtaining a complete database of airline employees, a convenience sampling method was used, which allowed for the efficient collection of data from accessible participants. To determine the appropriate sample size, Cochran's (1977) formula for unknown populations was applied, suggesting a minimum of 385 responses for statistical validity. To mitigate potential non-responses, 481 questionnaires were distributed as clarified in table (1), yielding 382 valid responses, achieving a 79.4% response rate, which is considered acceptable in marketing research.

Table (1) Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaire Forms

Total Distributed	Returned	Excluded	Valid Responses Used	Response Rate
481	396	14	382	79.4%

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Demographic Information

Table (2) provides a detailed breakdown of the demographic characteristics of the study participants, offering valuable insights into the diversity of the sample and its representativeness of the target population. The collected data spans several categories, including gender, age, educational level, marital status, occupation, and years of experience.

Table (2) Demographic Information

Demographic and Travel Information	Freq.	%	Demographic and Travel Information	Freq.	%
Gender			Marital status		
Male	218	57.1	Single	76	19.9
Female	164	42.9	Married	211	55.2
Age			Divorced	59	15.4
Less 25 years	5	1.3	Widowed	36	9.4
25- less than 35 years	48	12.6	Occupation		
35- less than 45 years	153	40.1	Senior manager	50	13.1
45-less than 55	97	25.4	Assistant manager	116	30.4
55 and over	79	20.7	Customer service	100	26.2
Education level			Other	116	30.4
High school	35	9.2	Years of Experience		
Bachelor's degree	234	61.3	Less than 1 year	5	1.3
Master's degree	51	13.4	1-3 years	17	4.5
Doctoral degree	26	6.8	4-7 years	44	11.5
Others (e.g Diploma)	36	9.4	8-10 years	126	33.0
			more than 10 years	190	49.7

The gender distribution shows that 57.1% of participants are male, while 42.9% are female, ensuring a balanced representation. The age distribution highlights that the 35-44 years group is the largest (40.1%), followed by 20.7% aged 55 and over,

contributing experienced perspectives. However, only 1.3% are under 25, limiting insights from younger individuals.

In terms of education, the majority hold a Bachelor's degree (61.3%), while 13.4% have a Master's degree, and 6.8% hold a Doctorate, indicating a well-educated sample. Additionally, 9.4% come from other educational backgrounds, adding diversity. Regarding marital status, 55.2% are married, 19.9% are single, while 15.4% are divorced, and 9.4% are widowed, ensuring perspectives from different life situations.

The occupational distribution shows assistant managers and other positions each make up 30.4%, while customer service employees account for 26.2%, and Senior Managers represent 13.1%. Years of experience vary, with 49.7% having more than 10 years, and 33% between 8-10 years, indicating a highly experienced sample. However, only 1.3% have less than one year of experience.

4.2 Validity and reliability

The reliability analysis was conducted to make sure that there are an internal validity and consistency for the items used for each variable (Mohamed and Al-Azab, 2017; Al-Azab et al., 2024). The results of the validity and reliability assessments for Intrusive and Marketing flexibility are summarized in Table (3). The findings suggest that the Intrusive Marketing and marketing flexibility constructs exhibit strong validity and reliability, supporting the use of this measurement model in testing the study's hypotheses. An alpha of more than 0.7 would indicate that the items are homogeneous and measuring the same constant (Al-Azab & Abulebda, 2023; Al-Azab & Zaki, 2024).

Table (3) Validity and reliability for Intrusive Marketing and Marketing Flexibility

Items	Loading	Full collinearity VIF	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Intrusion			0.705	0.895	0.572
Intrusion1	0.709	1.25			
Intrusion 2	0.803	1.31			
Intrusion 3	0.693	1.29			
Intrusion 4	0.792	1.30			
Intrusion 5	0.721	1.28			
Intrusion 6	0.810	1.34			
Intrusion 7	0.789	1.26			
Intrusion 8	0.836	1.29			
Marketing Flexibility			0.703	0.822	0.526
Flexibility 1	0.730	2.366			
Flexibility 2	0.710	2.329			
Flexibility 3	0.760	2.501			

Items	Loading	Full collinearity VIF	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Flexibility 4	0.790	2.287			
Flexibility 5	0.740	2.456			
Flexibility 6	0.710	2.342			
Flexibility 7	0.730	2.281			
Flexibility 8	0.680	2.198			

The item loadings for each dimension were analyzed to ensure that each item effectively contributed to its respective construct. An acceptable threshold for item loadings is typically above 0.70, indicating significant contributions to the construct (Hair et al., 2019). To identify any potential multicollinearity among the items, Full Collinearity Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were calculated. As a general guideline, VIF values exceeding 5 suggest multicollinearity concerns; however, in this analysis, all VIF values remained below this threshold, confirming no significant multicollinearity (Kline, 2015).

Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the dimensions of the study variables to assess internal consistency, with values exceeding 0.70 considered acceptable and indicative of adequate reliability (Taber, 2018). To further ensure reliability, Composite Reliability (CR) was evaluated, with all dimensions demonstrating strong reliability as CR values exceeded the 0.70 threshold (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Lastly, to assess convergent validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used. AVE values greater than 0.50 suggest that the indicators explain sufficient variance in their respective constructs. In this study, all AVE values exceeded this threshold, confirming the convergent validity of the constructs (Hair et al., 2019).

The validity and reliability assessment for Marketing Flexibility is summarized in Table (3). The results suggest that the construct demonstrates strong validity and reliability, providing a solid foundation for further analysis of the relationships within the model.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics for Intrusion in Airline Marketing

Table (4) presents the results related to the **Intrusion** dimension of stealth marketing used by an airline, with a mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.503, suggesting that respondents perceive a moderate level of intrusion in the airline's marketing campaigns.

Table (4) Descriptive Statistics for Intrusion in Airline Marketing

No.	Items	Mean	SD	Rank
1	I have noticed that marketing campaigns by the airline often intervene inappropriately, affecting customers' decision-making process.	3.78	.767	6
2	I feel that the airline sometimes monitors customers' online	4.27	.86	2

No.	Items	Mean	SD	Rank
	behavior or booking patterns to influence their decisions without clear consent.			
3	I find it uncomfortable when marketing materials mention or compare our airline with competitor services in a way that pressures customers.	3.40	.690	7
4	The airline sometimes directs customers' attention toward competitors' products or services without their interest or consent.	3.87	.632	4
5	I feel uncomfortable when the airline uses marketing tactics that focus on competitors' products to distract or influence customers.	4.37	.741	1
6	The airline uses electronic marketing techniques, such as unsolicited emails or pop-up ads, that invade customers' privacy without prior consent.	4.15	.951	3
7	I have seen instances where the airline continues to market products to customers who have shown no interest or explicitly opted out.	3.81	.676	5
8	The airline uses indirect marketing techniques, such as targeted ads on apps or websites customers visit, which may feel intrusive to them.	3.87	.576	4
Intrusion		3.94	.503	

Mean score; low: "1.00 to 2.33, average (moderate): 2.34 to 3.66, high: 3.67 to 5.00".

Among the individual items, the most intrusive marketing practice, according to respondents, is "using marketing tactics that focus on competitors' products to distract or influence customers", which received the highest mean score (4.37). This highlights consumer discomfort with comparative marketing that directs attention toward competitors. Similarly, "monitoring customers' online behavior or booking patterns without clear consent" ranks second (4.27), reflecting strong privacy concerns. Additionally, "the use of unsolicited emails or pop-up ads" is perceived as highly intrusive (4.15), reinforcing dissatisfaction with electronic marketing techniques.

Conversely, the least intrusive marketing practice, according to the data, is "mentioning or comparing the airline with competitors in a way that pressures customers", which received the lowest mean score (3.40). This suggests that while comparative marketing is acknowledged, it is not as concerning to consumers as data tracking and direct digital intrusion.

Overall, the findings indicate that privacy-invading strategies and aggressive competitor-focused marketing are the most problematic aspects of the airline's marketing approach. The high mean scores suggest that such tactics may negatively impact customer perceptions, potentially leading to resistance or disengagement from the airline's marketing efforts.

Competitor-focused marketing are the most problematic aspects of the airline's marketing approach aligns strongly with the theoretical foundations discussed in the literature. Goodman (2006) and Han & Bai (2022) highlighted that excessive digital intrusion—such as behavioral tracking, unsolicited emails, and competitor

comparisons—can result in negative consumer reactions, erosion of trust, and ultimately resistance to marketing efforts. This supports the interpretation that while intrusive marketing enhances adaptability (as supported by Prange & Schlegelmilch, 2009), it also introduces significant risks to customer perception and long-term loyalty.

