

## **INFLUENCE OF MARKETING FACTORS ON THE BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF RURAL TELECOM USERS OF PUNJAB AND CHANDIGARH**

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### **Abstract**

Consumer buying behaviour is the decision process and acts of the people involved in buying and using the products. Today is the world of consumer oriented market. Consumers are provided with hundred of choices to buy a product. So it has become imperative for the marketers to understand the consumer's needs and wants in order to satisfy them. For the marketers to retain their business it is very important to make available the better options to the consumers. Telecom sector is the fastest growing sector not only in urban area but in rural area also. The present study aims at understanding the impact of the marketing influences on the buying behaviour of rural telecom customers.

### **Introduction:**

According to Stuart Rose, "If you wait for customers to tell you that you need to do something, you're too late. Good business leaders should be half a step ahead of what customers want i.e. they don't actually quite know they want it. That's what innovation's about. With plan A, we didn't wait for the consumers to tell us"

Today is not the day to wait for the consumers. They are available with hundreds of choices and so it is very important for the marketers to understand their behaviour. Consumer behaviour is defined as the behaviour of the individuals in searching for purchasing, using, evaluating and

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disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. Consumer behaviour is the sum total a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intention and decisions regarding the consumer behaviour in the market place when purchasing a product or service. Consumers play an important role as much of their time is spent in the market place doing shopping. So it is important to understand consumer behaviour. For marketing point of view, understanding consumer behaviour is crucial to successful delivery of firms offering in the market place. Various marketing application areas of consumer behaviour knowledge are- market opportunity analysis, market selection, marketing mix determination, marketing strategy and effective regulatory policy. Marketing has made a paradigm shift from transactional approach to relational approach. The past two decades have brought dramatic changes in the marketing environment, leading to a rethinking of the marketing discipline. As markets matured and customers became a scarce resource, retaining customers by establishing and maintaining long term relationships has become crucial in order to have a competitive advantage in the market. In an era of intense competition and demanding customers, relationship marketing has emerged as a dominant paradigm and become increasingly important across all industries, particularly in the service industry.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the fastest growing segments of Indian economy. Liberalization of telecom sector in India aims at improving accessibility, availability, reliability and connectivity through private sector participation and to bring about much needed improvement in the quality of Service. The growth in the telecom sector is not only visible in the urban area where as it is also in the rural areas. The TRAI report shows the subscriber base was 33.14 million as on March 2007 to 323.27 million in March 2012 and 342.5 million in March 2013. National Telecom Policy (2012) was announced to transform India and to create an environment for attracting additional investments in the sector. The vision of this policy is to provide secure, reliable, affordable and high quality converged telecommunication services anytime, anywhere for social and economic development. The policy was made with the objective for increasing rural teledensity, high speed and high quality broadband access to all villages, to protect consumer interest, strengthen grievance redressal mechanism, recognition and creation of synergistic alliance of Public sector, adoption of green policy in telecom.

## **Review of literature**

**Brown (1950)** attempted to determine the factors which influence the buyer for selecting a brand. The study identified the eighteen factors which influence the buying decision of customer. The study concluded that customer pay more attention to the advertising because advertising presents facts about product, its price, packaging etc. highly influence the behavior of customers.

**Beckett (2000)** developed a consumer behavior matrix to articulate and classify consumer behavior in the purchasing of financial products and services. The model outlined four ideal types of consumer behavior: Repeat-passive, Rational-active, No purchase, Relational dependent which are examined in the light of consumer confidence and involvement in the financial products and services. By analyzing the consumer behavior matrix, bank providers attempted to identify appropriate strategies which are conducive to increased customer retention and profitability.

**Mattila and Wirtz (2000)** examined the impact of pre-consumption affect - pleasure and arousal - on consumers' post purchase evaluations. The results of this study suggest that pleasure and arousal, the two dimensions of emotional responses to the preprocess service environment, may interact in determining post-purchase evaluations. The interaction effect was observed for global satisfaction judgments and for repeat purchase behavior, thus suggesting that the combined effects of arousal and pleasure need to be considered in the design of pre-consumption service settings.

