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## **THE ROLE OF B2B MARKETING ACTIVITIES IN ENHANCING THE SALES OF PRIVATE EGYPTIAN AIR CARRIERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Airline companies employ marketing practices in a fiercely competitive environment with increasing rivals and higher customer expectations. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to demonstrate the impact of business to business (B2B) marketing practices on enhancing the sales of private Egyptian air carriers. The current study utilized the quantitative and qualitative approaches to achieve the study objectives. To collect data, questionnaire targeted the marketing, sales and customer services managers of private Egyptian air carriers. Data collected were analyzed using SPSS (23) statistical tool. The study found that there is a statistical significant and positive correlation between marketing performance measurement system and B2B marketing practices, besides it declared the positive influence of B2B marketing practices on sales growth. Moreover, the study declared the necessity of implementing effective marketing performance measurement system to support marketing managers at private Egyptian air carriers to achieve the marketing objectives in cost effective manner.*

**KEYWORDS:** B2B Marketing, Marketing Practices, Performance Measurement System, Private Egyptian Air Carriers, Sales Growth.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Airline companies have started to employ various marketing practices and strategies in an intensely competitive environment where product and service differentiation is becoming harder, the number of rival companies

is increasing and customers' wants and expectations are getting higher (Atalik, 2009).

Helmold (2022) stated that there are different types of marketing practices are currently used in the aviation industry; the marketing practices can be as follows:

1. Business to business (B2B) marketing practices.
2. Business to consumer (B2C) marketing practices.

B2B Marketing is commonly referring to business transactions between companies. These transactions of products and services usually have relatively high value compared to consumer products; repurchase which are integral to the success of both parties (Hutt & Speh, 2001).

Most private Egyptian airlines are suffering from the slowness in their growth and failure in achieving sustainable sales and revenue growth, besides they are also facing an increase in their operation costs and at the same time a decline in their market share of both international and domestic passengers' air traffic in Egypt, and some of these companies rapidly got out of the market when exposed to risks as Lotus Air, Memphis Air and recently Air Leisure (Ragab, 2005).

Therefore there is a need to investigate and evaluate the influence of Business to Business (B2B) and its influence on the sales growth for private Egyptian air carrier.

The purpose of this research is to assess the role of B2B marketing practices used by private Egyptian air carriers and their influence on the sales growth.

The research seeks to achieve the following sub objectives:

- Demonstrate the major B2B marketing activities used by Egyptian air carrier.
- Investigate the importance of most effective B2B marketing activities.
- Propose a comprehensive yet concise model of B2B marketing activities for marketing managers of the private Egyptian air carriers.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The objective of B2B marketing is to manage the buying and selling relationship. The exchanges between buyers and sellers are where marketing communication plays an integral role in a business's overall success. The customer in the B2B context is not an anonymous enterprise but a specific person or people, and marketing communications should be

directly targeted those people making the purchasing decisions (Hutt & Speh, 2014).

Baron *et al.*, (2000) stated that B2B marketing practices have the potential to positively impact the performance of supply chain by more efficient and frictionless procurement practices, e.g., lower purchase costs, reduced inventory, enhanced efficiency of logistics, as well as increased sales and lower marketing costs. Dean and Bowen (1994) indicated that achieving long-term success of the company via B2B marketing activities necessitates creating employee satisfaction, as these activities have a big impact on relations and cooperation. They also demonstrated that the teamwork in B2B includes the cooperation between managers and employees, and also with other stakeholders. Empowered employees play an integral part in B2B marketing and ensure company's success. In the next section the researcher will review the most common B2B marketing practices uses by air carriers.

## **B2B MARKETING PRACTICES**

B2B marketing involves careful strategic analysis of the different organizational processes of the firm. In terms of its operations, supply chain, value chain and overall resource management process is higher in the B2B marketing process (Vargo and Lusch, 2008).

