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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: a case study on PrettyLittleThing

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Introduction

For thriving successfully in the competitive business environment companies necessitates focusing on community engagement whereby seeking to engage the community in a better way for achieving sustainable and long-term outcomes. In this report, for increasing community engagement the processes involved, relationships built, communication, making appropriate decision and strategic implementation has been critically reviewed and comprehended.

Industry Background

In the fashion and clothing retailing industry in UK, over the last couple of years through 2019-20 the industry revenue is expected to witness an increment in the compound annual rate by nearly 1% (statista.com 2020). The industry is characterised by intensive downward pricing pressure, strong external competition and rising overheads, which altogether impacts on the business performance of the companies. The 2020 financial year is expected to achieve the preset market value of nearly 70 billion Euros. In such business environment, numerous operators have stretched their offerings to have a good claw on market share by enhancing operations and integrating novel services (ibisworld.com 2020).

Company Overview

In the fashion retailing industry of UK, one of the most popular and rapidly growing company is PrettyLittleThing, which offers everything women needs for owning their own creative style. The Company has targeted the online tech savvy shopping generation which is aged between 18-24 years. The brand has delivered trust through their products that are extensively inspired by the coolest and catwalk celebs muses at the movement. Since their operations started in 2012, the Company is strategically exploiting the online fashion retail business by approaching one milestone at each financial year. PrettyLittleThing has been extremely focused on demystifying contemporary style and hence taking the runway into the real life, which makes style feasibly accessible to all stratum of customers whatever their budget is (prettylittlething.com 2020). Targeting the young age females the Company offers everything, which reflects their proficiency in celebrity inspired looks, trend led pieces, daily wardrobe staples to that ultimately party piece.

Goals

After witnessing phenomenal growth in UK marketplaces, the Company's next goal is to strategically launch and expand their overseas operations as the way they are making waves in US, Australia and France. For sustaining as an epitome of fastest growing retailer in UK, the Company necessitates increasing their effectiveness in community engagement and hence advancing towards achieving the goal with no sign of slowing down.

Vision

PrettyLittleThing has set the vision of leading the global fashion e-commerce market. Through integration of effective technological innovations within the business process processes the Company has set the platform for convincingly penetrating into any market and further expand rapidly.

Values

The Company's exclusive product line, innovation in marketing and strategic business operations has accumulatively contributed towards increasing their overall business values, which resonate from their profit making capability over the last couple of years. While engaging in fashion retail business the Company has proficiently delivered business values to all its customers, suppliers, people and stakeholders.

Identification of customers and their expectations from the organisation in terms of services and/ or products

The success of PrettyLittleThing is extremely driven by having an intrinsic understanding on the demands and necessities of their customer base. In due course emergence of social media has opportune the brand in having a massive insight (Hogarth 2019). However, of course for accessing such huge female customer base, presence in social media platforms has never been the only channel in understanding expectations and subsequently addressing dynamic preferences of youth customer segment in UK (Çifci *et al.* 2016). The brand has targeted showcasing the most recent and trending fashionable apparels to the teenagers and young adults who belongs to the age group of 16-25 years and hence rejuvenated the style preferences of Generation Z in UK. The way most online retailers hold the target market through creation of a buyer persona has been achieved through the culmination of numerous platforms as well as tools for strategic planning and implementation, where organic search being just one of those strategies.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• They have a strong demographic selection around the ages of 16-24. Their models used to advertise are young, targeting the student demographic and other younger population who want affordable prices (Martino <i>et al.</i> 2017). • Much collaboration with social influencers and bloggers would result in extremely good online presence. • Wide variety of products availability can be strategized for attracting customers various seasons.	• As they sell their products for cheaper prices, the quality of the products cannot be ensured to be high. • Being a retail brand that deals with only online sales, customers are unable to physically visit and try on clothes before purchasing.
Opportunities	Threats
• Potential for growth in the UK and overseas (due to worldwide shipping) • Brand can grow exponentially with social media strategies. • Follow trends on social media to be involved and advertise to as many customers as possible.	• The organization is operating in an extremely competitive market, especially within the e-commerce high street UK retailers. • Entire dependency on the impact of social media on consumers lives.

