

# The effect of customer knowledge management on innovative marketing

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## Abstract

The purpose of the current study is to propose a new research model to test the relationship customer knowledge management and innovative marketing in Iraqi industrial organizations. According to the research design, methodology, and approach, testing was completed in the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Minerals through three main keys: identifying the knowledge gaps, reviewing the literature, and building postulated concepts. The research model was a case study form supplemented by a quantitative methodology using the community statistical package, where (SPSS) and (AMOS) were employed. The research results revealed that customer knowledge management significantly affects innovative marketing in industrial organizations. The research value is expressed in the fact that this research provides new insights into customer knowledge management and innovative marketing in emerging economies such as Iraq.

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## Keywords

customer knowledge management, knowledge about customer, knowledge of customer, knowledge of customer, innovative marketing

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Knowledge management is one of the modern concepts in the science of management, which has increased interest in it during the last two decades (Al-Issawi et al., 2018)\* Knowledge is considered the basis for competition, as it is the main resource for the survival and development of the organization's work &Salman & Saeed & Raheemah ,2019) , Today, in global economy, intangible knowledge plays a vital role in competitive advantage, as knowledge within the organization is a basis for producing more knowledge (Mohammed, 2019:158). Our social reality is constantly changing, as it has evolved from an industrial society to an information society and finally to a knowledge-based society, due to the knowledge management revolution global competition and ever-increasing customer's demands. (Bueren, et al, 2005) (Afri et al, 2023). Organizations have

acknowledged that knowledge is the main value driver in innovative organizations. (Chernetska, 2017). Thus, organizations work to gain a competitive advantage in the respective industry, because they require effective tools, programs, and strategies to enhance their competitive position to improve the value of their activities, increase their efficiency and effectiveness, as well as adapt to continuous environmental changes (Mohammed, 2022). , If knowledge management is defined as an essential activity and tool to maintain competitive advantage and improve organizational performance (Mohammed, A. A et Al: 2017 ) , Customers represent a source of knowledge, so that organizations have begun to realize the importance of knowing their customers better to provide products and services. (Kaoud, 2017). The new methods emphasize using customer knowledge

management as a key resource for delivering new and innovative results. Therefore, organizations have recently tended to employ customer knowledge management by involving customers in the operations to benefit from their knowledge and ideas. (García-Murillo, 2002)

Aghamirian (2015) sees that customer knowledge management is a new organizational method to grasp, exchange and use information, knowledge, experience and ideas related to the customer (Hamzah, 2016). The customer could be a partner in the process of finding knowledge in cooperation with the organization to make value for both parties in order to provide better products. Organizations have increased interest in integrating innovation into marketing activities. Yasser et al., (2018) see that innovative marketing is the ability of the organization to find many opportunities for growth and investment in the market by increasing sales, achieving profitability, and customer satisfaction. This implies that in Iraq, the innovator who can develop new markets the fastest will also be the one who can transform risks into opportunities in the future and profit from them. Despite the challenges faced by industrial organizations in terms of collecting data about customers and the ability to exploit this data in providing innovative products, solutions must be proposed. This study shows that most departments of industrial organizations do not realize the importance of customer knowledge management and its role in providing innovative products, as it enables the organization to achieve a competitive advantage, increase its profits, and outperform its competitors in the markets. There are very few research regarding customer knowledge management, where no empirical investigation which correlates customer knowledge management to innovative marketing directly exists in the context of the Middle East or developing countries. Thus, adopting the quantitative approach, it is necessary to find out the effect of customer knowledge management on innovative marketing in Iraqi industrial organizations. In general, these facts raise research questions:

1. To what extent does the company under study apply the dimensions of customer knowledge management?
2. What is the level of interest of the organization under study in innovative marketing?
3. Is there a correlation and effect between customer knowledge management and innovative marketing?