**Sun (2005)** attempted to investigate the issue whether promotion has any effect on consumption and provide insight behavioral explanations with the help of developed structural model that recognizes consumers as rational decision makers. The model speculate that the higher the degree of flexibility of consumption, the bigger the effect of promotion on consumption.

**Alvarez and Casiells (2005)** examined the influence that sales promotion has on brand choice behavior. To influence consumers' buying behavior, companies have launched strong promotional campaigns or introduce changes in their price policies. The study stated that the price of products and brands at the moment of the purchase constitutes a variable of interest. The study concluded that promotions based on price have the greatest effectiveness. The author

confirmed that price promotions have a greater impact on consumer behavior than other promotions.

**Assael H. (2006)** formulated a simple model of consumer behavior, emphasizes the interaction between the marketer and the consumer. According to author the two broad influences determine the consumer's choice. The first is the individual consumer whose needs, perceptions of brand characteristics and attitudes towards alternatives influence brand choice. The second influence on consumer decision making is the environment which is represented by cultural, subcultures and face to face groups. Post purchase experience directly influence whether the consumer will buy the same brand again.

**Erda(2008)** conducted a comparative study on buying behavior of rural and urban consumer in regard to mobile phones. The study was conducted to assess the similarities and differences between buying behavior displayed by both urban and rural consumers. For the study sample of 400 respondents are collected, 200 from each rural and urban area from Jamnagar district. The study shows that maximum respondents from the rural area fall in the age group of 20-30 years, male, where as females using mobiles in urban is greater than females in rural area. Maximum respondents are under graduates hence students have the maximum share. Regarding the purchase decision of the respondents from rural sample maximum respondents take self decision only even more than urban sample, followed by family help and friends.

**Singh and Goyal (2009)** studied the buying behavior of mobile handset user of different age and gender groups. The prime objective of the study was to understand the variation in the importance given by different age and gender groups. The study concludes that mobile handset use of age group of 18-30 are less price sensitive than consumers of other groups, rather they consider physical appearance , brand, value added features and core technical features more important.

**Toor (2009)** described some of the Best Practices for Improved Customer Relationship Management in order to gain competitive edge and market dominance. According to the author, retaining and enhancing relationships with current customers is the number one business issue,

followed by attracting new customers. There is an increased need to constantly reengineer business strategies that improve the customer experience and increase profitability for the company. Decision makers should investigate the attractiveness and suitability of sales solutions targeted towards improved customer relationship in order to advance revenue growth and margin expansion.

**Tripathi and Singh (2012)** conducted a study to analyze the consumer buying behavior and preferences towards the usage of mobile and consumers search things for their need satisfaction. It also attempts to find that how the consumers react and respond towards advertisement. Sample of 80 customers has been collected based on simple random sampling. The study revealed that the demographic characteristics effect the purchase decision of the consumers that include the gender, age, marital status, education, occupation, income. The study reveals that there are different purposes to buy to use a mobile phone; the choice for a particular mobile service provider depends upon the quality of service, especially in tariff plans, network coverage. As the source of awareness is concerned, study shows that maximum respondents are influenced by the family and friends or advertisements.

**Haghshenas, Abedi, Ghorbani, Kamali and Harooni (2013)** reviewed consumer behaviour and the factors affecting their purchase decisions. The study concluded that to achieve competitive advantage customer's needs must be satisfied properly. The marketing mix should be according to the interests of customers to cover the interest, the company's competitive positive and to increase the profitability of the company. Market Segmentation techniques must consider client needs. The buying decision process in influenced by two factors- controllable and uncontrollable. The determinant factors of consumer involvement are previous experience, internal risk taking and social perspective.

**OBJECTIVES:** The main objective of the current study is to examine the impact of various marketing influences factors on the consumer behaviour.