Furthermore, Kotler & Keller (2016) and Ismail (2024) stressed the need for balance between personalization and privacy. When airlines overuse invasive tactics, customers may feel manipulated or overwhelmed, resulting in disengagement. Therefore, the high mean scores reported in the intrusion dimension are consistent with the dual nature of intrusive marketing: it contributes to marketing flexibility but, if poorly implemented, undermines consumer trust a theme echoed across multiple theoretical discussions within this study.

4.3.2 Descriptive Statistics for Marketing Flexibility

Table (5) presents the results for **Marketing Flexibility**, with an overall mean score of 4.28 and a standard deviation of 0.544. This suggests that respondents generally perceive the airline to be flexible in adapting its marketing strategies, with only slight variation in responses.

Table (5) Descriptive Statistics for Marketing Flexibility

No.	Items	Mean	SD	Rank
1	The airline adjusts its marketing vision to reflect changes in market scope.	4.19	.611	5
2	The airline aims to increase its market share in various markets.	4.55	.702	1
3	The airline responds quickly to meet customer needs in terms of quantity and quality.	4.48	.751	2
4	The airline offers new promotions for its products from time to time.	4.10	.612	7
5	The airline adapts quickly to regulatory and legal changes in different markets.	4.14	.643	6
6	The airline is capable of adjusting pricing and offers in response to rapid economic shifts.	4.05	.722	8
7	The airline relies on multi-functional teams to accelerate marketing decision-making during critical times.	4.45	.791	3
8	The airline uses digital analytical tools to assess the impact of marketing adjustments in real time.	4.34	.809	4
Marketing Flexibility		4.28	.544	

Mean score; low: "1.00 to 2.33, average (moderate): 2.34 to 3.66, high: 3.67 to 5.00".

Among the individual items, the highest-rated aspect is "the airline aims to increase its market share in various markets" (4.55), indicating that market expansion is a key strategic priority. This is closely followed by "the airline responds quickly to meet customer needs in terms of quantity and quality" (4.48) and "the airline relies on multi-functional teams to accelerate marketing decision-making during critical times" (4.45), highlighting the airline's proactive approach in adjusting to operational

demands and ensuring agility in decision-making.

On the other hand, the lowest-rated item is "the airline is capable of adjusting pricing and offers in response to rapid economic shifts" (4.05), suggesting that while pricing strategies are adaptable, they may not be as dynamic as other marketing adjustments. Additionally, "the airline offers new promotions for its products from time to time" (4.10) and "the airline adapts quickly to regulatory and legal changes in different markets" (4.14) received slightly lower ratings compared to other flexibility indicators, indicating areas where improvements may be needed.

Overall, the findings suggest that the Egyptian airlines is perceived as highly flexible, particularly in terms of market expansion, customer responsiveness, and rapid decision-making. However, there may be opportunities to further enhance pricing strategies and promotional adaptability to ensure greater resilience in fluctuating economic conditions.

Testing the Study Hypothesis

Table (6) presents the results of testing the study hypothesis, which examine the relationship between Intrusive Marketing and Marketing Flexibility. According to the table, the research hypothesis (H1) suggests a statistically significant relationship between Intrusive Marketing and Marketing Flexibility. The path coefficient for this relationship is 0.130, indicating a positive but relatively limited effect.

Table (6) Testing Study Hypothesis

	Hypothesis	Path coefficient	(P) value	Result
H1	There is a statistically significant relationship between Intrusion and Marketing flexibility.	0.130	0.003	Supported

The (P) value for this relationship is 0.003, which is below the commonly accepted significance levels (0.05 or 0.01), confirming the statistical significance of the relationship between the two variables. As a result, hypothesis H1 is supported, suggesting that an increase in Intrusive Marketing has a positive impact on Marketing Flexibility, though the strength of the effect is not particularly strong.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that intrusive marketing strategies contribute to marketing flexibility in the airline industry, with a statistically significant positive relationship between the two constructs (path coefficient: 0.130, p-value: 0.003). This suggests that airlines employing intrusive marketing tactics—such as behavioral retargeting, personalized advertising, and digital tracking—can adapt more effectively to market fluctuations and consumer behavior shifts. However, the moderate effect size indicates that while intrusive marketing enhances adaptability, its effectiveness depends on various contextual factors, including consumer perceptions, ethical considerations, and regulatory constraints.