There are many B2B marketing practices used by air carriers, the most important practices are demonstrated below:

### **1- DIVERSIFYING NEW INDIRECT DISTRIBUTION SALES CHANNELS**

Retailing in airline sales and distribution, is one of the biggest industry disruptions in recent years. In a word, retailing allows airlines to sell new products in new ways, indirectly to passengers. Indirect sales continue to be the main channel of distribution for airlines (Riccardo, *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, IATA (2021) declared in its report that airline indirect sales will constitute about 50% of airline sales.

Kanchan (2019) stated that the indirect channel mainly comprises of consolidators and retail travel management companies. A more functional break-up of these agencies is mentioned below:

- Consolidators: consolidators are wholesalers of airline tickets who purchase tickets directly from airlines at special negotiated rates and then re-sell them to other retail travel agencies or end-consumers.

- Tour Operators/Leisure Travel Agencies/MICE Agents: these types of agencies provide holiday packages combining air travel together with other tour components such as hotels, car rentals, site-seeing, etc. They typically provide end-to-end travel solutions to customers as per their requirements.
- Online Travel Agencies: online travel agencies are like tour operators. However, they provide their travel services through an online platform which can be accessed through their website and mobile phone applications.
- Corporate Travel Agencies: corporate travel agencies manage the travel arrangements, most commonly through agency implants and long-term partnerships.

## **2. CONNECTING TO GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS (GDS)**

In the travel and tourism industry, Global Distribution System (GDS) refers to a network system connecting multiple vendors of services with end consumers or travel agents allowing direct booking. The service vendors include airlines, hotel rooms, car rentals, cruises, events, and activities. GDS is thus serving as an intermediary linking between the vendors and the travel agent in order to allow them to obtain information and make reservations with airlines and other related-operating travel service providers (Dimitrios, 2004).

GDS Moreover also is described as an advancement of Central Reservation System (CRS). During the 1960s, hotels and airlines started to build CRS to handle reservations for their individual business or inventory. Subsequent to the Airline deregulation act of 1978 in the United States and the widespread embrace of the open skies concept, air traffic was increased; more airlines entered into the market and several marketing and equity alliances were created among airlines; thereby, resulting in the need to expand distribution. The GDS supports the expanded distribution of tickets in accordance with the shifting market. Furthermore it provides the consumer with a forum to process multiple travel bookings whilst comparing to a wide range of fares and services offered by different airlines to choose the best suited fare for him (Athina et al., 2009).

Since the late 1990s, along with the development of the Internet, GDS had emerged as a business in its own right, specializing in travel distribution for many different types of services. Sabre, Galileo, Amadeus, and Worldspan had emerged as the GDS with the largest market shares. Although, Sabre was developed in 1960s by American Airlines along with IBM Inc. on a mainframe computer, they separated in 2000. Currently,

Sabre powers Travelocity, Expedia, lastminute.com, and a few other Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) (Buhalis, 2003).

### **3. JOINING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES WITH OTHER AIRLINES**

Airline growth and competitive strategies not only include cost cutting measures and better revenue management tools, but also strategic alliances with other airlines. Airlines form alliances to gain access to global networks, getting access and establishing identities in new markets without providing aircrafts, and services which would be unprofitable if operated alone. Moreover, alliances reduce costs through joint marketing, maintenance, ground facilities, training, computer reservation systems, and elimination of duplication and redundancy in operation (Oum *et al.*, 1996).

Kiraci (2019) found that airline's performance in terms of liquidity, debt and profitability differed before and after membership to global alliances. According to his study Lufthansa has a good performance before joining global alliances. However, Lufthansa became fourth in financial performance after becoming a member of the global alliance. He found that the financial performance of Air New Zealand changed significantly after joining alliance like Star Alliance, Oneworld and Skyteam.

### **4. ESTABLISHING CODE-SHARE AGREEMENTS**

Code sharing is the simplest application used in airline collaboration and its main purpose is to combine flight networks. In this type of cooperation, the flight schedules of the two airlines are organized in a coordinated manner. In the code sharing agreement, the transfer time of passengers and baggage is shortened and the loss of time is prevented because there is no waiting for transfer (Rajasekar and Fouts, 2009). In Code-sharing the airline companies use a common code, although their flights are different, they give a single flight code to the transfer flights between the two cities; thus, they show the flight as a direct flight. In this way, passengers reach where they want to go in a shorter time and easily without any delay (Schweiger and Philippe, 2003).