## Developing the theory and hypotheses

### The concept of customer knowledge management

In the 1980s, people and organizations, especially international organizations, recognized the increasing importance of information as a crucial element in the competitive environment. Those organizations tended to focus increasingly on the quality of services, responsiveness, diversity, and customization, which made several organizations to stress on knowledge. (Kadhim, 2022). At the end of the 1980s, there were extensive debates on the topic, which led to the publication of several research addressing how to manage knowledge explicitly across a number of years and a brief period. However, many managers at that time did not understand the significance of knowledge properly. Most writers and researchers in administrative, economic and social sciences agreed that customer knowledge management should link the external environment with the internal environment of the organization through the transfer and sharing of information between the organization and customers and within the organization (Abdullah, 2021).

The knowledge that customers retain provides great benefits to them and to the organization as well, as it is considered as one of the resources that support the research and development process. Therefore, organizations should focus primarily on gaining customer knowledge from understanding the customer's needs and desires for improving the products they offer and building real relationships with customers. Customer knowledge management focuses on the basic dimensions (knowledge of customer, knowledge from customer, knowledge about customer), because of the effect of these dimensions on strategic decisions that can bring about changes in products and processes, leading to a positive effect on sales and then achieving the goals of the organization. (Centobelli et al, 2019). The following is an explanation of each of the dimensions:

### Knowledge of Customer

This kind of knowledge is vital, as Valacherry et al, (2018) maintain that it enables the organization to retain existing customers and acquire new ones, and contributes to achieving the basic goals of the

organization. Trejo et al, (2016: 46) indicated that knowledge of customer provides the customer with information about the various products offered by the organization, as this type of knowledge helps the customer choose products that meet his aspirations, and his dealings with the organization are continuous and positive (Gibbert, M., Leibold, M. , & Probst, G. 2002). Hence, this creates a vision that clarifies to the customer the direction of the organization that tends to achieve his satisfaction, increase his loyalty and maintain it, and build positive relationships with him by providing distinguished goods and value-added services that the customer seeks to obtain through consumption.

Q1: Is there an effect correlation between customer knowledge and innovative marketing?

### Knowledge from customer

Munawar et al, (2018) believe that knowledge from customer must be integrated into the organization's new strategies to obtain new, innovative and creative ideas, as well as making continuous improvements to the products and services provided by the organization. Kakhki et al, (2021) emphasize that customers possess knowledge about the products they use, where it is valuable because it improves the procedures for improving products and services. Therefore, effort should be made to redirect this knowledge to the organization. Valacherry, (2020) believes that the customer is a generator of ideas, as his needs and complaints can be integrated into the process of adding value, whereby the organization would be able to think about new strategies and functions based on customer knowledge flows.

Q2: Is there a correlation effect between customer knowledge and innovative marketing?

### Knowledge about customer

Knowledge about customers and markets are opportunities that enable the organization to make quick and flexible decisions in the face of threats facing organizations (Gebert, H., Geib, M., Kolbe, L., & Brenner, W. (2003). Therefore, organizations should create a customer database that contains all the necessary information that the organization needs about the customer and update it continuously. This knowledge can be obtained through information about the interaction of customers with the organization. (Mocanu, 2020).

Many researchers believe that organizations that have good and developed systems and databases help improve the levels of service provided by organizations. Del Vecchio et al, (2020) believe that organizations that have good and developed systems and databases help improve the levels of service provided by organizations.

Q3: Is there a correlation effect between customer knowledge and innovative marketing?

### Innovative marketing

Numerous new and distinctive categories of customers have emerged as a result of the changes that have taken place in the cultural and social environment. Therefore, organizations realize that survival and continuity in light of strong competition is through innovation in product design and also through distribution channels and tools that they use in marketing communication processes. (Sattari & Mehrabi, 2016). Drucker was the first to combine innovation with marketing. Innovative marketing is defined as introducing something new, whether with products, ideas, technologies, or others, where these ideas are revised in response to market demands according to a new method. Kotler & Armstrong (2010) view innovative marketing as organizations' continual striving to improve products and marketing. Therefore, organizations that neglect and ignore innovation processes will eventually lose their customers. Al-Naimi et al., (2016) believe that innovative marketing is an organizational philosophy aimed at the company that focuses its efforts and marketing activities on customers and related marketing work in light of providing the products they desire. These activities represent untapped opportunities by other companies to provide the best products and achieve customer satisfaction. Ilic et al, (2014) agreed with Ferrell et al, (2011) and Jawad et al, (2021) on the combination of elements on which innovative marketing is based, as follows:

