

Marketing Engineering: The Evaluation of Integrated Marketing Communications towards the Growth of Air New Zealand

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Abstract

This paper evaluates the effectiveness of market segmentation, evoked set and enhance reputation established through Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) an essential component Marketing Engineering (ME) that has been determining Air New Zealand's growth. The paper explores the implementation and effect of the IMC towards Air New Zealand. Thus, three research questions demanded opinions, ideas and suggestions around the subject area. The qualitative data approach employed allowed researchers to interview 45 participants using convenience and quota sampling techniques. The results findings indicate that IMC has been essential and shall continue to be a necessary tool for Air New Zealand growth. Air New Zealand does not have to invest significantly on IMC as their current marketing communication activities are sufficient to sustain its growth and reputation. However, IMC has not been the primary reason for travellers to choose Air New Zealand services. IMC has the full potential to act as a practical engineering management tool in determining future Air New Zealand's growth.

Keywords: *Integrated Marketing Communications, Marketing Engineering, Air New Zealand*

1. Introduction

Integrated Marketing Communications or known as IMC is the strategic methods applied generally by business owners in communicating a particular brand via various marketing tools such as newspapers, televisions, radios, the Internet and (or) others. Similarly, IMC defined as brand information of a particular product or service on a platform that has been designed effectively and consistently over a period that can be easily obtained by relevant customers (American Marketing Association, 2018). IMC is an essential business concept that assists firms in understanding as well as meeting their consumers' wants and needs. IMC gives the best options to firms not in promoting what they could offer instead promoting the

needs and wants of the consumers (Schultz, et al., 1993). IMC is not considered as an art that uses traditional marketing concepts but seen as a science that aims to solve scientific problems. Thus, IMC is a critical element of marketing engineering (ME) that encourages marketers to use concepts to collect and analyses data constructively to design better marketing plans and decisions (Lilien, Rangaswamy, & Bruyn, 2013). Thus, ME is defined as the approach taken by individuals especially marketers in harnessing data, information, knowledge and wisdom through technology or process-driven model towards achieving effective and efficient business as well as operations decision making.

As a result, IMC that is developed also enhances corporate personality through effective ME and communication relationship between companies and other relevant stakeholders. The corporate identity and corporate image are two essential strategic tools in shaping the effectiveness of the corporate personality. Corporate identity has typically referred to preference taken by business organisations in communicating, sharing and identifying themselves to their respective market or audiences. Meanwhile, the corporate image is the outcome or the reality of the marketplace perception towards business organisations. So, efficiency in IMC through the concept of ME gives business organisations including airlines the opportunity to capitalise and gain the corporate identity and image which further lead to increase in the revenue, profit and share markets (Lauska, et al., 2014).

2. Literature Review

2.1 IMC

In the 21st century, airlines are no longer considered offering luxury services. Instead, it is known as necessity service providers. Thus, due to the surplus economic condition, many airlines operators currently face numerous challenges such as stiff competition as well as a high operating cost. So, one of the common issues that most of the airlines face would be attracting potential consumers. Air New Zealand, primarily operating in New Zealand, faces even more significant challenges. New Zealand is one of the most remote countries geographically in the world. New Zealand nearest neighbours such as Australia and Fiji are approximately 3 hours away via a flight. New Zealand does have a small domestic market as the country only ranked 127 in the world concerning population with just 4.5 million people (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018). Thus, New Zealand remote location and existing small domestic market, have been placing Air New Zealand in colossal business risk. So, communication is essential towards the growth of Air New Zealand as it plays a vital role in reaching as well as extending their pool of potential consumers. Air New Zealand used various forms of communication rather than concentrating on mass media advertising. They tend to focus more on niche communications such as applying social media via Facebook, partnering with other travel agencies as well as participating in relevant international travel fairs to communicate as well as to advertise their services. Air New Zealand also uses database marketing and personalised their communications based on the needs of our customer. Stone and Jacobs (2008) defined database marketing as a direct marketing as well as the scientific approach used by organisations in communications by establishing various databases of their potential customers.

