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FACTORS THAT MAKE THE DIFFERENTIATION IN THE SERVICE SECTOR**AASHISH.C.I****ASST. PROFESSOR****DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & COMMERCE****AMRITA VISHWA VIDYAPEETHAM****MYSORE****ABSTRACT**

The promotion of economic activities offered by a business to its clients. Service marketing includes the process of selling telecommunications, health treatments, financial, hospitality, car rental, air travel, hair cut, counseling by lawyers and professional services. If we take any of the areas mentioned or otherwise, there will be services factor included in this. Some long years back, the service factor for only found more evidently in the industrial goods than fast moving consumer goods or perishable items. A few decades back of what services used to be for the high involvement products & that which has a low brand differentiation, has now started emerging even in the convenience goods & eatables. The growth in the competition & the technology saturation has given rise to the demand in the services factor in more or less every industry today. The differentiation was a part of the marketing before & also in the present context. But in the present marketing strategy, the organizations have to rely mostly in the way they offer services of their products in short & at large to the customers. As one of the popular saying goes "history repeats"- the companies have to sustain the present competition with service differentiation. The fact that the technology improvement goes hand-in-hand with service aspect, is evidently seen in the recent time because of fast changing requirement of customers expectation.

KEYWORDS

Service sector, service marketing.

INTRODUCTION

The historical perspective in the late-eighties and early-nineties, focused on creation and possession of wealth. Classical marketing executive's contended that goods were objects of value over which ownership rights could be established and exchanged. Ownership implied tangible possession of an object that had been acquired through purchase, barter or gift from the producer or previous owner and was legally identifiable as the property of the current owner. This barter exchange very slowly started with intangible things adding to the product.

Services marketing according to "American Marketing Management" is defined as the process of conceptualization of ideas goods & services which create exchange & that satisfy the individual & the organizational goals. India from the larger perspective has been fast changing & an ever growing market or economy. The features that the Indian market is concentrating more are the people, process & the physical evidence which are a very important factor for the success of the organization. The only reason being the ever changing requirement of customer's requirement & a cut-throat competition.

CONTENTS

The business at large and more so the marketing activities start with the product, price, place & promotion. These are called the 4 P's or the marketing mix. It is evidently seen that these 4 P's are good for the tangible products but the service sector requires professionalism in terms of the kind of training given to the people (employees), process (fastness) & the physical evidence (brochure), the main reason being the intangibility characteristics in services industry in the initial stages of creating awareness in marketing, the organization used to give advertisement & in today's world, no doubt that it is one of the major successful formula, but this might just not be sufficient to have competitive advantage. Therefore, the companies would have to concentrate on the kind of training that it imparts to the employees, the fastness in work that it has & to show the people with brochure as physical evidence. These 3 P's actually become important for the competition. As such understanding the minds of the customer is difficult because, customer's mind is a black box, cannot find out what's running in the minds of the customers as such. Therefore, it is said in services marketing that "instead of being a part of the problem, it is better to be a part of the solution". You should always make the first conversation comfortable so that half the battle is actually won in the beginning. Some of the examples are the hospital industry, the hotel industry, insurance sector, manufacturing sector etc.,. Customer's requirement mainly depends on the literacy level, either from the previous usage & looking for further improvement or from the technology itself. Services have become a part and parcel of the everyday's ever changing demand and challenge for the organization. The categories mainly depend on the brand differentiation or the involvement. It is like a high involvement product with low differentiation requires the expertise of the company's personnel sensitizing the nuances of its working. This can be understood in the context of somebody how knows how to drive a car, looks to be good but when it comes to drive a premium segment car's like Audi, it requires the company executives to actually make the customer learn the sensitive issues connected to its working. The significance of this is so much, without which many of the features in the car might not be utilized. One of these features are like, if the driver is wearing the seat belt, then only the air bags on all the other seat opens during any untoward incidents. If the seat belt is unplugged by the driver, the balloons don't open at all. This may look to be a small example of feature utilization but every thing happens, only when something goes wrong, till such time everything looks to be fine. This is one of the features, but there are many high intensity features like the micro-chip induction in the suspension for the sensitivity of the traverse of the dampers and its utilization. Some of the points mentioned above are so very important that it never takes the significance due to the characteristic of intangibility. Services are intangible economic activities offered by one party to another. Often time-based, performances bring about desired results to recipients, objects, or other assets for which purchasers have responsibility. In exchange for money, time, and effort, service customers expect value from access to goods, labor, professional skills, facilities, networks, and systems; but they do not normally take ownership of any of the physical elements involved. Even though the quality of the services cannot be defined or measured, an attempt should be made to ensure that a tracing of a good service is provided. At the same time, there should be a balance between how much of money is being spent on it and also the returns of investment, either in the form of straight away the money or it can also be in the form of customer loyalty. Marketing should look towards more of multiplication rather than addition. Even though addition of customers is important in the beginning, attracting the customers through service multiplies. Especially it looks to be evident in the hotel industry when connected to food, you are not sure of the quality of food that is being provided or the quantity. If we look at this little deeper, even the calories that is being served should also depend on the personality of the individual. India in the recent past has become diet conscious and the mix of the food items all depend on the preference of the customers like the north Indian thali or the south Indian thali which contains more of the chapathi and rice respectively. It is said that once lost customer is lost for ever, therefore concentration on the services will multiply the same.

