

MARKETING MANAGEMENT

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1. Introduction

Marketing management actually defines the operations and controls of marketing activities through different strategies based on which performance in a market is developed. It focuses on various people who are involved in the activities such as managers, employees, management professionals and others. Without proper marketing management, it is difficult to understand the effectiveness of marketing efforts. Therefore, in the present report, the marketing strategy development for an airline organisation in the UK, **British Airways** (BA) has been chosen. The problems in the organisation related to marketing have also been analysed along with its effects. Apart from this, the report has conceptualised the marketing strategies based on which the mentioned problems can be prevented. On the other hand, various communication channels have been defined for managing as well as evaluating customer journeys through which both the current and future stakeholders' expectations are met.

2. Critically Appraising Innovative Marketing Strategists for Increasing Brand Awareness

2.1 Role of Communication and integrated marketing communication

Communication can be defined as the process through which information can be transmitted and the same is understood by others.

Communication Model:

There are different models of communication such as Laswell model , Shannon and Weaver model, Charles Osgood's model. Schramm Model, George Gerbner's model and many more. This model provides information in terms of methods which is actually necessary for alleviation of any form of stress and negativities in the whole communication process.

Shannon and Weaver Model (1949):

This model transmits information through signal. Transmitter transmits message through defined channel to the receiver through which it reaches to the destination. This model can be used in both written as well as oral form of communication (Kapur, 2018).

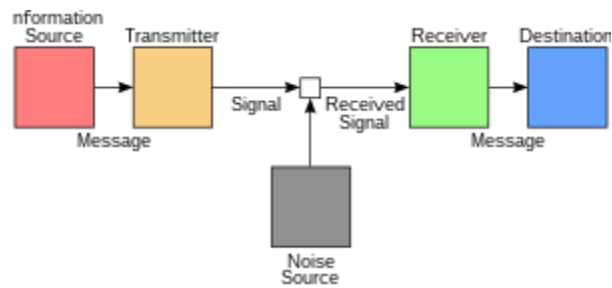


Fig. 01: Shannon and Weaver Model (Kapur,2018)

Online advertising on numerous social media platforms is one of the online promotional strategies British Airways may utilise to draw in clients. The younger generation is more social media savvy, so it will be easier for businesses to draw in their target audience. British Airways has a variety of offline tactics at its disposal for promoting its products offline, such as doing live product demonstrations or reaching out to potential buyers via telemarketing.

Here the discussion is based on implementing some innovative marketing strategies for enhancing the brand awareness of British Airways. This has been known that British Airways is facing some problems as the aviation industry has struggled during the span of the COVID-19 pandemic situation. This complicated condition of the pandemic has ruined brand awareness, and different barriers have come to continuing globalized aviation operations. It hampered the growth of the aviation industry in many countries and the same happened for British Airways. Many staff quit their job as many of them were migrant workers and many of them suffered from Coronavirus infection (Sky News, 2022). British Airways generated 70% less revenue in 2020 and that was 3.9 billion British pounds (Statista, 2022). Therefore, there was a situation of reducing the employees as the aviation services were blocked in many regions in the country and out of the country also. It is a vital cause of the staff shortage in British Airways presently. This kind of issue deteriorated the services of British Airways as a shortage of ground staff cannot maintain all services properly after the pandemic period.

2.1 Digital Technologies to Reduce Staff Shortage Issue

In the crisis of staff shortage, the installation of digitalized advanced technologies is necessary. As opined by Kloppenburg and Van der Ploeg (2020), biometric technologies are very important to reduce the manpower for checking humans, and most importantly, biometrics cannot lie about anyone's identity. Contrarily there is a limitation like biometric technologies cannot recognize the gender or ethnicity of the people.

2.2 Globalisation to Enhance Brand Awareness

Globalization is playing an important role in the changing situations in the aviation industry. In present days, globalization has affected almost every industry and establishment of a globalized level of products or services all over the world. In the airline industry, globalization initiates the establishment of high-efficiency operational activities at low fares for maintaining a standard facility worldwide (Redalyc, 2021). Digital technologies, especially social media technologies have played a crucial role in the development of globalization, but for going from one place to another for trade or tourism purposes, airlines become a key factor of globalization. So, British Airways needs to incorporate a cost-effective initiative to serve all national citizens and foreign people with a globalized service. This can be possible by installing different advanced technological supports that may increase the cost at the initial stage, but it can reduce the long-term costs and enhance the quality of services in British Airways (as influenced by Abu-Dalbouh, 2020).