Besides attracting the potential consumer, IMC foster relationship between business organisations and existing customers as well as other relevant stakeholders. This relationship as one of the attempts taken by business organisations as their Return on Investment (ROI). ROI defined as a mechanism applied by organisations to measure the gain or return received on their investment activities. ROI are customarily analysed and indicated as ratios or percentages (Rackley, 2015). Similarly, Clow and Baack (2015) stated that successful firms tend to value IMC as an investment.

Therefore, airlines tend to execute IMC by identifying, selecting, coordinating and managing necessary communications. The integration does include not only

external stakeholders such as customers but also internal stakeholders. According to Clow & Baack (2015), the active IMC approaches not only requires coordination and integration from other departments such as Finance, Human Resource, Sales, Logistics and others to minimise the operating cost as well as enhance the revenues of the corporations.

IMC is a compelling ME concept that indicates that the firms need to reemphasise to meet their consumers' wants and needs instead of focusing on the common elements such as product, price, place and promotion. Thus, with the growth of engineering, IMC is expected to be dominant ME practice and shall be widely used by many organisations, including Air New Zealand. For instance, instead of using basic reporting and query tool, ME would encourage marketers to make decisions via analytics software. Engineering concepts such as science, mathematics, in-depth empirical evidence and extensive analysis on the innovation and processes shall be applied in all IMC practices.

2.1 Air New Zealand

Air New Zealand Limited is the national airline in New Zealand and was incorporated on 26 April 1940. Currently, this international airline has 105 fleets provides air passenger services and cargo transport around the globe. It operates in 53 cities in 16 countries. Meanwhile, it's current headquarters is based in Auckland, New Zealand and it serves approximately 15 million passengers each year. On 26th August 2018, Air New Zealand announced its second-highest profit in airline history by achieving NZD 540 million earnings before taxation for the 2018 financial year. As a result, this airline recorded an increase in its operating revenue by 7.4% to NZD 5.5 billion as well as an astonishing 14% growth in operating cash flow (Air New Zealand, 2018).

The growth of Air New Zealand fundamentally laid due to their successful ME strategies which had formed as their business backbone. During the financial year of 2018, Air New Zealand spent NZD 357 million on all sales and marketing activities (Anthony, 2018). Hence, Air New Zealand applies global ME strategies to attract consumers all around the world, which has been a significant shift from their previous localised approach. Air New Zealand uses various IMC approach by ensuring all forms of marketing communications and messages are carefully linked together. Thus, Air New Zealand uses multiple ME tools to integrate and communicate their messages. The websites, Social Media, Social Share, Multimedia, Email marketing, Print Media, Search engine, Video, Public

Relations, Blogs, Mobile are the standard tools used by Air New Zealand in promoting their services. For example, Air New Zealand spent NZD 2.5 million for their 18th Safety Video and had 20 million global views within 30 days across various IMC channels such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WeChat and Weibo. The video considered as a successful ME approach as it has effectively communicated the importance of safety as well as enhance the public perception towards Air New Zealand (Anthony, 2018).

Convincing consumers their segmented market has been their main approach over the years, particularly international consumers due to their geographical isolation. Therefore, Air New Zealand has used various ME approach to break down conventional barriers such as time difference and distance (Pearl, 2018). Meanwhile, due to small domestic markets, Air New Zealand also apply the concept of trust-based ME to instil loyalty among local consumers. As a result, Air New Zealand uses IMC in building consumer relationships by providing trustworthy and unbiased information. For instance, Air New Zealand continuously update their passengers on any flight cancellation, flight with more than 20-minutes delay via email or mobile text message. This travel alert messages also include other changes such as changes on the departure gates or flight that aims minimise the disruption of the travel plan and to build the trust of the passengers (Air New Zealand, 2018).