Table 1: SWOT Analysis of PrettyLittleThing

(Source: Created by Researcher)

PESTLE Analysis

Elements	Factors	Impact
Political	Political stability in the region	Political stability in any region or country is linked with economic stability, which can significantly

		boost e-commerce growth. In contrast, political chaos can lead to significant challenges for the e-commerce industry.
Economical	Economic stability and growth of the region Disposable income of the population	The economic stability and growth of a certain region where the organization operates plays a significant role in business revenue and profits. This can heavily affect the e-commerce industry, as consumers would be unwilling to spend on this industry in poor economic conditions (Dunn <i>et al.</i> 2018). The higher disposable income of target population would opportune PrettyLittleThings more to operate in those marketplaces being influenced by the outcome of increased e-commerce purchasing and hence gaining increased profit margins.
Social	Socio-cultural factors can affect PrettyLittleThings Changing trends in regards to social media.	Changes in the socio-cultural factors and beliefs of a region can lead to individuals developing an unwilling towards e-commerce products. This will heavily affect PrettyLittleThings as they are an e-commerce brand who relies solely on social media for

		advertising, communication and boosting sales. Trends that do not favour their products will lead to massive losses.
Technological	Constant evolution of technology	The constant evolution of technology can have a positive effect on the e-commerce industry as it leads to better methods to communicate with customers and advertise new products to them (Desore and Narula 2018).
Legislation	Legal policies in the region or country of operation	As PrettyLittleThing operates in e-commerce industry through mostly online operations, they have specific rules, which are necessary to be abided by for avoidance of legal clashes.
Environmental	Sustainability factors	The e-commerce industry is seen to have a non-existent direct impact on the environment; however, the problem lies in maintaining sustainability. Areas such as sustainable packaging, waste reduction and renewable energy play an important role towards every e-commerce organization.

Table 2: PESTLE Analysis on Fashion and Clothing Retailing Business

(Source: Created by Researcher)

Explanation of the employees' roles within the organisation and its support towards organisation's goals achievements

The employees at PrettyLittleThing better know the Company's core values, vision and mission and guided towards that direction of achieving organisational goals with a strategic planning. Employees working all departments are necessary to be strategically aligned on the organisation's long-term goals, and those goals are subsequently broken down into smaller achievable short-term goals to ensure that community remain engaged in their day-to-day business operations (Lavoie 2016).

Consistent Feedback: The managers are constantly providing feedbacks, which help employees in staying focused on online marketing for surviving competitively on the Internet as the brand is associated with selling fashion clothing and are present online only. The role of the employees is to make sure that overall value proposition to customers is extremely compelling (Bonetti and Perry 2017).

Appropriate Task Allocation: Employees necessitates knowing the roles in each of their assigned business operations. The managers help them in achieving this by proficiently using visualisations while explaining the overall strategy of acquiring the customers through online product placing and afterwards integrating strategic marketing (AYERTEY 2018). By goal tracking on real time basis, PrettyLittleThing can measure the work performance based on how every role of employees is advancing towards achieving goals.

Recognition to high performing Employees: Community engagement is essential for accomplishing the short-term growth aspirations and reaching out for its vision. The managers at PrettyLittleThing necessitate recognizing their skilled employees through strategic reward system such that they do not lose track of their purpose.

Explain about training and development programs and its importance to organisations

It is highly essential as well as desirable in fashion retail industry based on public interest that employees' self-improvement, self-training and self-education has been supplemented and strategically extended by sponsored effective programs for training and developing the entire employee base.

Fundamental Literacy Skills Training- Such training session would make the perceptions of employees clear and clarify their doubts. It is important for enhancing their performance in

their official duties and thus acquiring a huge market share in UK through enhancing their social media marketing and offering extensive and trendy product lines (Nash 2019).

Technical Training- Such training program would facilitate the development and maintenance of PrettyLittleThing's website as this is the main hub of their digital business world that necessitates experienced and excellent talent, as it is the most important component in the digital marketing strategy.

Soft Skills Training- This training session would develop the employees' communication skills, which is most important piece in online real estate and other relevant online activity to direct the business prospects of PrettyLittleThing. Training on Web 2.0 can open a massive online growth for the Company's marketers who are proficient in offering highly targeted advertising through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, blogs and others to social groups (Nickson *et al.* 2017).