2.3 Development of Reputation and Competitiveness for Brand Awareness

Through the installation of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and other advanced digital technologies as globalised services can be ensured, at the same time the reputation and competitiveness of Airways can be established. With the incorporation of some innovative technological incorporation, it can control costs and they can inform the customers about new developments through different marketing programs like content creation, social media advertisements, advertisements on television, personalized advertisements, and different offers. These can pull the customer base again so that Airways can get the scope to secure brand loyalty among their customers (Shanahan *et al.* 2019). Besides this, brand loyalty can be helpful to get competitive advantages. British Airways can open some vital routes that were stopped due to the pandemic and can do marketing as per needed. This is another scope to get competitive advantages. As opined by Joseph *et al.* (2020), brand loyalty is the potential to stimulate the profitability of Airways which is also a key factor in getting competitive advantages.

For an organized strategy development, ***Porter's Generic Competitive Strategies*** can be followed by British Airways. According to Islami *et al.* (2020), this strategic model is based on three strategies like low-cost, differentiation, and focus strategy. The analysis has shown that the differentiation strategy is more effective to enhance firm performance and competitive advantage than the other two strategies. Therefore, besides cost-effectiveness and focus on digitalised development, Airways needs to concentrate on differentiation to enhance its competitive

advantages. For initiating differentiation, it is required to analyse the marketing style, growth, and other work processes of the competitive airlines.

2.4 Information Management for Managing Crisis and Enhancing Brand Awareness

The pandemic has created a crisis for maximum industries in the global market and for overcoming the critical situation; companies need to use information in an organised way. As per the view of Sukhorukov *et al.* (2020), systemizing information management through advanced software can make airline services smooth, increase competitiveness and reduce cost. Management of big data helps to reduce unnecessary wastes of money, resources, and time and this can make the work process of any organisation human-error free.

The analysis of the crisis of British Airways especially due to the pandemic situation and the use of different innovative strategies has revealed the possibilities of brand awareness. Also, not only the social media advertisements and personalised marketing through digital platforms can ensure brand awareness, but also there is a need for the practical development of services in British Airways. For this, the incorporation of advanced digital technologies and maintaining the level of globalisation in airline services have discussed. (as inspired by Hu, 2021). Therefore, it can make up for the gap of staff shortage in British Airways. Porter's Generic Competitive Strategies have been analysed here and it can be understood that stress on the differentiation strategy can be best suitable for regaining reputation and competitiveness in the European as well as global market.

2.5 Role and Relation of Keller's Brand Equity Model

The brand equity model is a framework used to measure the value of a brand. It consists of primary dependent variables or brand equity dimensions such as components: brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand (Lee, 2015) or in other words, four levels are identify, meaning, Response and Relationships.

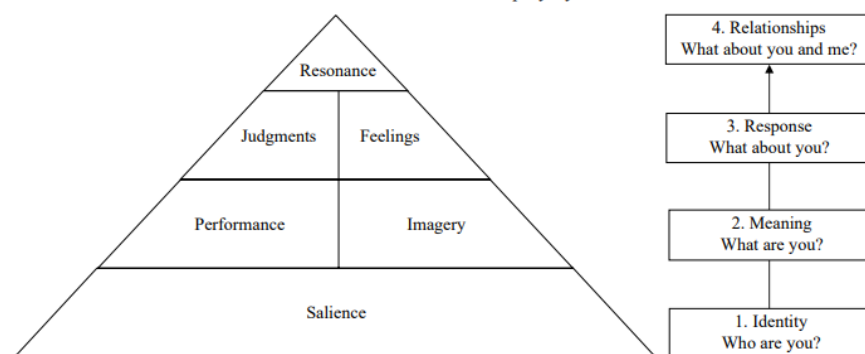


Fig. 01: Keller's customer-based Brand equity Model (Keller,2003)

Applying this model to British Airways, we can analyse its brand value. Keller's ARCS model provides a framework for designing effective learning experiences. Advantages include its focus on learner engagement and its flexibility for use in various learning contexts. Disadvantages include its emphasis on individual learner characteristics and potential oversimplification of complex learning environments.