Code-share agreements enable an airline to market a flight operated by another carrier, and of course airlines are only willing to use their brand in this way if they are confident that the other carrier is safe and has a suitable product. The existence of a code-share agreement with a partner airline can therefore give confidence to both customers and distribution channels that journeys involving the partner can be sold with the expectation of a good overall level of service, in terms of suitability of the product and

seamlessness of ticketing and flight connection arrangements (Sabiha, 2020).

## **5. ADVOCATING OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) STRATEGY**

A corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy is a long-term plan developed in terms of specific activities and investments aligned with the organization to meet the requirements of customers, stakeholders and the society as a whole (Gigauri, 2012). Corporations are increasingly adopting socially responsible actions, activities, policies and processes. Furthermore, a CSR policy is beneficial not only for a corporation's bottom line but also for its employees, stakeholders, consumers, and for communities, the environment and society at large (Kanji and Chopra, 2012).

Airlines are striving toward exemplary customer relations by proving a level of customer service and comfort that ensure customer loyalty, focusing on safety and security, meeting customer expectations, involving customers with the CSR program, and raising passenger awareness of sustainability issues. Airlines offer services that make customer experience more comfortable and less time consuming. It is in the best interest of the airline to build a long-term relationship with customers to ensure repeated purchasing (Ghada and Azza, 2014).

## **6. CREATING AFFILIATE MARKETING PROGRAMS**

Gallaugher *et al.*, (2001) stated that affiliate marketing is a type of online advertising in which merchants share a proportion of sales income generated by each customer who reached at the company's website via a content provider. Content provider is an affiliate who usually places online advertising such as banner or text link on website. Affiliate marketing is a kind of online marketing, whereby a company (an advertiser or merchant) marks an agreement with another firm (a publisher or affiliate) to feature a link for its website with an affiliated site.

Affiliate marketing is another type of performance-based marketing in which a business rewards its affiliates for each visitor or customer brought by the affiliate's own marketing efforts. By implementing this marketing model airlines benefit from having fixed marketing costs that do not rise with an increasing number of sales and flight bookings. Commissions (percentage from the actual booking amount) that affiliate partners receive differ a lot. For example, British Airways pays 0,25%, on the other hand air carriers such as Etihad, Qatar or Turkish Airlines pay 2,00% (both

percentages mentioned above apply on short-haul flights, the percentage for long-haul flights is usually higher) (Lukáš and Eva, 2015).

The major objectives of affiliate marketing programs are to promote and sell products or services through additional distribution access, web traffic to advertisers and generate transaction from online users in return for a commission (Goldschmidt *et al.*, 2003). Affiliate marketing programs or websites are based on performances of promotion where the promotion is paid for only after a specific number of sales, visits or subscription has been reaches. Therefore, factors according to which the basic payment models are determined are: Pay Per Sale, Pay Per Click, Pay Per Lead (Duffy, 2005).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to study and assessing the marketing practices used by private Egyptian air carriers and its performance. In order to achieve study objectives and to test study hypotheses, the researcher depended on an analysis of B2B marketing practices and its measurements as well as personal interviews with academics and professionals in air transport industry and with professionals in marketing and sales to develop an initial questionnaire and then a field survey will be performed.

To obtain results that achieve the research objective, the field targeted is 10 Egyptian air carriers which are currently licensed and operating in Egypt. The sample size is 100 % of the Egyptian private air carriers.

The sample of the population includes the executive managers who are working in marketing, sales and customer service departments at the private Egyptian air carriers to assess the business to business (B2B) marketing practices used by these air carriers.