Therefore, recent achievement proves that Air New Zealand has used various IMC strategies to establish its success. For instance, while accepting the marketing award during the Airline Strategy Awards in London, the Air New Zealand Chief Marketing and Customer Office, Mike Tod stated Air New Zealand business activities particularly IMC have delivered the growth of Air New Zealand (Scoop Independent News, 2018). As a result, through IMC Air New Zealand enhance its reputation, engage with its selected customers and attracted many potential customers successfully. Similarly, Clow and Baack (2015), highlighted IMC is an essential tool that has the ability to assist organisations in various manners including through establishing successful market segmentation, evoked set and reputation.

2.2 Effective Market Segmentation

IMC is the most appropriate ME tool in impacting the consumers' behaviours as well as segmentation differently. Market segmentation is a common ME strategy applied by organisations by dividing the market into various segments or divisions according to their preferences (Lilien & Rangaswamy, 2005). The purpose for organisations

segmenting or partitioning their market is to address the differences between their existing and potential customers' needs and wants. The differences are generally reflected based on their gender, income, age, time, place, perception, influences of Medias or friends, the information they have gathered as well as other factors. Thus, there are many approaches or methods for segmenting the consumer market. The typical consumer market segmentation or market divisions are customarily known as geographic, demographic, behavioural and psychographic (Kotler, et al., 2010). Marketers who analyse as well as adjust and select the appropriate content and channel towards a different group of consumers tend to be successful (Hun & Yazdanifard, 2014). Consumers, particularly from different backgrounds, generally react based on the benefits, cost or both. Based on the consumers' reactions, marketers tend to analyse scientifically and create appeal accordingly especially within the appropriate IMC channels.

The standard market segmentation classification usually is gender, age, income and ethnicity (Clow & Baack, 2015). However, this type of segmentation is very much reflected based on various factors including cultural factors. Culture generally influenced by multiple variables such as visible and invisible components (Daft, 2003). Visible elements are language, dress code and others that are easily seen. Meanwhile, invisible components are a belief, attitude, and expectations including the trust that cannot be easily illustrated. Thus, despite identical products or services being offered to the similar group of consumers into the market, it can be seen that visible and invisible cultural factors play a dominant role towards customer acceptance and behaviour which further influences market segmentation. Over the years, Air New Zealand has successfully corrected several misconceptions and have established trust among its consumers. One of the common misconceptions among international travellers in the North and South America has been the long distance to New Zealand as well as its long hauls duration flights. Thus, Air New Zealand communication strategy has successfully reminded these travellers that Air New Zealand emphasise on night-time flight which could be only equivalent to one-night sleep (Pearl, 2018).

So, successful consumer segmentation derived from effective IMC planning process. The planning stage is crucial because the consumers want and need as well as other stakeholders such as competitors, suppliers, and distributors desire changes constantly. Thus, the IMC plan would ensure as well as provide clarity towards all the members of organisations to work effectively to achieve IMC efficiency. According to Clow & Baack (2015), six

steps need to be addressed by organisations in achieving their goals. The process starts with communication research and then followed by targeting markets as well as product positioning strategies which accomplish by the marketing team members to meet the expectations and objectives of their brand. After that, the appropriate communications are being established. The final task would be including the design of the budget as well as executing the relevant IMC components based on agreed communications. If IMC planning is not established effectively, then it could lead to poor market segmentation and eventually could lead firms towards market failure as well as poor customer satisfaction.