British Airways being a service sector, needs an adjustment for measurement of brand equity according to consumer focus. In case of British Airways, brand trust depends heavily over consumer's inclination towards different intangible attributes which are generally offered in the form of services related to reservation, availability and reliability of flight, inflight and airport services.

Brand loyalty: British Airways has a loyal customer base due to its reputation for quality service and global reach. **Brand awareness:** British Airways is a well-known brand, with a strong presence in the airline industry. **Perceived quality:** In case of British Airways, as flight service quality generally have a subcontract involving various parameters such as inflight, reservation, availability, reliability, employees as well as airport. So, all these can be considered as perceived quality (Chen and Tseng, 2017). On the other side, British Airways is known for its high-quality service, both in-flight and on the ground. **Brand associations:** British Airways is associated with luxury and prestige, due in part to its history and its focus on premium services. Overall, British Airways has strong brand equity, due to its reputation for quality service and its association with luxury and prestige. Also, according to Thakshak (2018), flight service quality of BA has a positive affect over brand trust. However, it faces challenges in the highly competitive airline industry, and must continue to invest in maintaining and enhancing its brand value.

3. Evaluating and managing customer journeys across different communication channels for meeting stakeholder expectations

The main stages of Customer Journey are awareness, consideration, decision, retention and Advocacy.

Awareness: In this stage, customers/consumers become aware of product or their requirement, which can be achieved through marketing campaigns.

Consideration: In this stage, Consumers start considering product or service purchase actively which further involves comparison with other products through reviews or another source.

Decision: In this stage, consumer takes decision for a purchase of required product or service.

Advocacy: In this stage, consumers become active promoters of the Brand or product or service. It is through positive reviews, mouth to mouth publicity, referring etc.

Communication channels

The communication channels are the mediums through which a message is sent to the intended customers by the companies or marketers. Phone calls, text messages, emails, Whatsapp, video, Facebook, YouTube and others are considered under the communication channels based on which companies reach customers (Mustafa and Al-Abdallah, 2020). These channels are utilised to manage and evaluate customers' journeys to meet the services of BA with a proper satisfaction level.

Defining the customer journey map

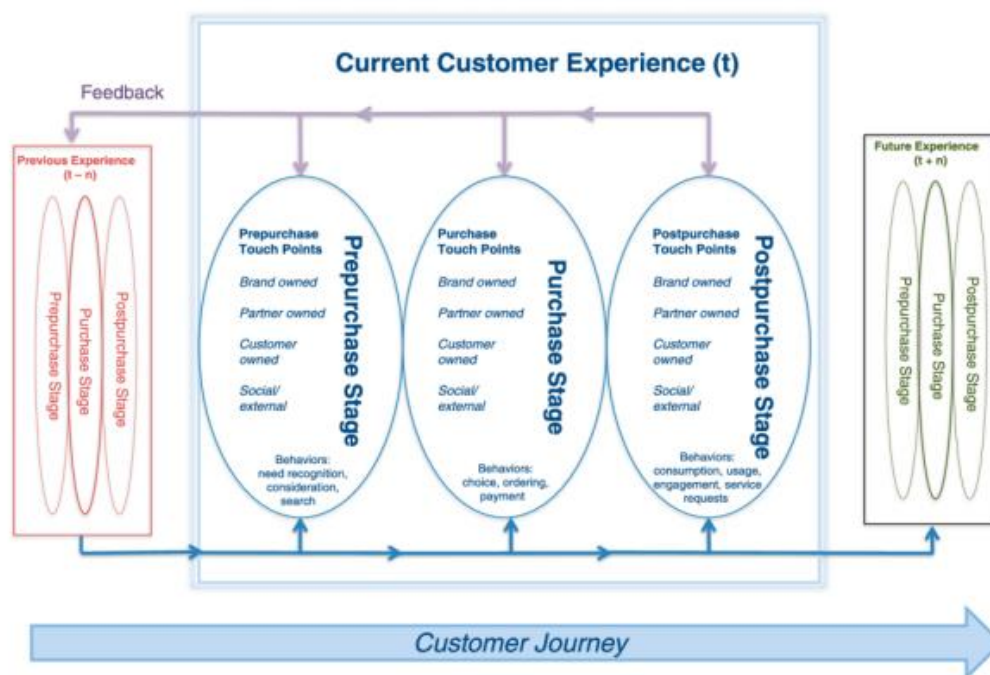


Figure 2: Customer Journey Map

(Source: Influenced by Alvarez *et al.* 2020)

The “**Customer Journey Map**” is the exploration of the stages through which customers interact with a company. Through this process, product buying to the accession of services is done in a significant manner (Alvarez *et al.* 2020). Customers easily inform their grievances to the companies based on social media platforms. The **Value Proposition** defines the benefits for customers, features of products or services for customers and customer experience through which their **wants** and **needs** are met avoiding **fears** (da Costa Fernandes *et al.* 2020). The “**Customer**

Journey Map” establishes the stages, which will be enhanced properly through communication channels to meet customers' or other stakeholders' expectations.