**Table 1: list of private Egyptian air carriers operating in Egypt**

<b>Serial</b>	<b>Air Carrier Name</b>	<b>Year of Foundation</b>
1	Petroleum Air Services	1982
2	AMC Airlines	1988
3	Air Cairo	2003
4	Nile Air	2006
5	Alexandria Airlines	2007
6	AlMasria Universal Airlines	2007

7	Air Arabia Egypt	2009
8	Nesma Airlines	2010
9	Fly Egypt	2014
10	Red Sea Airlines	2021

The researcher conducted an exploratory study in the period from Jan 2023 till June 2023 to be the first guideline to collect the study data through the following face to face interviews:

- Interviews with professionals in the civil aviation industry in Egypt (Operations managers in Cairo, Luxor, Hurghada and Alexandria Airports- Airlines operations managers in Egypt).
- Personal interviews with researchers, academics and faculty members who are interested in aviation and marketing (From faculty of tourism and hotels in Fayoum, Minia and Luxor universities).
- Personal interviews with professionals in the field of marketing and sales in the aviation industry.

A survey was the primary method of quantitative data collection to measure the B2B marketing activities used by airlines. The target population of this study is the private Egyptian air carriers. A total of 70 survey instruments were gathered. Eight questionnaire forms were eliminated because they are not valid as they are incomplete. The total number of the valid questionnaire forms was 62. The questionnaire forms were distributed in the period from July-2023 till August-2023. The questionnaire consist of two parts, the first part is marketing performance measurement system includes six statements and aim to explorer the marketing performance measurement methods used by the private Egyptian air carriers. Moreover, the second part is the performance of the marketing practices includes six statements and aim to measure the influence of B2B marketing practices in the sales growth of the private Egyptian air carriers.

A Likert scale used in the questionnaire with different measurement options as 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= neutral; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree.

### **RESPONSE BIAS**

Response bias, according to the literature, may be represented using three estimating methods: comparisons with known population values, subjective estimates, and extrapolation. This research employed the population approach of comparison with known values to guarantee that the data was free of response bias. Furthermore, even if there is no



response bias for the remaining items, it is usually difficult to conclude that other items are not biased as well. Using known values can still be beneficial. The study separated the response data into two parts ( $n = 62 \div 2 = 31$  respondents) for this purpose; the first 31 respondents responded questionnaires obtained from replies.

**Table (2) Group statistics of marketing practices**

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
marketing practices	1	31	4.263	.53641	.05314
	2	31	4.152	.58364	.04631

As shown in the table (2), the mean for the first 31 replies was 4.263, while the mean for the second was 4.152. This demonstrates that respondents from both groups were free of data bias, as validated by the t-test.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the Questionnaire for Marketing Managers, Sales Managers and Customer Service Managers of Private Egyptian Air Carriers

### Q.3 RESPONDENTS PROFILE

The distribution of the respondents according to their demographic characteristics is shown in Table 3.

**Table (3) Demographic profile of respondents**

Variables	Frequencies	Percentage
<b>A- Gender</b>		
Male	49	79%
Female	13	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>B- Age</b>		
Less than 23 years old	0	0%
23 to less than 43 years old	42	67.7%
43-60 years old	17	27.4%
Over 60 years old	3	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>C- Education level</b>		

Below bachelor's degree	0	0%
Bachelor's degree	45	72.6%
Postgraduate	17	27.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>D- Work Experience at the Organization</b>		
Less than 5 years	6	9.7%
Between 5 and less than 10 Years	37	59.6 %
Between 10 and 20 Years	15	24.2%
More than 20 Years	4	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>E- Current Position</b>		
Head of Marketing Department/Assistant	9	14.5%
Digital Marketing Manager / Assistant	7	11.3%
Area Marketing Manager / Assistant	4	6.5%
Head of Sales Department/Assistant	14	22.6%
Area Sales Manager / Assistant	21	33.8%
Head of Customer Services Department/Assistant	7	11.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table No. (3) Shows that more than two-thirds of the sample were males by 79% (49 respondents), while the percentage of females reached 21% (13 respondents). Regarding age; the age group (23 to less than 43 years) was the highest by 67.7% (42 respondents), followed by the age group (43-60 years) by 27.4% (17 respondents), and finally the age group (more than 60 years) by 4.8% (3 respondents).