Meanwhile, the IMC has been seen as a tool to established positive relationship marketing. Positive relationship marketing (RM) can be considered as efforts taken by firms towards achieving customers' long-term engagement and loyalty (Samaha, Beck, & Palmatier, 2014). Therefore, sometimes useful RM be obtained if the sensitivity of the society are taken seriously into consideration and could diagnose and overcome the issues from poor segmentation (Dibb & Simkin, 2001). Similarly, Air New Zealand understand the importance of trust through long-term engagement and customer loyalty. The airline has favourable relationship marketing to its domestic consumers. For instance, regularly Air New Zealand communicate and assure its local consumers that they know New Zealand better than other carriers. Thus, knowledge sharing has been mainly about the key locations have been their method to encourage the Kiwis to explore more the country. Therefore, the "See more of New Zealand" was a successful domestic campaign as Air New Zealand provided interactive insider tips about the attractions in New Zealand such as food, wine, outdoors, arts and culture (Air New Zealand, 2018). Eventually, over the years the successful segmentation has eventually lead the consumers mainly in the domestic market have considered Air New Zealand as their favourable brand especially when they are reviewing their travel options.

2.3 Successful Evoked Set

Air New Zealand has been the evoked set of many consumers. Evoked set can be described as the set of choices of products or services that consumers believe as the viable options to acquire or purchase (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). For instance, air travellers tend to have their own evoked set before buying air ticket as they usually analyse the airlines and its attributes before purchasing it. Most of them tend to list and rank their desired airlines based on the price, quality, brand and design before reserving the travel tickets. Thus, the primary objectives for many business organisations

including Air New Zealand are to ensure their services are among the evoked set of their segmented consumers. The evoked set exist in all six stages in consumers' decision-making process. Those six stages are availability, awareness, evaluation, choice, implementation and post-purchase evaluation. Thus, firms apply IMC to ensure their prospective consumers are well informed and updated on the offered products and services (Turley & LeBlanc, 1993).

To be among the evoked set organisation need to apply effective communication strategies employed by business organisations. Communication in the context of ME is known as integrated and coordinated information such as promotional information on offered products and services that been shared with various stakeholders via one more media such as social media and print media. Communications strategies are applied to ensure interested stakeholders such as public and consumers to have a positive perception towards the products or services. Therefore, the strategy focus on the benefits, consideration as well as the expert view of the products or services (Cleveland, Papadopoulos, & Laroche, 2011).

Meanwhile, the strategy of word of mouth (WOM) also has contributed towards the consideration of Air New Zealand part of the consumers' evoked set. WOM defined as the attempt taken by various stakeholders in transmitting information on products as well as services through verbal communication. However, this verbal communication is typically shared in multiple forms such as printed documents and online which is also known as eWOM. Research findings have indicated that online reviews or known as ORs have been successful in various industries. Notably, the aviation industry especially airline industry seem to encounter strong business growth from eWOM. ORs via eWOM has gained its significant attention from many consumers because the information shared or provided by stakeholders appears to be accurate, value-added, relevant and on time (Filieri & McLeay, 2014). Similar to other Airlines, Air New Zealand uses various media including social media to encourage eWOM such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Yelp and Instagram. However, studies revealed that eWOM could be a simplified approach but also enhances business risk. Consumers are always expected to share their bad experiences rather than good experiences. Thus, minor issues could lead to a significant discussion among consumers in various forums if eWOM is widely used by business organisations (Perera, et al., 2014). Thus, positive information eWOM and negative eWOM could widen or close up the gap between the buyers and sellers. Negative eWOM can be reduced through the concept of

awareness. Communications such as advertisements are essential effort taken by the firms in creating brand awareness which further leads to public awareness as well as drives consumers' inclusion of the relevant products or services into their evoked set. In IMC, public perception is the primary concern for most of the organisations.