Social Media Platforms

The customer journey is managed and evaluated through these channels based on which stakeholders' expectations are met. As per Cartwright *et al.* (2021), the foremost thing, which can be done by the company, is the dependence on ***Facebook, YouTube*** and other social media platforms to enhance communication significantly. In such a case, the new offers of BA and their discounts can be informed by the customers through the channels. The first stage of the ***“Customer Journey Map”*** is ***Awareness***, which can be met through it.

It can properly impact the expectations of stakeholders such as ***customers*** because depending on such management, they may properly know the company's new deals in the UK market to satisfy them. This is helpful for the organisation to explore the needs and necessities of future stakeholders such as ***employees*** also because the importance of social media usage will be known by the employees. Arguing the above viewpoint, Cartwright *et al.* (2021) signified that they can also know the ways to communicate with the consumers by which their requirements will be known. The current stakeholder expectation will also be met through the management of the ***customer journey map*** because the awareness of ***travellers*** will also be broadened after getting new information about the company. This marketing strategy can support the company to develop its ***information management*** without any type of incongruity in customer service.

Video

Another major communication channel, is ***video*** through which similar and attractive content can be given to customers. The marketing team of BA can depend on it for management ***“Customer Journey Map”*** because it helps in developing sales in a huge manner. ***Kotler's Marketing Theory*** is helpful to know the customers' wants interests and needs by which the effective business dimensions are met with a competitive advantage (Praesri *et al.* 2022). ***Product marketing content*** is one of the major parts of the map through which the consumers get effective ideas for their selection. If BA marketing team depends on videos, they can deliver marketing content to customers such as booking discounts, new food facilities in the flights and others to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. As customers want ***more information always about the services of the company***, it can help in meeting their expectations.

Significantly, the process is helpful for the current stakeholders such as **investors** because, through the development of content, they may get the options of high investment. If the current stakeholder such as **customers** become satisfied and utilise the service continuously, the investors may also get the opportunity to invest in it. According to the opinions of Tafesse (2020), the service users can also know the deals and offers of the company even from home as the videos will be available on their websites or advertisements. When they will provide attractive content, future stakeholder like **customers** can properly know the flight listings from the videos. The customer-centric services of the company will also be known from it, which may also support them to meet their expectations.

Emails

In order to meet the expectations of the stakeholders, the company can also depend on **email marketing** through which a “**customer journey map**” can be met. It is one of the significant communication channels to connect with customers in a proper manner through its personalised way of dealing with them. As discussed by Vakulenko *et al.* (2019), the **decision stage** of customers within the map is developed through this communication channel because it gives details of services to them and they significantly select the services. The marketing team of BA needs to depend on it through which they can easily inform their pricing pages to the customers. Even, the website link can also be utilised when the marketers will provide it via emails.

The future stakeholder expectations will also be met by giving value to **employees**. From the notations of Bangsa and Schlegelmilch (2020), it is clear that **Consumer Decision-making Process Theory** is significant to deal with problem recognition and information search in marketing.

Phone call

Contrary to the above viewpoint, it is mentioned that **Phone call** by marketers to customers is considered as the most effective communication channel. This medium is highly significant in the present market because lengthy conversations or discussions about company products or services are done through it (Al-Hawary and Obiadat, 2021). As this type of communication is done through it, the customers are **retained** towards the services of a company. This stage of the “**customer journey map**” can be developed in this way within BA. The marketers of the organisation can retain customers through phone calls because the newly developed offers of flights and ticket booking can be known by them through it. This strategy can help in developing the **reputation** of the organisation because the retained customers will have the core sense of services of BA.

The current stakeholder, **customers'** expectations can be fulfilled easily through the management of the map via the mentioned communication channel. The customers can easily clarify their queries on the services of BA and gather knowledge on the discount facilities with ticket booking. As defined by Al-Hawary and Obiadat (2021), if any customer buys tickets for more than 4 members, there can be facilities of discounts, which can also be clarified through phone calls.