**DESIGN OF THE STUDY:** Descriptive method of research was used to know the influence of Marketing factors on the purchase behavior of rural customers.

**POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE:** The term research population refers to all members of the group of interest to the researcher. The population of the present research was the customers who are using mobile services. The sample was randomly drawn from the Rural areas of Punjab and Chandigarh with the sample size of 200 customers. The questionnaire was personally administered to all selected respondents.

**RESEARCH INSTRUMENT USED:** The Questionnaire prepared consisted of Likert's five-point scale to measure the impact of various marketing factors where Strongly disagree was coded as 1 while strongly agree was coded as 5.

#### **RELIABILITY OF CRONBACH'S ALPHA**

Its reliability has been tested by applying the Cronbach Alpha whose value came out to be 0.765 which is acceptable indicating that the internal consistency of the questionnaire is good.

#### **ANALYSIS & FINDINGS**

The study aimed at finding out the different marketing factors that can effect the purchasing decisions of the telecom users in rural area.

**Table 1: ANOVA of rural Customers with Various Components of marketing influences based on gender**

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	P value.	
I give special consideration to brand image	Between Groups	3.802	1	3.802	4.024	0.046*	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	187.073	198	0.945			
	Total	190.875	199				
For me Word Of Mouth is an important consideration.	Between Groups	0.998	1	0.998	1.300	0.256	Insignificant
	Within Groups	151.997	198	0.768			
	Total	152.995	199				
Sales promotion offers and advertising is an important	Between Groups	4.480	1	4.480	4.730	0.031*	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	187.520	198	0.947			
	Total	192.000	199				
Exclusive applications offered by the providers is an	Between Groups	3.916	1	3.916	5.788	0.017*	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	133.959	198	0.677			

important factor	Total	137.875	199				
Advertising campaign is an important factor	Between Groups	0.503	1	0.503	0.799	0.372	Insignificant
	Within Groups	124.492	198	0.629			
	Total	124.995	199				
I give special consideration to call rate/tariff schemes/STD rates	Between Groups	1.818	1	1.818	3.762	0.054	Insignificant
	Within Groups	95.682	198	0.483			
	Total	97.500	199				
I give consideration to different plans for different set of consumers(students, working person)	Between Groups	1.554	1	1.554	2.191	0.140	Insignificant
	Within Groups	140.446	198	0.709			
	Total	142.000	199				
I give special consideration to Customer Care Services	Between Groups	5.327	1	5.327	8.881	0.003**	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	118.753	198	0.600			
	Total	124.080	199				
I give special consideration to the innovation in services and technology	Between Groups	3.374	1	3.374	5.116	0.025*	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	130.581	198	0.660			
	Total	133.955	199				
Special Offers to buy a handset from the service provider is an important factor	Between Groups	1.285	1	1.285	2.130	0.146	Insignificant
	Within Groups	119.495	198	0.604			
	Total	120.780	199				

Table 1 represents results of one-way ANOVA conducted on data collected from rural customers regarding various components of marketing influences. The ANOVA was conducted to find out if there exists some significant difference among the male and female rural customers. The results revealed the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘sales promotion offers’, ‘exclusive applications offered’, ‘customer care services’ and ‘innovation in services’.