For the educational level; The majority of the study sample hold a bachelor's degree with a percentage of 72.6% (45 respondents), and there are 17 respondents who hold postgraduate studies with a percentage of 27.4%, while there are no respondents in the study sample who hold a degree less than a bachelor's degree.

Regarding the number of years of experience in the company; More than half of the sample had years of experience between 5 and less than 10 years by 59.6% (37 respondents), followed by those with years of experience between 10 and 20 years by 24.2% (15 respondents), then those

with years of experience less than 5 years by 9.7%, and finally, those with more than 20 years of experience by 6.5% (4 respondents).

Finally, regarding the current position; there are 33.8% of the study sample working as Area Sales Manager / Assistant (21 respondents), followed by those working as Head of Sales Department/Assistant by 22.6% (14 respondents), followed by those working as Head of Marketing Department/Assistant by 14.5% ( 9 respondents), then those who work as a Digital Marketing Manager / Assistant with a percentage of 11.3% (7 respondents), and with the same percentage 11.3% work as a Head of Customer Services Department / Assistant (7 respondents), and finally those who work as an Area Marketing Manager / Assistant with a percentage of 6.5 % (4 respondents).

#### **MARKETING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM**

#### **Q.4 THE TENDENCY OF THE FIRM TO APPLY MARKETING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM**

The firm's inclination to apply marketing performance measurement system is shown in Table 4.

**Table (4) the firm's implementation of marketing performance measurement system**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Did your firm implement any marketing performance measurement system?	Yes	62	100%
	No	0	0%
	Total	62	100%

Table No. (4) Showed the extent to which the firm implements the marketing performance measurement system. The results depicted that all respondents (62 respondents) by 100% indicated that the private Egyptian air carriers implemented the marketing performance measurement system.

#### **Q.5 THE PREFERRED MARKETING PERFORMANCE MEASURES USED BY THE FIRM TO MEASURE ITS MARKETING PRACTICES**

The marketing performance measures advocated by the firm to measure its marketing practices are illustrated in Table 5

**Table (5) Marketing performance measures used to determine the firm’s marketing practices**

Statement	Attribute	Freq.	%
Which marketing performance measures that your firm use to measure its marketing practices?	Consumer behavior metrics (e.g., the total number of consumers, the number of new consumers and customer loyalty)	9	14.5%
	Consumer intermediate metrics (e.g., brand awareness, brand knowledge and consumer satisfaction)	2	3.2%
	Trade customer metrics (e.g., customer satisfaction and the number of complaints)	3	4.8%
	Competitor metrics (e.g., relative consumer satisfaction, market share and perceived quality)	7	11.3%
	Accounting metrics (e.g., sales, revenue, gross margins and profitability)	28	45.3%
	Innovativeness metrics (e.g., the number of new products, revenue of new products and margin of new products)	3	4.8%
	A mixed set of measures of above mentioned measures	10	16.1%
	Total	62	100%

Table No. (5) Shows that there is a number of marketing performance measures that are used to measure the marketing practices of the private Egyptian air carriers. The results show that the most used measure is accounting metrics (e.g., sales, revenue, gross margins and profitability) by 45.3% (28 respondents), then a mixed set of measures of above mentioned measures by 16.1% (10 respondents), followed by consumer behavior metrics (e.g., the total number of consumers, the number of new consumers and customer loyalty) by 14.5% (9 respondents), then competitor metrics (e.g., relative consumer satisfaction, market share and perceived quality) by 11.3% (7 respondents), then trade customer metrics (e.g., customer satisfaction and the number of complaints) by 4.8% (3 respondents), followed by the same percentage (4.8%) innovativeness metrics (e.g., the number of new products, revenue of new products and margin of new

products) (3 respondents), and finally consumer intermediate metrics (e.g., brand awareness, brand knowledge and consumer satisfaction) by 3.2% (2 respondents).