In some cases, public awareness events are the primary factor for business growth as well as failure. Public awareness can be developed and improved through feedback and constant communication. Similarly, many airlines used the concept of "reminder advertising" to be part of the evoked set. Such advertisements define as strategies applied by firms through constant messages which serve as reminders for the consumers about the new or existing products or services. Reminder advertisements are communicated in various forms. Some of the messages serve as the update and sometimes it acts as important guidance. For example, Air New Zealand frequently use their advertisements to remind their domestic consumers on their domestic flight. In particular, Air New Zealand continually reminds their consumers about their daily 400 domestic flights which have successfully connected visitors from various locations. As a consequent, Air New Zealand always is known for its remindful campaign which has them to achieve a remarkable reputation. The Colmar Brunton Corporate Reputation Index (CRI) recently stated Air New Zealand has the best business reputation in New Zealand followed by TVNZ, Toyota, AA Insurance and Z Energy. Air New Zealand has been part of the Kiwis, and the Kiwis trust Air New Zealand for its fairness, success as well as trustable and credible activities (Stuff, 2018).

2.4 Enhance Reputation

Credibility in ME is essential as its showcase the factors of the products or services being trusted by the consumers. The elements could be the high-level integrity messages of the products or services which is communicated by the relevant stakeholders or Medias (Eisend, 2002). Meanwhile, integrity in ME can be acknowledged as credible business principles or actions applied by business organisations such as demonstrating moral, ethical and legal acts (Erhard, Jensen, & Zaffron, 2014). Thus, credibility and integrity are acts that work hand in hand in enhancing the image and brand value for most of the products and services. Credibility and integrity can be built through effective IMC. One of the conventional methods would be through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities taken by organisations. CSR has become a part of an everyday business language and been a critical activity commonly practised by private and government agencies. CSR is social initiatives and policies that can be taken by these agencies towards overcoming the social and economic issue. CSR defined as the attempt taken business

organisations particularly to indicate their concern towards the relevant stakeholders. CSR is also effort and commitment made by business organisations towards improving their surrounding environment. Most of the business organisations tend to return and share their growth and profit through contribution to economic and social development towards their workforce and the local community. The 2018 Annual Review of the State of CSR in Australia and New Zealand recognised and awarded Air New Zealand with the CSR top 5 award due to their sustainability efforts. Air New Zealand reviewed positively on their employee perceptions towards CSR priorities, practices as well as their management capabilities within the organisation.

However, CSR activities which are communicated and published sometimes been heavily criticised due to its insincerity and wrong approach. Some organisations use their CSR activities as their ME tools in the effort to improve business organisations' brand as well as the reputation of their products and services. Most of these organisations tend to be transparent to showcase their efforts towards the community, but the questions always arise on their sincerity towards the SCR activities (Verk & Golob, 2014). Nevertheless, CSR should not be treated as a separate event, but it has to be incorporated into various forms of communications such as advertising, branding or even packaging. There has been a clear relationship between communications and CSR as both tools work effectively if those tools are managed accordingly together in building the organisations' image (Jahdi & Acikdilli, 2009).

CSR also can be closely associated with ethical ME practices. Ethical ME is attempts taken by marketers and firms to gain as well as to build customers interest and relationship towards the offered products and services with the consideration on the social and environment (Verk & Golob, 2014). Ethical ME also can be explained as the practises or principles that guides and govern the appropriate conduct of the marketers (Hill, et al., 2008). Therefore, Air New Zealand has been recognised globally and locally as an organisation that practices and promotes ethical ME strategies, positive principles as well as valuable and trustable IMC. Ethical ME includes activities that aim to satisfy the needs of customers via the honest approach which leads towards long-term benefits for the firm and its brands (Cavanaugh, et al., 1981).

Hence, Air New Zealand reputation has been developed through their credibility and integrity as well as ethical ME approaches. Reputation is the stakeholders' assumptions, beliefs or trust towards the organisation. As known, reputation cannot be easily earned but and can be easily

destroyed. Therefore, Air New Zealand is always cautious in developing their business strategies as they always ensure those strategies have positive direct and indirect influences towards their business reputation. Similarly, it has been stated that corporate reputation is derived from the firms' objectives as well as business activities. Therefore, Air New Zealand's ME strategies are seen as the opportunity to enhance its reputation. Unlike other business strategies, ME strategies have been seen as the direct reputation mediator between the firm and the public including customers (Iyer & Dunn, 1999). Therefore, effective ME strategies have more tendency and significant impact on improving the firm performances as it reflects directly towards the public as well as customers.