These results align with Kaikati and Kaikati (2004) and Roy and Chattopadhyay (2010), who argue that stealth marketing techniques and targeted promotions allow companies to adjust their strategies dynamically in response to market trends. The study supports the notion that data-driven marketing enhances decision-making

agility, reinforcing the importance of real-time analytics in modern airline marketing (El-Remedy & Ismail, 2023).

However, this study also highlights potential drawbacks of intrusive marketing, as noted by Goodman (2006), who warns that excessive marketing intrusion may erode consumer trust. Similarly, Han and Bai (2022) caution that while personalized digital marketing enhances engagement, it may also provoke consumer resistance when perceived as overly invasive. The findings suggest that airlines must carefully balance personalization with privacy considerations, as excessive intrusion could trigger negative consumer reactions, ultimately reducing long-term brand loyalty.

The dual impact of intrusive marketing on flexibility is further supported by El-Sayed & El-Baz (2023), who argue that AI-driven personalized marketing can be both effective and disruptive. The study findings reinforce this argument, showing that while AI-powered targeting enhances real-time adaptability, excessive tracking can create a sense of manipulation among consumers. This highlights the importance of calibrating the level of marketing intrusion to ensure it remains relevant and engaging rather than invasive.

From a strategic standpoint, Prange and Schlegelmilch (2009) emphasize that marketing flexibility is essential for firms operating in competitive industries, as it allows businesses to adjust their promotional strategies, pricing models, and customer engagement efforts dynamically (Marzouk, 2022). This study confirms that intrusive marketing plays a vital role in fostering this adaptability, particularly in airline marketing campaigns that rely on continuous consumer engagement.

Moreover, the study aligns with El-Sayed and El-Baz (2023), who found that celebrity endorsements, viral marketing, and brand promoters enhance brand visibility. However, the results suggest that such tactics should be part of a broader strategic approach rather than being used in isolation. Over-reliance on intrusive marketing may lead to advertising fatigue and consumer distrust, ultimately limiting its effectiveness.

The long-term sustainability of intrusive marketing remains a key concern, as emphasized by Martin and Smith (2008), who caution that aggressive marketing tactics can undermine brand credibility over time. Similarly, Ismail (2024) highlights that excessive reliance on intrusive strategies can weaken customer loyalty, as modern consumers seek transparency and authenticity in brand communications. The findings suggest that while intrusive marketing can enhance short-term flexibility, its long-term success depends on ensuring consumer trust and ethical marketing practices.

Finally, this study echoes the concerns of Hani and Fadil (2019) regarding the lack of regulatory clarity surrounding intrusive marketing. Given the evolving landscape of consumer privacy laws (e.g., GDPR, CCPA), the future effectiveness of intrusive marketing strategies may be constrained by legal limitations and shifting consumer expectations. Future research should investigate how regulatory changes influence the long-term role of intrusive marketing in maintaining flexibility within the airline industry.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the theoretical discourse on marketing flexibility by highlighting the paradoxical nature of intrusive marketing. On one hand, intrusive

marketing fosters rapid adaptation by leveraging real-time consumer insights, predictive analytics, and AI-driven targeting (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004; Roy & Chattopadhyay, 2010). On the other hand, excessive reliance on such tactics may backfire, leading to consumer resistance and ethical concerns (Goodman, 2006; El-Sayed & El-Baz, 2023). This duality challenges traditional perspectives on marketing adaptability, suggesting that flexibility should not be assessed solely in terms of responsiveness but also in terms of consumer perception management.

The findings support existing literature on marketing ambidexterity, which emphasizes the importance of opportunity exploration (seeking new market strategies) and exploitation (refining existing engagement efforts) (Josephson et al., 2015; Prange & Schlegelmilch, 2009). Airlines using behavioral tracking, dynamic pricing, and geo-targeted advertising can respond effectively to emerging consumer trends while optimizing their existing marketing frameworks. However, this study highlights that intrusiveness alone does not guarantee adaptability—instead, it must be strategically integrated within a broader, consumer-focused marketing model.

This study also reinforces the evolving role of digital transformation in marketing strategy, particularly the integration of AI-powered consumer insights (Bardhan & Kroll, 2007). While digital stealth marketing and predictive analytics enhance marketing flexibility, they also introduce new ethical challenges related to privacy, data security, and consumer autonomy. The results suggest that future research should explore how ethical considerations mediate the effectiveness of intrusive marketing in fostering long-term consumer engagement.