Text messages

Text messages are also very helpful mediums of communication channel through which customers are directly connected with the companies or marketers. For managing and evaluating the **"customer journey map"**, this channel can be utilised by BA based on which **customer loyalty stage** can be forecasted (Berman, 2020). The marketers of British Airways can depend on this channel by which they can send open SMS to the users and make a direct line of communication. Several times, marketers can also respond to the messages of the customers through which their **brand value** can be developed and loyalty towards customers can be shown.

Most significantly, it can support the current stakeholder which is **customers** by informing them about the company's values towards them. Trust issues cannot be developed through it because the marketers will make the linking with them constantly (Influenced by Berman, 2020).. The expectations of the **UK Government** can also be fulfilled through the development of the services because it will expand the earnings of the company and the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the UK will be increased.

For BA, the examples of different touchpoints may include drink carts, waiting areas in-flight refreshments, flight attendants as well as in-flight entertainment system. It further include travel agents, television, radio advertisement, credit card offers, websites, text messages and many more. Advertising, social media, website and online reviews can be considered as pre-purchase touchpoints for British Airways whereas online search and booking such as expedia, Kayak or skyscanner, mobile applications for ticket booking, contact centres or airline customer service team for booking assistance, airport kiosks can be considered as purchase touchpoints for BA. Personalised Email survey sent to the consumer after flight, feedback forms can be considered as post purchase touchpoints.

Customer Journey Map for British Airways for existing consumer:

Customer Journey map can be considered as visual representation of different touchpoints which a consumer experiences throughout its attachment with the business which could be from initial

awareness to post purchase evaluation. It assists in number of processes such as creates an understanding over consumer demand and pain point, identify the business improvement opportunities, supports customer focused decision making, help the business to build a stronger consumer relationship. Below diagram represents the consumer journey

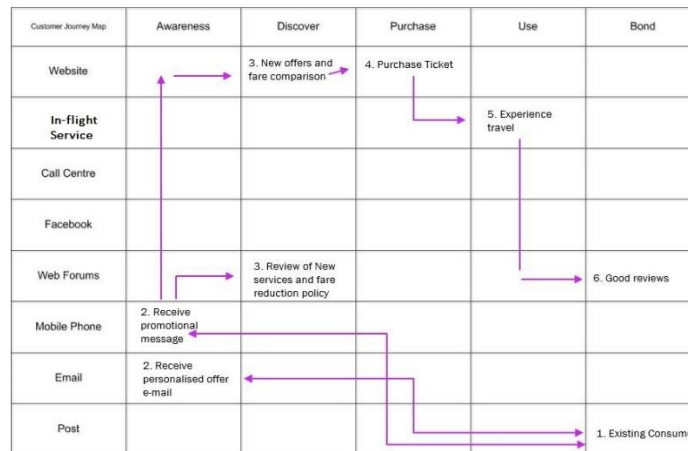


Fig. 03: Consumer journey for existing consumer

According to the map, pre purchase touchpoints works very well resulting ticket booking and as digital marketing plays very important role for British Airways but older methods such as Post do not provide necessary results. So, digital marketing plays very stronger role whereas post plays a weaker role.

Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of BA customer journey map e.g. what touchpoints have worked well and what touchpoints have not worked well.

Recommendations of new touchpoints for BA

While deciding the new touchpoints for performance improvement three factors which are customer intimacy, product leadership and operational excellence should be considered. This can be achieved through an enhancement in flight experience. British Airways is already attempting it by providing passenger iPads which is already stocked with entertainment (Aarde,2018). As many airlines has achieved a competitive advantage through marketing an entertaining in-flight experience as a touch point. So, British Airways should also attempt it. It should also run its loyalty program on an elevated level to reach out large audience which can eventually book tickets (Bultink,2020)

Creation of total Engagement model for British Airlines:

Below is the main elements of total engagement model

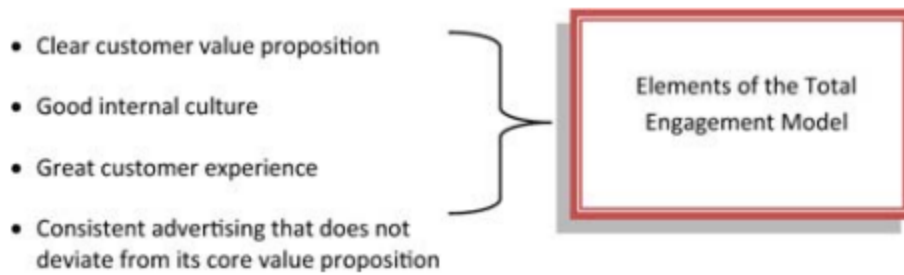


Fig. 04: Total Engagement model Key elements (Alpert, 2014)

Development of clear value Proposition:

British Airways can develop value proposition in terms of global service, safety, security and assurance. The Value proposition should be very well communicated through different touch points used by British Airways. BA should also conduct a market research to understand the other pain points, differentiate itself through competitors do innovation by introducing new routes, upgrading its fleet and improving its digital offerings.

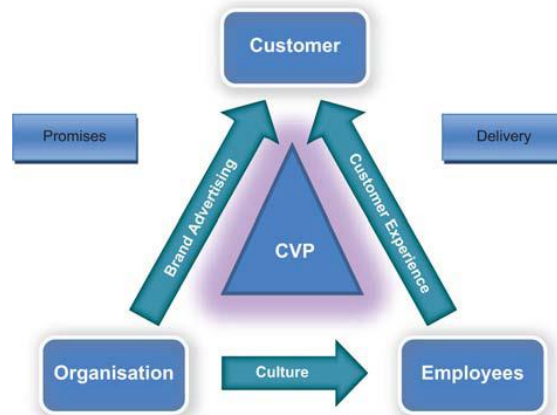


Fig. 05: The total engagement Model (Alpert,2014)

Good internal culture development:

It can be developed by defining values, hiring for culture fit, by encouraging communication and through training as well as reward recognition.

Role of staff:

Staff is responsible for the delivery of planned consumer experience. BA can achieve it by developing such internal culture.

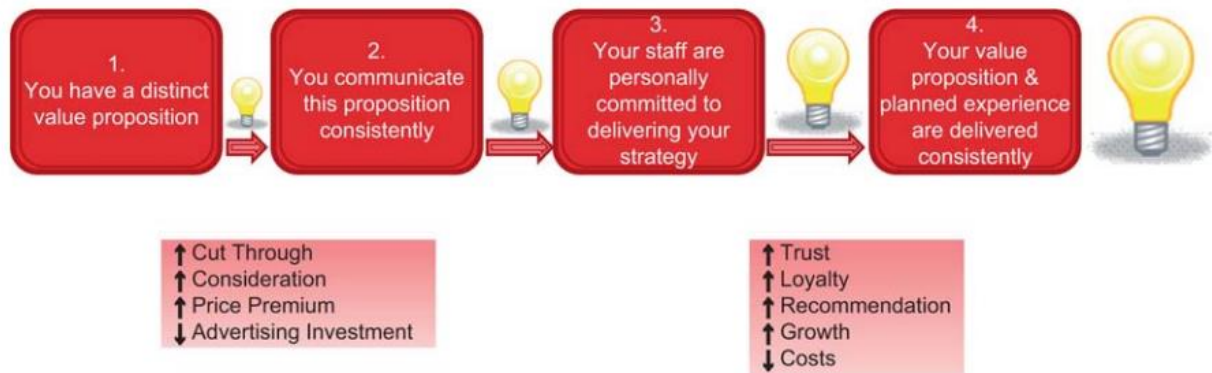


Fig. 06: The engagement journey (Alpert,2014)

Conclusion

From the entire analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that British Airways have different marketing problems in the country. The issues related to brand awareness, competitiveness, information management, reputation management, rising expectations of customers and others are there. Thus, the company has failed to make its marketing strengthened in the country as constant customers' negative reviews are found. The IT system failure or the random flight cancellations are found in the market, which have increased the issues. However, the ways to create innovative marketing strategies have been explained here for developing brand awareness. It is mentioned to open some vital routes, develop digitalisation properly, make attractive content and others for customers as part of marketing strategies to enhance brand awareness. On the other hand, marketing channels such as emails, phone calls, social media usage and others have been mentioned to make their market position strengthened. The marketers can utilise the channels for their "***Customer Journey Map***" to meet the expectations of stakeholders such as suppliers, customers, the Government, investors, shareholders and employees.

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