According to the survey conducted, there can be many factors that are considered to find the satisfaction of the customers to that particular hotel starting from parking of the vehicle to the quantity. Typically two factors namely the quantity & the price in a small hotel located at Mysore is taken for the study & the inference is as follows:-

X represents number of people acknowledging for quantity & Y represents price in rupees. The data so collected is through questionnaire distributed to the customers in Mysore Karnataka. The same is depicted in the form of a tabular column.

TABLE 1

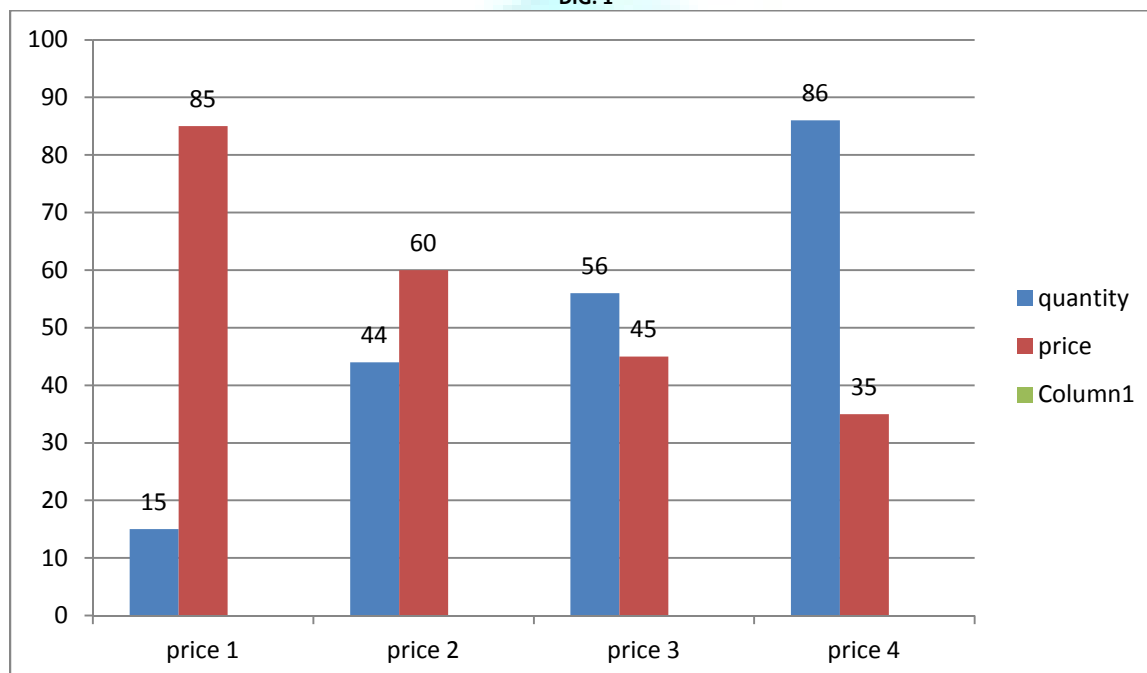
X Value	Y Value	X*Y	X*X	Y*Y
15	85	1275	225	7225
44	60	2640	936	3600
56	45	2520	3136	2025
85	35	2975	7225	1225
200	225	9410	12522	84075

Now, Substitute in the above formula given.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Correlation}(r) &= \frac{N\sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}} \\ &= \frac{(4)(9410) - (200)(225)}{\sqrt{[(4)(12522) - (200)^2][(4)(84075) - (225)^2]}} \\ &= \frac{(37640 - 45000)}{\sqrt{[50088 - 40000][336300 - 50625]}} \\ &= \frac{-7360}{\sqrt{10088 * 285675}} \\ &= -.134 \end{aligned}$$

The number above signifies that the quality & price does not have a strong correlation. Further it is that the permutations & combinations of quantity & price would take a deeper study, in the sense that few of the possibilities are one being customers in Mysore are looking at same quantity but may be at a lesser price or another possibility is that, they may be ready to pay little more higher but require a much better quality. The negative correlation in the calculation is a far stronger evidence for the same.