- A. Making improvements in product designs through changes in shape, packaging, and others.
- B. Implementing new pricing strategies. Innovation processes refer to the use of new pricing strategies and methods to market the organization's goods or services.
- C. Employing a new retail concept by introducing new distribution channels.
- D. Employing the concept of promotion is a set of activities to communicate with customers by various

new means, for example providing advertisements on social networks to achieve excellence.

Q2: What is the level of interest of the organization under study in innovative marketing?

### The correlation between innovative marketing and customer knowledge management

Innovative marketing and customer knowledge management are basic concepts in the world of business and commerce, as they contribute to achieving organizational goals and increasing customer satisfaction (Bratianu et al, 2021). Innovative marketing is characterized by focusing on finding new and innovative solutions to problems faced by customers (Migdadi 2021), while customer knowledge management focuses on understanding customers' needs and analyzing their behavior to improve their experience with the products or services provided. Innovative marketing helps organizations achieve more success and sustainability, through which new products or services can be developed that better meet customer needs than existing products. (Fidel et al, 2016)

Focusing on innovative marketing can increase profitability and create a competitive advantage over competitors. It can also improve brand image and increase customer loyalty. The integration of customer knowledge management in the innovation process positively affects product innovation. Customer knowledge management theory emphasizes the importance of acquiring and using customer knowledge to enhance business performance, including innovation in marketing strategies. Quaye et al, (2019) proposed three forms of customer participation in innovation: customer participation as a source of information, customer participation as co-creators, and customer participation as innovators.

Idrus, (2023) states that customer knowledge management positively affects marketing results and enhances innovative efforts in organizations. Organizations can use innovative marketing to better interact with customers, and listen to their feedback and suggestions. (Zhang et al., 2019). Innovative marketing helps organizations better understand what customers want and improve their services and products accordingly. It can improve the customer experience and make it more personal and distinctive, which increases their level of satisfaction and increases the chances of success for the organization.

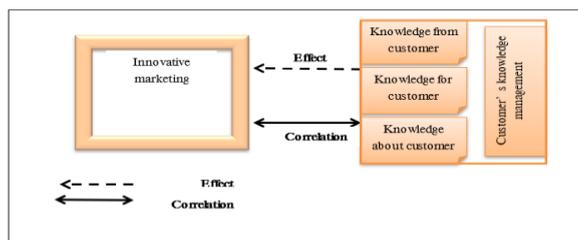


Figure (1) shows the theoretical model with the proposed hypotheses.

The source: The table was made by the researchers

## Research Methodology

### Research Design, Data Analysis and Measurements

The quantitative research design was chosen to meet the research objectives and questions because it provides accurate statistics on accuracy. SPSS and AMOS were used to examine the hypothetical research model. Some of the proposed conceptual models have been used to provide a framework which correlates the research variables according to the five-point Likert scale. The research tool consists of two parts and the first variable consists of several sub-dimensions. Table 1 provides an illustration of each variable and identifies the source of the measurement.

Table No. (1) The structural structure of the research-approved questionnaire

Measurements	No. of items	Numbers of items	Sub-variable	The main variables
No. of researchers	2	1	Personal and general information about the research sample	Identification information about the research sample
(Muriel Perea, et al,2019)	5] /	5	knowledge from customer	Customer knowledge management
	/2] 6	5	Knowledge about customer	
	0/] /3	5	knowledge of customer	
(Kotler&Armstrong ,2016)	06] 00	5	+	Innovative marketing

Source: The table was prepared by the researchers

**The description of personal information**

Table (2) shows that the participants in the research were mostly males, with (66.4%), and approximately (27.9%) of the participants ranged in age from (40-49

years). Most of the respondents were from the number of their years of service (11-15 years), with a rate of (25.9%), and most of the respondents were holders of a bachelor's degree, with a rate of (51.4%).

