

PERCEPTUAL MARKETING UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CUSTOMER

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Abstract:

The dynamics of marketing has seen a shift from the manufacture centred products to customer centred this article presents an in-depth view of the changing scenario of marketing work. Almost all behaviour of consumers that participate in markets are in one way or another linked to consumption. In order to compress this board subject into a more specified field, A division of consumer behaviour is selected in accordance with an area of interest which is consumer psychology. The psychology theories and marketing strategies to bring together the main ideas of consumer psychology. The fundamental elements accentuated in the theoretical framework of internal influences, which consists of perception, attention, and interpretation and also segmentation.

KEYWORDS: Perceptual Mapping, Consumer Psychology, Fundamentals, Segmentation.

INTRODUCTION

Perceptual mapping is a delineated method mostly used by marketers in an attempt to optically display the perceptions of the potential customers. Typically the orientation of a product, product line, brand or company is presented relative to their group action. Some perceptual maps use many diametric sized circles to indicate the market share and sales volume of various competitive products.

Perceptual maps are generally referred to have two dimensions even though they are capable of having several. For example, in this perceptual map you can see consumer perceptions of various automobiles on the two dimensions of sportiness/conservative and classy/affordable. This sample of consumers felt that Porsche cars were the sportiest and classiest of the ones in the study. They felt that Plymouth cars were the most practical and conservative.

PERCEPTUAL MAPPING

Perceptual Mapping is the graphical technique used by marketers to visualize the perceptions and opinions of consumers about products, product lines or brands. The position of the company with respect to the competitor can be represented by using a Perceptual Mapping. It is also called as product positioning.

Two dimensions

A perceptual map can be enclosed in many number of dimensions, but the least frequently preferred are the only two dimensions which are price and quality.

Example: When it is about different cars, perceptual mapping helps in providing information about the perception of consumers with respect to the dimensions: low performance/ high performance and low prestige/ high prestige.

Competition

According to consumers, cars that are close together in the Perceptual Mapping are comparable in terms of price and quality. US state applies to the brands like Ford, *Chrysler* Honda and Toyota. In this way, the company will get a clearer picture about the closest competitor and gets aware whenever a new model is going to be introduced in the market, the company will look for an area in the perceptual mapping which is already removed from that of the competition. Combination of various dimensions reflects the perceptual map to become more and more complicated, but for a company it will become clear in which area there is still market share to be captured.

Points for attention

The ideal points that consumer expects from a product can also be represented in perceptual mapping. When a company is considering the introduction of a new product, it will first looks in the areas with the highest points for attention density. In combination with the perception areas, a company will immediately understand what the competitors are aiming at.

Intuitive Perceptual Mapping

Perceptual Mapping can also be based on the marketers own spontaneous opinions and views. The marketers decisions are always based on their own experiences and understanding of the sector in their point of view. In a detailed market research there are chance of methodological problems in future, however the information is actually received directly from the consumer.

Different approaches

For the drawing up of a perceptual map, various statistical procedures can be used and implemented to collect and identify the raw data. Preferably, dimensions are used and implemented, but at the same time multidimensional scales and other ideal points for attention provides an understanding of the competitive position of a company. Furthermore, statistical methodologies such as discriminate analysis, logical analysis, cluster analysis, and factor analysis are utilized. In addition to this, some techniques have been built up from the sensed differences between products and others have been built up from sensed similarities.

CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY IN CONSUMPTION

Consumer behaviour in its broadest sense is concerned with understanding both how purchase decision are made and how are the products or services get consumed. Consumption psychology is referred to as the psychological characteristics. All consumers behavior are dominated by the psychology on consumption for the activities. The behaviour or assumptions of how consumers think, feel, reason, and select between the types of products available....like how a product is best positioned or how we can encourage the sales of the product

through increased consumption. Consumption of a public good, like a pleasant city park, can be experienced by many people at the same time. Decision-making about whether to build a park is done at a community level, not by an individual. Even within a household, both decision making and enjoyment of consumption may involve more than one individual. Adults may negotiate about what to produce or purchase. Many goods and services are also consumed by people while in their roles in business or other organizations.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: THE MARKETING VIEW

Marketing professionals have a job to do: they want to influence consumers toward purchasing their organization's product; for that the marketer needs to study the buying tendency of consumer. An individual who always goes for purchasing and end up purchasing products, but there are also several other stages a consumer goes through before purchasing a product from the available market. Consumer behaviour consists of various factors like cultural, personal, or psychological influence for taking the buying decisions of the individuals.