**Table 2: ANOVA of rural Customers with Various Components of marketing influences based on age**

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
I give special consideration to brand image	Between Groups	12.812	3	4.271	4.701	0.003*	Insignificant
	Within Groups	178.063	196	0.908			
	Total	190.875	199				
For me Word Of Mouth is an important consideration.	Between Groups	0.714	3	0.238	0.306	0.821	Insignificant
	Within Groups	152.281	196	0.777			
	Total	152.995	199				
Sales promotion offers and advertising is an important	Between Groups	3.838	3	1.279	1.333	0.265	Insignificant
	Within Groups	188.162	196	0.960			
	Total	192.000	199				
Exclusive applications offered by the providers is an important factor	Between Groups	4.562	3	1.521	2.236	0.085	Insignificant
	Within Groups	133.313	196	0.680			
	Total	137.875	199				
Advertising campaign is an important factor	Between Groups	2.307	3	0.769	1.229	0.300	Insignificant
	Within Groups	122.688	196	0.626			
	Total	124.995	199				
I give special consideration to call rate/tariff schemes/STD rates	Between Groups	3.047	3	1.016	2.108	0.101	Insignificant
	Within Groups	94.453	196	0.482			
	Total	97.500	199				
I give consideration to different plans for different set of consumers(students, working person)	Between Groups	0.826	3	0.275	0.382	0.766	Insignificant
	Within Groups	141.174	196	0.720			
	Total	142.000	199				
I give special consideration to Customer Care Services	Between Groups	3.944	3	1.315	2.145	0.096	Insignificant
	Within Groups	120.136	196	0.613			



	Total	124.080	199				
I give special consideration to the innovation in services and technology	Between Groups	3.055	3	1.018	1.525	0.209	Insignificant
	Within Groups	130.900	196	0.668			
	Total	133.955	199				
Special Offers to buy a handset from the service provider is an important factor	Between Groups	0.755	3	0.252	0.411	0.745	Insignificant
	Within Groups	120.025	196	0.612			
	Total	120.780	199				

Table 2 shows the results of one-way ANOVA conducted on data collected from rural customers regarding various components of marketing influences. The ANOVA was conducted to find out if there exists some significant difference among rural customers on the basis of age. The results revealed that there was no significant difference.

**Table 3: ANOVA of rural Customers with Various Components of marketing influences based on marital status**

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
I give special consideration to brand image	Between Groups	3.230	1	3.230	3.408	0.066	Insignificant
	Within Groups	187.645	198	0.948			
	Total	190.875	199				
For me Word Of Mouth is an important consideration.	Between Groups	0.957	1	0.957	1.246	0.266	Insignificant
	Within Groups	152.038	198	0.768			
	Total	152.995	199				
Sales promotion offers and advertising is an important	Between Groups	1.253	1	1.253	1.301	0.255	Insignificant
	Within Groups	190.747	198	0.963			
	Total	192.000	199				
Exclusive applications offered by the providers is an important factor	Between Groups	0.633	1	0.633	0.913	0.340	Insignificant
	Within Groups	137.242	198	0.693			
	Total	137.875	199				
Advertising campaign is an important factor	Between Groups	0.467	1	0.467	0.743	0.390	Insignificant
	Within Groups	124.528	198	0.629			
	Total	124.995	199				
I give special consideration to call rate/tariff schemes/STD rates	Between Groups	2.531	1	2.531	5.277	0.023*	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	94.969	198	0.480			
	Total	97.500	199				
I give consideration to different plans for different set of consumers(students, working person)	Between Groups	0.043	1	0.043	0.059	0.808	Insignificant
	Within Groups	141.957	198	0.717			
	Total	142.000	199				
I give special consideration to	Between Groups	0.025	1	0.025	0.040	0.841	Insignificant

Customer Care Services	Within Groups	124.055	198	0.627			
	Total	124.080	199				
I give special consideration to the innovation in services and technology	Between Groups	3.083	1	3.083	4.665	0.032*	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	130.872	198	0.661			
	Total	133.955	199				
Special Offers to buy a handset from the service provider is an important factor	Between Groups	1.163	1	1.163	1.925	0.167	Insignificant
	Within Groups	119.617	198	0.604			
	Total	120.780	199				

\*\*p<0.01 and \*p<0.05 levels

Table 3 shows the results of one-way ANOVA conducted on data collected from rural customers regarding various components of marketing influences. The ANOVA was conducted to find out if there exists some significant difference among rural customers on the basis of marital status. The results revealed consideration to ‘tariff plans’ and ‘innovation in services’ are the variables that showed the significant difference.