**Q.6 THE EFFICIENCY OF MARKETING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM IN SELECTING AND IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE MARKETING STRATEGIES**

The firm’s reliance on marketing performance measurement system in selecting and implementing powerful marketing strategies from the respondents’ perspective is shown in Table 6.

**Table (6) the effectiveness of marketing strategies selected and implemented via the firm’s marketing performance measurement systems**

Statement	Attribute	Frequencies	Percentage
In your own view, do you think that marketing performance measurement systems support the marketing managers for choosing and implementing the effective marketing strategies?	Yes	62	100%
	No	0	0
	Total	62	100%

Table No. (6) Highlights the extent to which marketing managers depend on the marketing performance measurement system in selecting and implementing effective marketing strategies. The results confirm that the marketing performance measurement system is supportive of marketing managers in Private Egyptian air carriers, as all respondents responded to that by 100% (62 respondents).

**Q.7 THE IMPORTANCE OF MARKETING PRACTICES ON PASSENGERS’ PURCHASING DECISION TOWARD THE EGYPTIAN PRIVATE AIR CARRIER**

The effect of marketing practices on customers’ travel intention via the Egyptian private air carriers from respondents’ perspective is shown in Table 7

**Table (7) the role of marketing practices on passengers' purchasing intention to travel via the Egyptian private air carrier**

Statement	Attribute	Frequencies	Percentage
In your own view, do you think that marketing practices have positive influence on purchasing intention for the passengers traveling onboard the private Egyptian air carriers?	Yes	62	100%
	No	0	0%
Total		62	100%

Table No. (7) Shows the role of marketing practices in motivating passengers to travel on private Egyptian airlines. The results show that 100% of the study sample (62 respondents) indicated that marketing practices have an effective effect on motivating passengers to travel on private Egyptian air carriers.

**THE PERFORMANCE OF THE B2B MARKETING PRACTICES**

**Table (8) the descriptive analysis of the implementation of B2B marketing practices**

Attribute		Yes	No	Mean	SD
My firm has indirect distribution and sales channels with consolidators, tour operators/leisure travel agencies, MICE agents, online travel agencies and corporate travel agencies.	Freq.	62	0		.596
	%	100%	0%		
My firm joined GDS to sell its tickets through it.	Freq.	45	17	1.27	.582
	%	72.6%	27.4%		
My firm joined strategic alliances with other airlines to gain the access to global networks.	Freq.	0	62	2	.471
	%	0%	100%		
My firm established Code-Share Agreements to combine flight networks with the partner's airlines.	Freq.	12	50	1.81	.714
	%	19.4%	80.6%		
My firm implemented CSR strategy.	Freq.	23	39	1.63	.771
	%	37.1%	62.9%		
My firm has affiliate marketing programs with other airlines and online third parties websites.	Freq.	17	45	1.73	.658
	%	27.4%	72.6%		

Table No. (8) Shows the B2B marketing practices which commonly used by air carriers and its implementation at the private Egyptian air carriers. The results show that the most used B2B marketing practices is (indirect distribution and sales channels with consolidators, tour operators/leisure travel agencies, MICE agents, online travel agencies and corporate travel agencies) by 100 % (62 respondents), then joining GDS to sell its tickets through the GDS by 72,6 % (45 respondents), followed by implementing CSR strategy by 37.1% (23 respondents).

**Q.9 THE OUTCOME OF APPLYING B2B PRACTICES FROM THE RESPONDENTS’ PERSPECTIVE**

The benefits of implementing B2B practices according to the respondents are shown in Table 9