Firstly a marketer needs to identify his target consumer and start analysis their lifestyles, psychologies, income, spending, mentalities, purpose, and capabilities to offer them the right product.

For example: Kellogg's k special would hardly find any takers from the low income group. In this segment, the individuals will be more concerned of buying fresh vegetables, fruits, pluses which are necessary for their survival rather than spending their income on the health supplements. Its an obvious decision; coming to a consumer from a lower class group who will definitely be less concerned in buying expensive and luxurious products. He would first satisfy his daily basis needs like food, water, air and his necessary things to survive.

Is it really essential for the marketers to understand the need of consumers. Find out what they are actually looking for ??

There are two modern and different ways which enable marketers to understand consumers

- Primary research
- Secondary research

Primary Research- refers to a research methodology where marketers can interact with customers directly and collect as much information as they can. This method is played through different elements like questionnaires, survey, feedback forms, interviews etc.

Secondary Research- often refers to the information which has already been collected by others at some point of time.

The background and family status of an individuals also influence his/her buying behaviour. Here are some examples .

Selling a computer or a smart phone to an individual who is not much educated would be pointless. Marketers should always remember that consumers would show interest only when there is a use and purpose from the specific product. A low grade worker would never be curious to purchase a suit or formal shirt, that's correct actually. Where as canned juices are a hit among middle and higher income group people where these consumers are really conscious about their health and fitness. Individuals who live hard to mouth will never put a hand in spending money on sugar free tablets, health supplements and not even the canned juices.

That is why it is always important to give complete information to end users. Do not hide anything from them. It is not ethical. All alcohol beverages products come with a warning. Individuals should be familiar with not only the benefits but also the side effects of the products. Marketers must also take into account like Age group of consumer, geographical location, lifestyle of consumers, social status of consumers.

CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND BEHAVIOUR

Why do consumers want what they want? Why do they buy what they buy? The standard marketing view draws on a wide variety of research concerning individual motivations and social influences to answer these questions

People are motivated by many things, some positive and others not. There are factors motivating people within a short time itself.

Perception is the driving force by which the individual try to excel at a point by putting up their action. Motivation can also be said as the activation or energizer of goal oriented behavior. Perception can be intrinsic or extrinsic. This term is mostly used by humans but theoretically it can also be used to describe animal behavior as well. According to various theories, perception is rooted in the basic theme of minimizing physical pain and maximizing the pleasure to self. Motivation and perception is the related object to NEEDS, GOALS, and the TYPES of motivation.

NEEDS: Needs are the essence of the marketing concept. Usually marketers doesn't have the ability to create needs to the consumers but have the capability to make consumers aware of needs. A need is something that helps a consumer to live a happy and healthy life. Needs can be objective and physical such as food, water, shelter etc which satisfies consumer to survive physically or they can also be subjective and psychological, which is almost related to the mental health such as self-esteem, responsibilities, self-respect etc.... needs are everywhere, like in the fields of politics, social science and philosophy. Need can be classified into two:

Innate needs: refers to the biogenic needs which consider to be the primary needs or motives or principles.

Acquired needs: refers to the response to our environmental and cultural needs which is considered as the secondary needs.

GOALS: Goal and objective is referred as the same term, where a person or a system plant intends to achieve it. Goal is usually sought out after the results of motivated behavior is done. Goals are classified into two:

Generic goals: are general principles of goals expected by consumers which helps in fulfilling their needs

Product-specific goals: are specific branded products and services like Gucci, Swiss, fossil etc... that are selected by the consumers as their goals.

Positive and Negative motivation:

Positive motivation: is a response which includes emotion, entertainment, optimism about the task assigned or delegated. This positive motive induces people to work with more interest and in the best possible manner which also helps them in improving their performance.

Negative motivation: this is undertaken to control the negative efforts occurred by the environment factors around. Negative motive suffers from lack of good performance. Negativity concentrates on the concept of punishing the worker or employee when he fails to achieve the given possibility.

SEGMENTATION

Market segmentation is the process of delegating the market's potential customers into groups, or segments based on different characterizations. The segment created are composed of consumers who could respond according to the marketing strategies and share their traits which are similar to their interest, needs, or location.