**Table 4: ANOVA of rural Customers with Various Components of marketing influences based on qualification**

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
I give special consideration to brand image	Between Groups	9.238	3	3.079	3.323	0.021*	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	181.637	196	0.927			
	Total	190.875	199				
For me Word Of Mouth is an important consideration.	Between Groups	7.468	3	2.489	3.353	0.020*	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	145.527	196	0.742			
	Total	152.995	199				
Sales promotion offers and advertising is an important	Between Groups	16.346	3	5.449	6.080	0.001**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	175.654	196	0.896			
	Total	192.000	199				
Exclusive applications offered by the providers is an important factor	Between Groups	13.293	3	4.431	6.971	0.000**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	124.582	196	0.636			
	Total	137.875	199				
Advertising campaign is an important factor	Between Groups	11.364	3	3.788	6.534	0.000**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	113.631	196	0.580			
	Total	124.995	199				
I give special consideration to call rate/tariff schemes/STD rates	Between Groups	6.925	3	2.308	4.995	0.002**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	90.575	196	0.462			
	Total	97.500	199				
I give consideration to different plans for different set of consumers(students, working person)	Between Groups	3.292	3	1.097	1.551	0.203	Insignificant
	Within Groups	138.708	196	0.708			
	Total	142.000	199				
I give special consideration to Customer	Between Groups	6.025	3	2.008	3.334	0.021*	<i>Significant</i>

Care Services	Within Groups	118.055	196	0.602			
	Total	124.080	199				
I give special consideration to the innovation in services and technology	Between Groups	6.616	3	2.205	3.395	0.019*	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	127.339	196	0.650			
	Total	133.955	199				
Special Offers to buy a handset from the service provider is an important factor	Between Groups	8.510	3	2.837	4.952	0.002**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	112.270	196	0.573			
	Total	120.780	199				

\*\*p<0.01 and \*p<0.05 levels

Table 4 represents results of one-way ANOVA conducted on data collected from rural customers regarding various components of marketing influences. The ANOVA was conducted to find out if there exists some significant difference among the rural customers on the basis of qualification. The results revealed the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘word of mouth’, ‘sales promotion offers’, ‘exclusive applications offered’, ‘advertisement campaign’, ‘consideration to call tariff’, ‘customer care services’, ‘innovation in services’ and ‘special offers to buy a handset’.

**Table 5: ANOVA of rural Customers with Various Components of marketing influences based on occupation**

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
I give special consideration to brand image	Between Groups	10.785	4	2.696	2.920	0.022*	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	180.090	195	0.924			
	Total	190.875	199				
For me Word Of Mouth is an important consideration.	Between Groups	8.045	4	2.011	2.706	0.032	Insignificant
	Within Groups	144.950	195	0.743			
	Total	152.995	199				
Sales promotion offers and	Between Groups	10.587	4	2.647	2.845	0.025*	<i>Significant</i>

advertising is an important	Within Groups	181.413	195	0.930			
	Total	192.000	199				
Exclusive applications offered by the providers is an important factor	Between Groups	7.728	4	1.932	2.895	0.023*	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	130.147	195	0.667			
	Total	137.875	199				
Advertising campaign is an important factor	Between Groups	2.084	4	0.521	0.827	0.510	Insignificant
	Within Groups	122.911	195	0.630			
	Total	124.995	199				
I give special consideration to call rate/tariff schemes/STD rates	Between Groups	3.745	4	0.936	1.948	0.104	Insignificant
	Within Groups	93.755	195	0.481			
	Total	97.500	199				
I give consideration to different plans for different set of consumers(students, working person)	Between Groups	4.219	4	1.055	1.493	0.206	Insignificant
	Within Groups	137.781	195	0.707			
	Total	142.000	199				
I give special consideration to Customer Care Services	Between Groups	8.370	4	2.092	3.526	0.008**	<b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	115.710	195	0.593			
	Total	124.080	199				
I give special consideration to the innovation in services and technology	Between Groups	4.944	4	1.236	1.868	0.118	Insignificant
	Within Groups	129.011	195	0.662			
	Total	133.955	199				
Special Offers to buy a handset from the service provider is an important factor	Between Groups	4.247	4	1.062	1.777	0.135	Insignificant
	Within Groups	116.533	195	0.598			
	Total	120.780	199				

\*\*p<0.01 and \*p<0.05 levels

Table 5 represents results of one-way ANOVA conducted on data collected from rural customers regarding various components of marketing influences. The ANOVA was conducted to find out if there exists some significant difference among the rural customers on the basis of occupation.