**Table (9) descriptive benefits of B2B marketing Practices**

Items		1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Building indirect distribution and sales channels effectively enables firm to sell new products in new ways, indirectly to passengers	Freq .	0	0	0	25	37	4.60	.632
	%	0 %	0 %	0 %	40.3 %	59.7 %		
Joining GDS is an effective marketing tool which easing and increasing the air carriers’ sales volume and enable the air carrier to alert agents of special rates, air fares, and travel packages	Freq .	0	0	0	16	46	4.74	.521
	%	0 %	0 %	0 %	25.8 %	74.2 %		
Joining strategic alliances with other airlines enable air carriers to affect consumer purchase intention by enhancing the customer perception of brand equity and brand preference and enlarge the air carriers’ flight routes which also positively reflect on sales increment	Freq .	0	11	10	34	7	3.60	.891
	%	0 %	17.7 %	16.1 %	54.9 %	11.3 %		
Establishing Code-Share Agreements enable the air carrier to market many flights operated by another carrier,	Freq .	0	0	9	37	16	4.11	.853
	%	0 %	0 %	14.5 %	59.7 %	25.8 %		

which enlarge the air carriers' flight routes which also positively reflect on sales increment								
Implementing CSR strategy help air carrier to build a long term relationship with customers to ensure repeat purchasing	Freq .	0	3	7	40	12	3.34	.964
	%	0 %	4.8 %	11.3 %	64.5 %	19.4 %		
Affiliate marketing programs help air carriers to promote and a large number of their tickets and its other services through additional distribution access, driver web traffic to advertisers and generate transaction from online users in return for a commission	Freq .	0	0	5	37	20	4.24	.853
	%	0 %	0 %	8.1 %	59.7 %	32.2 %		

Table No. (9) Indicates the following results:

The statement "Building indirect distribution and sales channels effectively enables my firm to sell new products in new ways, indirectly to passengers", the percentage of disagreement was 0% (0 respondents). The percentage of acceptance was 100% (62 respondents) as 59.7% of the respondents strongly agreed (37 respondents) and 40.3% reported agree (25 respondents). The mean value was 4.60 and the standard deviation was .632. This means that the respondents greatly accepted the statement.

Regarding the statement "Joining GDS is an effective marketing tool which easing and increasing the air carriers' sales volume and enable the air carrier to alert agents of special rates, air fares, and travel packages", the percentage of disagreement was 0% (0 respondents). The percentage of acceptance was 100% (62 respondents) as 74.2% of the respondents strongly agreed (46 respondents) and 25.8% reported agree (16 respondents). The mean value was 4.74 and the standard deviation was .521. This means that the respondents greatly accepted the statement.

Concerning the statement "Joining strategic alliances with other airlines enable air carriers to affect consumer purchase intention by enhancing the customer perception of brand equity and brand preference and enlarge the air carriers' flight routes which also positively reflect on sales increment", the percentage of acceptance was 66.2% (41 respondents) as 54.9% of the respondents strongly agreed (34 respondents) and 11.3% reported agree (7 respondents). While 10 respondents marked neutral by 16.1%. The



percentage of disagreement was 17.7% (11 respondents) as 17.7% of the respondents disagreed (11 respondents). The mean value was 3.60 and the standard deviation was .891. This means that the respondents accepted the statement.

Regarding the statement "Establishing Code-Share Agreements enable the air carrier to market many flights operated by another carrier, which enlarge the air carriers' flight routes which also positively reflect on sales increment", 9 respondents marked neutral by 14.5%. The percentage of acceptance was 85.5% (53 respondents) as 25.8% of the respondents strongly agreed (16 respondents) and 59.7% reported agree (37 respondents). The mean value was 4.11 and the standard deviation was .853. This means that the respondents accepted the statement.

Concerning the statement " Implementing CSR strategy help air carrier to build a long term relationship with customers to ensure repeat purchasing ", the percentage of acceptance was 83.9% (52 respondents) as 19.4% of the respondents strongly agreed (12 respondents) and 64.5% reported agree (40 respondents). While 7 respondents marked neutral by 11.3%. The percentage of disagreement was 4.8% (3 respondents) as 4.8% of the respondents disagreed (3 respondents). The mean value was 3.34 and the standard deviation was .964. This means that the respondents accepted the statement to some extent.