Table (2) Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Category	Frequencies	Percentage	Variable
Male	93	66.4	Gender
Female	47	33.6	
Less than 30 years	30	21.4	Age
30-39 years	38	27.1	
40-49 years	39	27.9	
50-59 years	21	15.0	
60 years and older	12	8.6	
5 years or less	32	22.9	Years of service
6-10 years	32	22.9	
11-15 years	36	25.7	
16-20 years	16	11.4	
2-25 years	10	7.1	
26 years and older	14	10.0	
Prep	+	+	
Diploma	37	26.4	Academic achievement
Bachelor's	72	51.4	
Higher Diploma	15	10.7	
Master's	14	10.0	
Ph.D	2	1.4	

**Research community and sample**

The questionnaire was distributed to the different administrative levels (general manager, assistant general manager, heads of departments, division managers, and employees) of Al-Furat Chemical Industries Company affiliated to the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, who were (140) persons. The questionnaire was based on obtaining data for the practical side and included three parts: the first part included the information included in the research sample. The second part included measures related to customer knowledge management, and the third part included measures related to

innovative marketing according to the Liker scale. This was to verify the availability of research variables represented by (customer knowledge management) as an independent variable with its dimensions represented (knowledge from customer, knowledge about customer, knowledge of customer), and innovative marketing as a dependent variable and the nature of the relationship between them in the company under study, through a statistical method characterized with accuracy and clarity. The research variables and their sub-dimensions were coded as shown in Table (3).

Table (3) Coding the research variables and its dimensions

Numbers of items	English translation	Code	Variable/Dimension
Q1-Q7	Knowledge from customer	Fromcu	المعرفة من الزبون
Q8-Q14	Knowledge about customer	Aboucu	المعرفة حول الزبون
Q15-Q21	Knowledge of customer	Ofcu	المعرفة للزبون
Q28-Q22	Innovative marketing	Inma	التسويق الابتكاري
Q28-Q1		Total	

**Tests of Validity Reliability (Confirmatory Factor Analysis)**

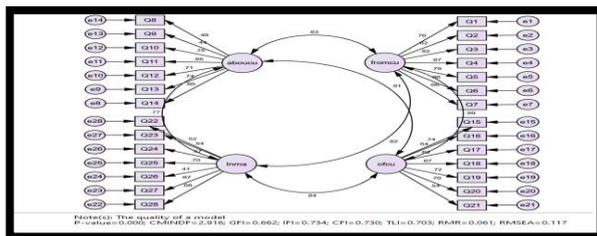


Figure 2: Primary confirmatory factor analysis

Figure (2) presents the results of the quality indicators of conformity to the items of the questionnaire as a whole (the initial measurement model), which includes 4 concepts and 28 questions using the confirmatory factor analysis technique to improve the suitability of the model.

It is clear from Figure (2) that the saturation rates for all paragraphs are higher than the standard range (40%). By observing the indicators of the quality of conformity, some of them did not achieve the standard ratios (GFI = 0.662, IFI = 0.723, CFI = 0.730, TLI = 0.703, RMR

= 0.061). Therefore, the researchers tended to add landmarks or paths by linking the paragraphs of common variance, and after correlating them to the

paths mentioned in Table (4), the model achieved the standard ratios for all indicators, as shown in Figure (3).