The four common segmentation variables for consumer markets are:

Firstly, GEOGRAPHIC classified into country, region, city size, density, and climate. Secondly, DEMOGRAPHIC classified into age, gender, life-cycle, income, education, religion etc...

Thirdly, PSYCHOLOGICAL classified into social class, life-style, personality. Lastly, BEHAVIORAL classified into occasions, benefits, loyalty, attitude, user status etc.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SEGMENTATION:

social class: different types of consumers fall under many different social categories. This is mostly dependent on their buying power. The buying power is affected drastically by the background of the customers which refers to their income power and their spending habits. The customer will always buy to main his/her social standard.

Thus premium brands like Gucci, fossil etc are the target products of consumers to maintain their living standards.

personality: personality is the major psychological factor included in consumers understanding. Personality is dependent on both life style and social class. A person will have a rich personality only if he has high buying or purchasing power as well as the taste in clothes, foods, etc to maintain such a life style.thus the term “brand personality” came into effect. The reason for this is the different brands and different mentalities to target different personalities

Lifestyle: everyone has different styles, different ideas ,different styles of clothing habits based on their life style. The customer might be school going, college going, office going or other. Thus by lifestyles we mean, where does the customer stands in his own life cycle. This is how automobiles carry out for promotions.

Further, In perceptual mapping the third variable is mostly surrounded and implemented “PSYCHOLOGICAL SEGMENTATION”. Followed by the explanation; psychological segmentation which is sometimes called as psychometric segmentation which is measured to analyse and study the interests, activities, and opinions of customers. Psychological segmentation is a very widely used technique by marketers to identify tightly defined market segments and to understand consumer motivation better for product and brand choice. The optimal psychological segmentation model should meet several other criteria like:

- ✓ It should provide the important differentiation among other comparing segments.
- ✓ It supplies segments which contains internally consistent factors.
- ✓ It is capable of providing actionable insights.
- ✓ It creates answers which are stable and reproducible.
- ✓ Ability to balance predictability with practicality.

Example:

Consumers always recognize only the modern marketers and advertisers who collect wealth of information about prospects and consumers.As a result consumer always wants to attain brands to a higher standards

Here are some of the examples:

1) An individual who is considered as integration is almost certainly marked as the upper income group as they are blessed with a vast amount of wealth which will be able to live the life of a philanthropist whereas survivalist is a person who is considered as the top-lower income group ,who is continuously fighting to stay alive and satisfy his wants with that little amount of money to actually enjoy their lives. This is basic psychology of the middle class member and the top-class member.

2) Walmart- Walmart is naturally called as the Discount stores which target the middle -class budget savvy individual ,who always stay in a dynamo to save money wherever and whenever they can .As a result psychological segmentation study’s the past and present customer needs and trends , as a result Walmart designed few messages to attract consumer like “Unbeatable prices” and “Special Discount Online Offers “ to target consumers who are most interested in opting for discounted goods to save money.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, perceptual brand mapping can be an effective and efficient tool for marketers. Our belief is that it is often overlooked tool in the marketer’s toolkit. Perceptual mapping are a popular choice, when it comes to develop a business or a market while positioning strategy plans for a product or services. Generally perceptual mapping is a market research technique which is used to trace or plot the individual’s view on a product. Mostly, perception plays an important role in buyer life and they are know as perceptual maps. There are several reasons why a business or a market should apply perceptual mapping to make it more convient. It helps in knowing everything from adding new products to tracking preference changes, analyzing segments, clearing the gaps and having an eye on the competitors. Perceptual mapping is the major factor helps in making the most of a marketing strategy. By using perceptual maps a business or a market will be able to analyse what are the profits gained. Some of the benefits or profits gained by using perceptual marketing are:

- ✓ Attains a whole view of better understanding of market segments.
- ✓ Helps the marketers to know how the target markets perceives their brand in the market area.
- ✓ Gives access to the changing market position of the competitors.
- ✓ Solves the business spot gaps.
- ✓ Helps in closely monitoring preferences of consumers.
- ✓ Evaluates performances of the campaigns.
- ✓ Gives a check list of goals and responsibilities of consumer’s needs.
- ✓ Tracks the exact brand positioning place in the market.
- ✓ Gives a data analysis of how many new products have been added to the market positioning status

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