Finally, as for the statement "Affiliate marketing programs help air carriers to promote and a large number of their tickets and its other services through additional distribution access, driver web traffic to advertisers and generate transaction from online users in return for a commission", the percentage of acceptance was 91.9% (57 respondents) as 32.2% of the respondents strongly agreed (20 respondents) and 59.7% reported agree (37 respondents). While 5 respondents marked neutral by 8.1%. The percentage of disagreement was 0% (0 respondents). The mean value was 4.24 and the standard deviation was .853. This means that the respondents greatly accepted the statement.

## **TESTING HYPOTHESES**

Based on the above results, table (10) summarizes the test of hypotheses in this study.

**Table (10) Summary of hypotheses testing**

Hypothesis	Test
H1: The B2B marketing activities can increase the sales volume of the private Egyptian Air Carriers.	Accepted
H2: The B2B marketing activities can support the private Egyptian air carriers to effectively sell new products in new ways.	Accepted
H3: The private Egyptian airlines didn't implement B2B marketing practices on large scale.	Accepted

## RESULTS

Depending on both the theoretical and field study, it was found that the private Egyptian air carriers have indirect sales and distribution channels with consolidators, tour operators / leisure travel agencies, MICE agents, online travel agencies, and corporate travel agencies which effectively enable them to sell new products in new ways, indirectly to the passengers, while the private Egyptian air carriers do not establish “Code-Share Agreements” to combine flight networks and partner airlines. Moreover, private Egyptian air carriers do not implement CSR strategies. In addition, private Egyptian air carriers have joined GDS networks and have not joined strategic alliances with other airlines to gain the access to global networks. Affirmatively, private Egyptian air carriers have affiliate marketing programs. Also, there are no statistically significant differences in the responses of the sample members to marketing performance measurement system and B2B Marketing practices due to the gender, age, and educational level variable. Although, there are statistically significant differences in the responses of the sample members to marketing performance measurement system and B2B Marketing practices due to the work experience variable.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on both the examined literature and the results of the field study, the following recommendations could be suggested to the top management and marketing and sales managers of private Egyptian air carriers:

- Joining strategic alliances with other airlines (Egyptian and foreign airlines) will enable your firm to gain the access to global flight networks and to enhance the customer perception of brand equity and brand preference which will lead a sales increment.

- Establishing “Code-Share Agreements” with other airlines (Egyptian and foreign airlines) will enlarge the flights network of the firm which will lead to increment in selling tickets.
- Advocating an effective CSR strategy in terms of specific activities and investments aligned with the firm objectives to meet the requirements of not only the customers and the stakeholders but also the environment and the society as a whole to build a long-term relationship with customers to ensure repeated purchasing.
- Investing in different B2B marketing practices to induce the sales growth.
- Using effective marketing performance management system with different measurement metrics will ease the calculation of return on investment in marketing activities in the firm.
- Considering using the affiliate marketing programs with other airlines, travel websites and with other online travel engines as one of the major sales channels for the firm would play a great role in promoting and selling a large number of their tickets.

## **RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

This research has some limitations, which consider avenues for future research. Thus, similar research on other air carriers operating in Egypt may give different results. Another important limitation is related the number and type of marketing practices which were assessed on this research, as there are many other marketing practices can be used by air carriers. For instance, capital merge and firm acquisition can be used as B2B marketing practice which may affect brand image and air carrier performance and effectively influence purchasing decision. Future researches can extend in a new comparative study among air carriers owned by the governmental sector and can focus on other marketing practices. Finally, future research with different criteria can further explore the impact of B2B marketing practices on the performance of private Egyptian air carrier and the influence on its sales growth.

## **CONCLUSION**

B2B marketing practices are strategies and tactics that businesses use to promote their products or services to other businesses. These practices focus on reaching and engaging with the target businesses, building relationships, and driving sales. They often involve utilizing various channels with effective sales management which is integral in ensuring a smooth and successful wholesale selling processes.

The main result generated from the research is B2B marketing practices has direct positive impact on air carriers sales and the investment in B2B marketing practices and can achieve sustainable growth by the wholesale sales' transactions for private Egyptian air carriers.

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