Role selection and explanation of its importance to the organisation

Being appointed in a company, which is dominating the fashion retail industry in UK through their online marketing channels it would be best to focus on the roles of digital marketing manager. To get the word spread out through the digital space regarding PrettyLittleThing brand and its key product lines holds the key to this in-demand role. The importance of the roles of digital marketer rests in the enhancement of brand awareness through reflecting proficiency in digital space and hence driving website traffic resulting in acquiring of huge business leads and customers as well.

Explain the skills and knowledge needed to carry out the role

The business operations for enhancing community engagement at PrettyLittleThing necessitate paramount leadership skills in performing the roles of digital marketing manager. . It is essential to have the skills of working with the colleagues and related other stakeholders at all levels of the organisation for development of compelling offers and hence escalating product sales as benefits of increased customer experience.

- ▲ The marketing manager necessitates having the knowledge of effective eye catching writing skills, which would effectively communicate the brands message to Generation X.

- ▲ Adaptability in dynamic digital space and competency of thinking from the perspective of the 21st generations are extremely essential (Gibson and Capdeville 2019).
- ▲ For meeting the organisational goals of PrettyLittleThing and increasing community engagement, the digital marketing manager necessitates strategizing innovative things, taking chances and tests everything.
- ▲ It is inevitable for marketing managers to engage in coordination with other departments such as product management, marketing and sales teams for active promotion of PrettyLittleThing's trendy apparels and post selling feedback services.
- ▲ The digital marketing manager having the skill of developing effective press releases, preparation of briefing materials, message documents, and reports for deliberately enhancing sales promotion through building healthy public relationships.

Explain what training and development requirements need to be considered

For gaining effectiveness in training and development session at PrettyLittleThing, it is essential to consider job rotation. This would deliver the employees with experience based training whereby employees necessitates moving through a sequence of jobs for gaining broad understanding regarding the requirements of each (Testa and Karpova 2018). Other considerations in training and development requirements are enlisted below:

- Deliverance of consistent training sessions and quantifying its effectiveness
- Tracking application of skills
- Dealing with market dynamisms
- Instillation of conflict management skills

Conclusion

The e-commerce industry is seen to be an extremely profitable industry in today's world with the increasing evolution and use of technology and online platforms. PrettyLittleThings has shown competencies towards achieving their goals, which has resulting in extremely positive margins of success for the organization. The SWOT analysis and PESTLE analysis included has succeeded in showing the organizations future challenges and problems which can be solved by utilizing their current strengths. Further, the role of digital marketing manager was chosen for this report and analysed to find its importance and influence within the organization.

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Appendices

Training and Development Plan with a Suggested Timeframe

Training and Developmental Essentials	Impending Action	Essential resources inclusive of human resources	Date of Commencement	Closing Date
Time Managing Skills	Allocating daily tasks Taking tasks sincerely	Arranging weeks and days in well advance with use of calendar, text book or organisation's mailing account	16.05.2020	05.06.2020
Marketing Expertise	Staring to work in some organisation that precisely focus on marketing Acknowledgin g the basics of online branding	Pursuing Mobile Social Media Advertising course from an Institution Reading social media marketing articles, journals and books	06.06.2020	26.06.2020
IT Proficiencies (Soft and Hard)	Reading and collecting business information through various websites Cyber security Customer	Computer System Software for learning basic deigning Online courses on Email Marketing	27.06.2020	17.07.2020

	Relationship Management				
	Search Engine Marketing and Search Engine Optimisation				
Communication Skills	Being attentive	Communicate with colleagues	18.07.2020	07.08.2020	
	Building more friends through social networking platforms	Practise through online courses for effectively speaking, listening and writing			
	Developing listening skills				
Publicly Speaking Skills and Confidence	Absolute removal of filler words while speaking upfront a huge audience	Engaging in Volunteering activities Practise of speaking a lot with office pals and colleagues	08.08.2020	21.08.2020	
	Practising daily by standing in front of mirror	Speaking in public			

Table 3: Training and Development Plan with a Suggested Timeframe

(Source: Created by Researcher)