Additionally, the study extends previous research on regulatory influences on marketing strategies (Hani & Fadil, 2019). Given the tightening of privacy laws and data protection regulations, firms may need to rethink their reliance on intrusive tactics. Future theoretical models should integrate regulatory constraints as a moderating factor, examining how compliance with data protection frameworks affects marketing flexibility.

Furthermore, this study suggests that marketing flexibility is not merely about agility but also about sustainability. While prior research has focused on the ability to respond quickly to market shifts, this study highlights that a firm's long-term marketing adaptability depends on consumer acceptance. This contributes to the broader literature on brand trust and transparency, reinforcing the argument that marketing flexibility must be both responsive and ethically sustainable.

5.2 Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, the findings offer valuable insights for airline marketing executives seeking to balance consumer engagement with strategic adaptability. The results suggest that intrusive marketing techniques can serve as an agile response mechanism to market fluctuations, competitive pressures, and evolving consumer behaviors. However, their effectiveness hinges on how well they are implemented and perceived by consumers.

To optimize intrusive marketing without undermining brand credibility, airline marketers should consider the following strategic recommendations:

- **Adopt a Moderated Approach to Intrusiveness:** Rather than deploying aggressive retargeting or excessive push notifications, airlines should prioritize

context-aware engagement. AI-driven content personalization should be subtle yet relevant, avoiding marketing fatigue.

- **Leverage Real-Time Consumer Insights for Dynamic Adjustments:** Airlines should invest in predictive analytics to gauge consumer sentiment shifts and adjust intrusive tactics accordingly. For instance, rather than relying solely on retargeting ads, companies can integrate adaptive email marketing that responds to behavioral cues.
- **Enhance Consumer Transparency and Trust:** The study reaffirms that privacy concerns remain a critical barrier to the success of intrusive marketing. Airlines must clearly communicate their data collection practices and offer opt-in personalization features to mitigate consumer discomfort (Kim & McGill, 2018).
- **Refine Crisis Response Strategies Using Marketing Flexibility:** Given the volatility of the airline industry, firms should harness intrusive marketing not only for revenue generation but also for crisis communication. For example, during economic downturns or operational disruptions, airlines can use adaptive pricing models and personalized outreach campaigns to maintain consumer engagement.
- **Invest in Multichannel Synergies to Reduce Perceived Intrusion:** By integrating omnichannel marketing, airlines can enhance message consistency across platforms. Instead of deploying isolated intrusive tactics (e.g., repetitive retargeting ads), firms can synchronize their promotional efforts across email, social media, and in-app notifications to create a seamless user experience.

The overarching takeaway is that intrusive marketing can be an asset rather than a liability if it is contextually adaptive, ethically grounded, and consumer-centric. Airlines must not only embrace technological advancements but also cultivate a long-term trust-based relationship with their customer base.

5.3 Future Research

This study has certain limitations that should be considered. First, it primarily focuses on airline employees involved in marketing, strategic planning, and customer engagement, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other sectors. Additionally, while the study employs a structured questionnaire to assess intrusive marketing and marketing flexibility, self-reported data may be subject to bias. Future research could incorporate qualitative methods or longitudinal studies to provide deeper insights.

As digital marketing evolves, consumer attitudes toward intrusive marketing may shift based on privacy awareness, regulatory changes, and expectations for personalized yet non-invasive engagement. Longitudinal research tracking these changes can provide insights into the sustainability of intrusive marketing and help businesses refine their strategies to balance effectiveness with ethical considerations.

Future studies should explore the intersection of AI, neuromarketing, and predictive behavioral analysis to optimize intrusive yet engaging advertising. AI-powered neuromarketing can help decode consumer cognitive responses, allowing businesses to craft highly targeted yet non-disruptive marketing strategies. Machine learning algorithms can further analyze real-time consumer sentiment, ensuring optimal engagement without triggering resistance.

This study confirms that intrusive marketing enhances marketing flexibility, but its success depends on ethical implementation, consumer trust, and regulatory foresight. As the airline industry navigates digital disruption, future research should examine how emerging technologies and evolving consumer expectations will shape the future of marketing intrusiveness. Achieving true marketing flexibility requires both adaptability and ethical responsibility.

Future research should also, explore the ethical dimensions of intrusive marketing in marketing flexibility, particularly in relation to evolving consumer privacy concerns and regulatory frameworks.

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