The results revealed the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘sales promotion offers’, ‘exclusive applications offered’ and ‘customer care services’.

**Table 6: ANOVA of rural Customers with Various Components of marketing influences based on income**

Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
I give special consideration to brand image	Between Groups	14.824	3	4.941	5.501	0.001**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	176.051	196	0.898			
	Total	190.875	199				
For me Word Of Mouth is an important consideration.	Between Groups	17.766	3	5.922	8.583	0.000**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	135.229	196	0.690			
	Total	152.995	199				
Sales promotion offers and advertising is an important	Between Groups	28.685	3	9.562	11.475	0.000**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	163.315	196	0.833			
	Total	192.000	199				
Exclusive applications offered by the providers is an important factor	Between Groups	14.115	3	4.705	7.451	0.000**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	123.760	196	0.631			
	Total	137.875	199				
Advertising campaign is an important factor	Between Groups	9.028	3	3.009	5.086	0.002**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	115.967	196	0.592			
	Total	124.995	199				
I give special consideration to call rate/tariff schemes/STD rates	Between Groups	17.107	3	5.702	13.903	0.000**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	80.393	196	0.410			
	Total	97.500	199				
I give consideration to different plans for different set of consumers(students,	Between Groups	7.729	3	2.576	3.761	0.012**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	134.271	196	0.685			
	Total	142.000	199				

working person)							
I give special consideration to Customer Care Services	Between Groups	15.271	3	5.090	9.169	0.000**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	108.809	196	0.555			
	Total	124.080	199				
I give special consideration to the innovation in services and technology	Between Groups	10.240	3	3.413	5.408	0.001**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	123.715	196	0.631			
	Total	133.955	199				
Special Offers to buy a handset from the service provider is an important factor	Between Groups	7.525	3	2.508	4.341	0.005**	<i>Significant</i>
	Within Groups	113.255	196	0.578			
	Total	120.780	199				

Table 6 represents results of one-way ANOVA conducted on data collected from rural customers regarding various components of marketing influences. The ANOVA was conducted to find out if there exists some significant difference among the rural customers on the basis of income. The results revealed the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘word of mouth’, ‘sales promotion offers’, ‘exclusive applications offered’, ‘advertisement campaign’, ‘consideration to call tariff’, ‘special plans for different strata’, ‘customer care services’, ‘innovation in services’ and ‘special offers to buy a handset’.

**CONCLUSION:** The present study aimed at finding out the various marketing factors that influence the consumer’s buying behaviour. The results of one-way ANOVA showed various significant factors. In case of gender the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘sales promotion offers’, ‘exclusive applications offered’, ‘customer care services’ and ‘innovation in services’ For age factor, there is no significant difference. For marital status, the variables that showed the significant difference are tariff plans’ and ‘innovation in services’. In regard to qualification, the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘word of mouth’, ‘sales promotion offers’, ‘exclusive applications offered’, ‘advertisement campaign’, ‘consideration to call tariff’, ‘customer care services’, ‘innovation in services’ and ‘special offers to buy a handset. The results for occupation revealed the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘sales promotion offers’,



‘exclusive applications offered’ and ‘customer care services’. . In regard to their income level the variables that showed the significant difference are ‘brand image’, ‘word of mouth’, ‘sales promotion offers’, ‘exclusive applications offered’, ‘advertisement campaign’, ‘consideration to call tariff’, ‘special plans for different strata’, ‘customer care services’, ‘innovation in services’ and ‘special offers to buy a handset’.

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