DIG. 1



According to the graph, the demographical characteristics are no different from that of the normal consumer behavior. As the price of the food increases, immaterial of the quality of food, the number of customers & the hotel preference is definitely selective. If we look at the last histogram, as the price reduced, the number of customers increase. But as all ways, the quality of the food is always questionable even though. As such, in any food related industry, it is very difficult to measure the justification of the quality of food & for the kind of price that is being paid. If we go little deeper into the subject of food, the quality of food is measured in terms of calories that is available for the price that we pay. But it is difficult to measure the calories. One other factor is that the price of perishable items fluctuates every day & the same cannot be changed in the menu so frequently. All that may differ mostly likely is that of the quantity of the food but even that also cannot be changed to such an extent, that it is noticeable. Having an understanding of its inventory, because vegetables being the perishable item, maintaining the consistency is far more a challenging task and many questions turned unanswered. That may be the reason for the graph showing its concentration of quantity and quality at the middle giving indications that, it is value for money. At the same time the correlation analysis shows that a negative relationship between quantity of food to price, meaning the two extremities of price being too high or price being low are not acceptable by the local customers. Else where, the market responses might be different with the graphical structure and behavior also. Therefore, customers here are not looking at quantity & price as a factor for their responses. In any case the hotel industry as such is quite lucrative and customers might probably be looking for some other factors. These are the indication of the change in the preference of the customers & the industry or the individuals business houses should react, so does the likes and preferences.

EXAMPLE

A) FEDERAL EXPRESS

Is a courier company delivering the post across the globe. One of the unique features of its operations are that as soon as the customers entry & an invoice is raised, an customer id & password is given, through which the customers can access & trace the actual location, path of the courier movement, including the signature of the person who took the delivery of the courier. According to statistics, 30% of the couriers never used to reach the designation. What if this 30% has a Pareto effect. The loss in this can be so huge that the multiplication factor reduces & there might be a day when there are hardly any takers for courier. Fed ex took this opportunity & made the best use & also a huge difference in terms of security & satisfaction.

B) AUTOMOBILE SECTOR

It is common now-a-days that customers are aware of the products, many a times much better than the companies executives, and it is also true that it's just not only sufficient to create awareness but also services are equally important. If we look at the statistics & analyses, today most of the automobile companies are spending money on services than marketing, such as offering free driving classes, pick & drop facilities of vehicles for engine overhauling, warranty coverage, free insurance, some accessories free etc. In this case, the importance is given more for the process, because customers would mostly want to see the procedure rather than the people or for that matter the physical evidence.

C) DOMINOS PIZZA

Dominos pizza has an edge over its competitors because of the kind of training that it has given to the employees, may be in the form of welcoming the customers during the time of taking orders. Another in its features, is the delivering the pizza with in 30 minutes, or else the delivery cost would be exempted. Rest assured that customer would get it with in the stipulated time. Hence the company has atleast 4-5 outlets in a city & it becomes easy to deliver within a stretch of 4 kilometers & might just take about half-an-hour.

D) TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

In the supply chain management, some companies like friendly logistics, Asia transportation management, Vijayananda road transports, DHL, TNT express, safe express, Blue Dart etc have connected with RFID (radio frequency identification) to its transport facility. As such, when the transport vehicles leave the station, it can be traced through the distance of which place it has reached after some time& when exactly it would reach the destination. In this case, it is the physical evidence in term's of the print out , which can be shown to the customers (retailers). It is like buying peace, when crores of business is happening. SCM has become more applied & important in the recent time.

E) TOURISM INDUSTRY

A tour package is less risky as compared to individual tourist places. In the recent past companies like Thomas &cook, BITS, Hot wheels etc., would take all the responsibilities of picking the customers from the spot, taking them to the tourist spots (accommodation included) & bringing them back to the same place has picked market & it is more of hassle free. Every procedure is taken care by the company. In other words, it is also called as package tour. Here all the 3 p's are of equal importance name the employee (people) have to be trained well to show courteness, the process should go smoothly & also they have to show the destination in the photo form.

CONCLUSION

The increase in the professionalism in almost every sector & especially the service sector has become so competitive, that unless otherwise, these features are added to the core working pattern, the success of the company will be at stake. The pattern of service emerging from this industry is in transition phase & will take some concrete shape in the days to come. Some of the organizations like the café coffee day has trained employees to treat the customers with salutation in the beginning because the punch line of CCD itself is "lot can happen over a cup of coffee", this is one such instance where, the important meeting of business people take place & thereby the chance of the same customers coming back to the shop also increases. In turn this helps in developing customer relationship management (CRM). In today's perspective, the companies are fighting hard to develop the loyalty of customers. At this point in time, it becomes even more important for the organizations to make the customers feel that "they are the king". By doing so, not only the loyalty increases but also the brand image of the organization also build up. The indications at least now seems more clear that the service factor simply cannot be neglected but some where a thin line has to be draw to ensure that marketing activities & operational factors have balance that is presently required. May be in the initial stages of marketing of what we call it to be the primitive age, the service factors such as instillation, maintenance etc were given less importance. But as and when the times passed, it started becoming clearer that the service factors surfaced more quickly than anticipated. Presently, the services factors have become evident and some of these factors on which the survey conducted showed that pricing as a factor could increase, but a quick serving of food with the right quantity and quality is taking the prime position. All these indication are clearer that the services factors in the near future will give the organization, the required competitive advantage. A faster adoption of these factors will help the companies to sustain for the short defined objectives and never the less the organizations can define the objectives for a long term. At the same time the companies should continue doing its core business with little modifications on the service factor, which is the call for the day.

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