3. Methodology

The literature review identified several IMC approaches as well as its strengths and weaknesses in the context of Air New Zealand. Thus, the purpose of this study was to evaluate further the effective market segmentation, successfully evoked set and enhance the reputation that is established through IMC determining Air New Zealand's growth. Therefore, the research objectives were developed to understand recent Air New Zealand's growth based on the evaluation and effect of the IMC. So, the goals were determined by addressing one central research question and three research questions. The primary research question developed was - To what extent IMC has influenced the growth of Air New Zealand? Meanwhile, this question followed with three research questions. Those questions were; 1) Does Air New Zealand use its IMC effectively to address the needs of its segmented customer? 2) Do Air New Zealand' IMC activities have prompted customers to choose Air New Zealand as their frequent flight operator? Does IMC have enhanced Air New Zealand's reputation?

Therefore, the three research questions demanded opinions, ideas and suggestions from the subjects. Thus, qualitative data rather than quantitative data were employed. Qualitative research methods were used to produce data about personal experience and the meanings behind social actions. Ordinarily individual experiences and feelings used as part of the qualitative research methods. Therefore, the researchers used semi-structured interviewing methods. Qualitative information can be explored by observation and by unstructured interviews which use the interviewee's own words. According to them most qualitative data are most often associated with interruptive research methods and can be considered as more valid than quantitative data. Validity in this explanation justifies as more truthful, in-depth picture of

the phenomenon being studied. Semi-structured Interviews allow access to a more significant number of subjects. The researchers used convenience sampling and quota sampling method. Convenience sampling has been decided as the proper sampling method because it would enable the researchers to conduct interviews on any individual whom the researchers feel is suitable and available (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2014).

Meanwhile, the quota sampling was chosen by the researchers for the interview with a selected group of people. The targeted interviewees included those who are residing in Palmerston North, New Zealand who have flown with Air New Zealand. Palmerston North was chosen due to the location of the researchers which enable them to interview as many participants. Meanwhile, Palmerston North is located in Manawatu, and it is one of the most culturally diverse regions in New Zealand. Each year approximately, 3000 international students from around the world live and study in Palmerston North (Air New Zealand, 2018). The researchers did consider Air New Zealand's customer loyalty and long term engagement. Thus, the researchers focus on interviewees who have flown with Air New Zealand at least twice in the last twelve months and did emphasise in interviewing interviewees who have flown with Air New Zealand for more than five years.

The researchers had more extensive access to gain relevant data from the appropriate interviewees. The research questions were used to guide researchers' data collection, and analysis as the researcher used data collection of primary and secondary data. Therefore, the researchers were able to triangulate the data as the researchers were able to use primary and secondary resources obtained to evaluate as well as to generate precise findings. As the interviewers recorded the interviewees' response via text; thus, the software NVivo 11 were used to analyse the text-based data. NVivo 11 assisted the researchers to highlight and understand the key quotes and trends mentioned with the presented structured and unstructured data.

The researchers also observed two ethical considerations. Consent and confidentiality were both ethical considerations. Firstly, the requirements for consent have been met by researchers fully explaining verbally to each participant on the purpose of the interview. Subsequently, each interviewee was required to acknowledge their consent orally prior before answering the interview questions. Secondly, confidentiality was ensured by allocating a code number to the recording and transcript of each interview set. The interviewees were also given the authority to decide on answering each question. If an

interviewee is not comfortable with a question then he or she was not required to answer the question.

