

# Consumers want to be in control of marketing messages

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Most consumers do not like personal marketing messages. Sales phone calls and text messages are considered particularly obtrusive, with consumers preferring marketing in newspapers, catalogues and internet search services as these can be controlled and utilised by the consumer.

These results were published in Kari Elkelä's (M.Sc.) doctoral dissertation for the Aalto University School of Business. The study looks at which of the available marketing communication channels consumers prefer, which factors affect their preferences for channels, and how the preferences have changed during the last few years.

## Obtrusive marketing irritates

According to the study, consumers have a preference for those marketing channels they feel in control of. They want to have the choice of receiving the messages when it suits their timetable or ignoring them altogether if necessary. Consumers also regard it as important that marketing is unobtrusive: the messages should not be pushed at them in an irritating manner, nor should they interrupt anything more important the consumer might be in the middle of.

Consumers like to use marketing channels they have grown used to, slowly making changes to their preferences. Consumers may favour an old and familiar channel that works moderately well even when a new one might seem better and more useful.

## Digital marketing gaining popularity

Consumer preferences vary, particularly with the traditional paper and new digital marketing dividing opinions. In 2006, there was no group that would have exclusively favoured digital marketing, whereas four years on, up to 20 per cent preferred to receive messages mainly in digital form. Paper communications are still, however, more popular.

Some [consumers](#) like to remain totally anonymous to sellers. At the other end of the spectrum, there are those whose attitudes to all kinds of marketing are positive and who are happy to make their personal data available to marketers.

The study offers more in-depth information to those companies in the process of selecting their marketing channels. The results are particularly noteworthy because of the revolution in marketing brought on by social media and other new [digital marketing](#) channels, which emphasises the importance of the consumer preferences for marketing channels.

**More information:** Dissertation PDF:  
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