Table (4) Paths added between paragraphs

No	Items	Decision
/	e1 <--> e2	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 27.7
0	e1 <--> e4	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 12.5
1	e4 <--> e5	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 11.8
2	e6 <--> e7	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 9.12
3	e8 <--> e13	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 10.8
4	e9 <--> e13	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the modification index 10.1
5	e12 <--> e14	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment indicator 13.1
8	e15 <--> e16	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 29.6
9	e18 <--> e20	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 12.6
10	e22 <--> e23	Adding a path between the two paragraphs based on the amendment index 56.5

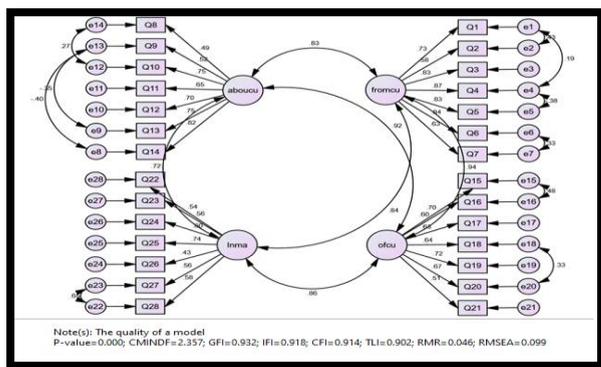


Figure (3) Modified confirmatory factor analysis

Furthermore, it is noted that all the 28 paragraphs achieved a saturation rate greater than (0.40) and a significant level (0,000), which indicates that the paragraphs conform to the purpose for which they were prepared and they were able to represent the variable. Table (6) shows the results of the factorial analysis of the research variables, noting that the Composite Reliability is (CR>0.70) and the average variance extracted is (AVE>0.50). In addition, the indicators of conformity quality have achieved the required percentages, and with them all the conditions of structural modeling and all indicators have been fulfilled.

Table (5) Results of confirmatory factor analysis

Estimated Variation	Standard deviation	Calculate C.R	Level of Sig.	Cronbach coefficient	Average variance extracted	Confirmatory analysis	Dimension +++< item	Dimension
1.000				0.910	0.422	0.790	fromcu+++< Q1	Knowledge from customer
.827	.110	7.488	(((					
1.245	.120	10.350	(((					
1.116	.101	11.007	(((					
1.117	.113	9.878	(((					
1.076	.099	10.906	(((					
.751	.094	8.008	(((					
1.000				0.847	0.510	0.855	aboucu+++< Q8	Knowledge about customer
.669	.072	9.294	(((					
.781	.088	8.853	(((					
.606	.077	7.893	(((					
.757	.080	9.439	(((					
.405	.080	5.084	(((					
.529	.094	5.607	(((					
1.000				0.841	0.511	0.841	ofcu+++< Q15	
.912	.123	7.445	(((					
.794	.111	7.176	(((					
.796	.103	7.736	(((					
1.136	.136	8.351	(((					
.822	.100	8.205	(((					
.568	.092	6.151	(((					
1.000				0.783	0.639	0.912	Inma+++< Q22	Innovative marketing
.939	.135	6.951	(((					
.578	.130	4.443	(((					
1.028	.144	7.149	(((					
.867	.144	6.018	(((					
.743	.130	5.709	(((					
.678	.123	5.501	(((					

### Testing the research hypotheses

1. Analyzing the results of the correlations between the two research variables (testing the first main hypothesis and its subs)

A- Analyzing the results of the correlation between customer knowledge management and innovative marketing at the macro level.

Table (5) shows the results of the correlation between the two research variables. The value of the association was (0.771\*\*), which is a strong significant direct correlation. This means that the more the company pays attention to customer knowledge management, the more innovative marketing will be.

Table (6) The value of the correlation between customer knowledge management and sustainable promotion

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Correlation value	Level of sig.
Knowledge customer management	Innovative marketing	0.771**	...

Source: The table was prepared by the researcher based on the statistical program (SPSS v25).

B- Analyzing the results of the correlation between the dimensions of customer knowledge management and innovative marketing. Table (7) shows the results of the correlation as follows:

- The value of the correlation coefficient between the dimension (knowledge of customer) and innovative marketing (0.680) and the level of significance (0,000) were noticed.
- The value of the correlation coefficient between the dimension (knowledge about customer) and

innovative marketing (0.579) and the level of significance (0,000).