4. Findings

For six months, the researchers interviewed forty-five participants across Palmerston North. Seven questions were asked to all participants. Four questions were on their background information such as their age, the profession, the number of their travel frequency by Air New Zealand for the last 12 months and the total number of years that they have travelled by Air New Zealand. The remaining three questions directly reflected on the research questions. The questions were; Did New Zealand IMC activities such as via website, social media and others have addressed the needs of the participants? Did Air New Zealand's IMC activities such as Safety Video in Youtube and other similar IMC activities have prompted respondents to choose Air New Zealand as their frequent flight operator? Finally, the researchers did ask the respondents on the Air New Zealand's IMC effort such as their Facebook advertisement "Grab a Seat", and other IMC efforts have enhanced the airline reputation?

Forty interviewees agreed that Air New Zealand uses its IMC effectively. They supported the statement for various reasons. The common reasons were that they could see Air New Zealand almost everywhere. Air New Zealand catchy advertisements are always noticeable in televisions, website as well as in social media. Air New Zealand frequently uses hilarious videos to attract potential consumer attention. Indeed, four interviewees manage to list the three coolest safety video that they have admired the most which have been promoted widely in social media. Those listed videos are "Men in Black", "The Hobbit" and "Safety in Paradise". However, five interviewees do not agree that Air New Zealand uses its IMC effectively as they quoted the ME strategy is dull and does not cater to international audience. According to them, Air New Zealand has always failed to meet the global expectation and has not promoted New Zealand as the ultimate destination. Furthermore, they added, the air points which are the reward points seem unattractive and confusing as well as does not encourage travellers to fly more with Air New Zealand frequently.

Meanwhile, twenty interviewees agreed with that Air New Zealand's IMC practices have prompted them to choose Air New Zealand as their frequent flight operator the statement as they do frequently purchase their tickets after viewing the promotional materials. The "Grab a Seat" web and televisions promotional campaign has been quoted as

very attractive as it provides clear information about the price of the ticket and destinations. Nineteen interviewees have purchase air NZ tickets via www.grabaseat.co.nz and do agree that Air New Zealand campaigns as a major success. However, forty-three interviewees admitted Air New Zealand has an unfair competition, and they have monopolised the domestic aviation market. Thus, their limited competitors have by default led the travellers in New Zealand to choose Air New Zealand as their carrier. They do agree that the role of IMC towards Air New Zealand would be more crucial if there are more competitors in the domestic market.

Besides that, forty interviewees agree the IMC has assisted Air NZ reputation. The constant news about the airlines keeps consumer well abreast with the progress and development of Air New Zealand. Forty-four interviewees agree that Air New Zealand does not need to spend more advertising cost and enhance their communication channels. The existing campaigns and channels are sufficient to improve its reputation. Therefore, Air New Zealand does not need to rebrand and does not need to change its ME tools. The websites, social media, billboards and television advertisement are sufficient. However, thirty-two interviewees stated the Air New Zealand needs to revamp their ME strategies such as working on more scientific research in establishing ways to attract and introduce more international routes and discounted fares for the domestic routes.

5. Conclusion

Overall, this research reveals IMC should handle as a scientifically. Engineering tools are been explored being used extensively in IMC for better decision making. In the context Air New Zealand, the airline has used its IMC efficiently and effectively. Their promotional campaigns particularly such as their safety videos have addressed the needs of their segmented customer. The customers also feel Air New Zealand has successfully used its IMC scientifically and strategically to address the needed and relevant information such as price and promotion adequately. However, IMC has not been the primary reason for many consumers to choose Air New Zealand regularly. Instead, due to Air New Zealand monopoly status, it has prompted and left many travellers without choice to fly with Air New Zealand. Nevertheless, it is understandable that Air New Zealand has been able to gain as well as enhance its reputation from its effective IMC approach. The recent prestige rankings and awards are important indicators of the Air New Zealand's successful reputation and IMC especially the social media has been a significant used in contributing towards the success.

Therefore, ME through IMC has positively determined the growth of Air New Zealand and shall continue its essential role in future. Thus, further research required to explore and maximise the role of ME especially IMC towards the sustaining the growth of Air New Zealand.

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