- The value of the correlation coefficient between the dimension (knowledge of customer) and innovative marketing (0.673) and the level of significance (0,000).

From the foregoing, the first main hypothesis and the sub-hypotheses were accepted.

Table (7) the values of the correlation between the dimensions of customer knowledge management and innovative marketing

Correlation and level of significance		Independent variable customer knowledge management	Dependent variable
Correlation value	0.680**	Knowledge from customer	Innovative marketing
Significance level	...		
Correlation value	0.579**	Knowledge about customer	
Significance nlevel	...		
Correlation value	0.673**	Knowledge of customer	
Significance level	...		

Source: The table was prepared by the researcher based on the statistical program (SPSS v25).

2. Analyzing the results of the effect between the two research variables (testing the second main hypothesis and its subs)

A- Testing the second main hypothesis. The results shown in Table (8) indicated the results of the effect of customer knowledge management on innovative marketing, as there was a significant effect between them, as the calculated F-value was (146.19), which was

higher than the tabular value of (3.49) at a significant level (0,000), while The coefficient of determination was (0.506). This means that customer knowledge management accounts for (50.6%) of innovative marketing. According to what was mentioned, the second main hypothesis is accepted, which states (there is a statistically significant effect of customer knowledge management in innovative marketing).

Table (8) The effect of customer knowledge management on innovative marketing

T sig.	Calculated	R correlation coefficient	coefficient of determination R2	Calculated F	Sig. of F	constant limit value a	beta coefficient (B&	Dependent variable	Independent variable
...	12.09	0.711**	0.506	146.19	...	1.072	0.751	Customer knowledge management	Innovative marketing

Source: The table was prepared by the researcher based on the statistical program (SPSS v25).

b- The effect between the dimensions of customer knowledge management and the innovative marketing variable.

Table (9) shows that there was a correlation effect between the dimensions of customer knowledge management in innovative marketing, as the dimension (knowledge from customer, knowledge about customer, knowledge of customer) affects innovative marketing.

This effect is supported by the calculated F-value of (122.68), (72.16) and (118.42), respectively, which is greater than the tabular value and at a significant level (0,000). The coefficient of determination was (0.462), (0.335) and (0.453), respectively. According to the above, the second main hypothesis and its subs are accepted.

Table (9) The effect of customer knowledge management dimensions on innovative marketing

T sig.	Calculated	R correlation coefficient	coefficient of determination R2	Calculated F	Sig. of F	constant limit value a	beta coefficient (B&	The Dependent variable	The independent variable
...	11.07	0.680	0.462	122.68	...	1.61	0.59	Innovative marketing	Knowledge from customer
...	8.49	0.579	0.335	72.16	...	1.63	0.61		Knowledge about customer
...	10.88	0.673	0.453	118.42	...	1.46	0.656		Knowledge of customer

Source: The table was prepared by the researcher based on the statistical program (SPSS v25).

## Conclusions and recommendations

### Conclusions

This study develops a theoretical model to understand whether customer knowledge management has an effect on innovative marketing in Al Furat Chemical Industries Company. It was found that the research sample uses the dimensions of customer knowledge collectively to enhance its ability to support innovative marketing for its products and for the company under study better than using each of these dimensions individually. This leads to a conclusion about the existence of interdependence between these dimensions, which in turn is reflected in the increase in the innovative marketing of Al-Furat Company. It also reflects the efficiency of the company under study in adopting the dimensions of customer knowledge management (knowledge from customer, knowledge about customer, knowledge of customer) versus innovative marketing, which will lead to discrimination in its work and achieve great success and competition.

### Recommendations

Customer feedback is a valuable source of information for the company being studied since it contributes to developing new goods. The organization uses the data that consumers supply to help with product development and design. The company must adopt strategies based on close cooperation with the customer, with an emphasis on

opening educational courses for its employees on customer knowledge management and innovative marketing. These courses should be provided by specialists in these fields in order to promote these concepts and then achieve the basic competitive position through presenting products via innovative marketing methods.

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