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Evaluating levels of Customer Satisfaction
of a Chinese Retail Enterprise named *Pangdonglai*

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Abstract

With the booming Chinese economy, Chinese retail industry has grown rapidly. However, the fierce competition exists the industries. The rapid development of e-commerce platforms and Covid-19 pandemic has put traditional retail enterprises under tremendous pressure. Therefore enhancing customer satisfaction in order to realize customer retention has become a top priority for traditional retailers to focus on. As a private enterprise in Xuchang City, Henan Province, China, DL Trading Group is widely known for its fabulous service so exploring its customer satisfaction has certain practical significance.

This study firstly customers' feedback through interviews. Analyse the operation status quo of DL Trade Group with the support of 7Ps Marketing Mix; Secondly, based on Chinese Customer Satisfaction Index (CCSI) model and combined with interview results, a scientific evaluation system is designed. In this system, enterprise image, perception of goods, service quality, shopping environment, perceived value, shopping convenience, and customer satisfaction are the primary influencing factors and they are subdivided into several second-level indicators. Then questionnaire survey is adopted and SPSS is used to analyze the data collected to explore the degree of each indicator's impact on DL's customer satisfaction. Based on the data analysis and DL's actual condition, a series of improvement suggestions are proposed to help DL improve its customer satisfaction.

Key Words

Customer Satisfaction, DL Trading Group, Retail, SPSS, CCSI, 7Ps Marketing Mix,

Content

Abstract	1
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Chapter 2 Literature Review	6
Chapter 3 Methodology	14
3.1 Research Methods	14
3.2 Guiding Principles	18
3.3 Research Tools	20
3.4 Theoretical Models	22
Chapter 4 Main Analysis	24
4.1 Researcher's Observational Analysis—— DL's Marketing Strategies	24
4.2 The potential factors affecting DL's customer satisfaction based on 7Ps Metric	35
4.3 Interview Result Analysis 1000	39
4.4 Questionnaire Analysis 1000	42
Chapter 5 Conclusion & Recommendation	46
Reference	53
Appendix	64

Chapter 1 Introduction

Lei Jun, the CEO of Xiaomi, a smartphone giant praised Pangdonglai as a legend in China's retail industry. Jack Ma, the founder of Alibaba, also compared Pangdonglai to a mirror that can shine out the deficiencies of other enterprises. (Liu, 2024). Pangdonglai, also called DL Trading Group enjoys a great reputation and wins high admiration in China's retail industry for its unique business management and impeccable customer service. In 2023, DL recorded an astonishing turnover of 10.7 billion yuan with just 13 shops that are located in two fourth-tier cities in China. (Shi, 2024)

The history of DL can be traced back to 1995, when the founder Yu Donglai rented a storefront in Xuchang, a fourth-tier city in Henan Province and opened a small grocery store. (Hu, 2023) Based on the store, DL Trading Group was established in 1997 with its headquarters located in Xuchang and the founder named Yu Donglai as both the chairman and legal representative.

In 2005, DL Trading Group made its first outreach into Xinxiang, another fourth-tier city in Henan Province. (Zhao, 2013) With the expansion of the business, DL successively opened a number of chain shops in neighbouring cities, and then some of the smaller shops were closed down as the company's development strategy was adjusted. Up to today, DL Trading Group has only 13 shops in total, all of which are located in Henan Province, 11 in Xuchang and 2 in Xinxiang. (Zhang, 2023) The retail company has formed a considerable brand effect not just in Henan Province but in the whole country and even attracts the attention of many western media.

On January 10th 2023, a high-end shopping mall named Angel City owned DL Trading Group opened in Xuchang. According to HNR News (Wang, 2023), the total customer flow on the first opening day amounted to 150,000 and millions of netizens watching the opening scene through the camera of many live streamers and vloggers, which ushered in another high moment for the enterprise.

According to Zhao (2021), DL Trading Group has a wide range of business scope, covering grocery, beauty&cosmetics, jewellery, medicine, books&stationery, electronics, furniture, clothing, cinemas, food plaza and game center, which can meet the diversified needs of customers and bring them pleasant shopping experience. The company is always committed to creating a comfortable and enjoyable shopping environment for the customers, making them feel at home. DL aims at providing exceptional customer service and warm humanistic care.

DL has sound employee welfare system, which sets a great example in the retail industry. The minimum wage set by DL is higher than the local average. Besides the basic wage, the enterprise also provides a variety of benefits and bonuses for its employees, including holiday benefits, paid vacations, job subsidies, and dividends.

In order to protect its employees, DL set up a special award “Aggrieved Award”. When the employee are blamed, abused or treated unfairly without any reason in the work, the company will give the him or her financial compensation accordingly. According to Tencent News (2024), the degree of the unfair treatment is closely related to the financial compensation and it has been promoted to 30 thousand yuan at most. Apart from giving the employees the award, DL will also investigate the legal liability of relevant customers.

At the same time, DL strictly limits the working hours of employees. The employees work for around 40 in a week, far below the average of the retail industry. Yu Donglai, the founder of DL once said it’s unethical and illegal for enterprises to force their employees work overtime and that overtime work was the cruel exploitation of employees. (Fan and Du, 2023)

In order to guarantee the employees to have enough rest time, since 2023, DL implements a strict Tuesday Closing System, which means every Tuesday, except for the Angel City, all the other stores should be closed. In addition, all of the 13 stores are also closed during legal traditional holidays such as the Spring Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival. The employees are entitled to have around two-month rest time every year in total. (Trip,

2024) DL also offers its employees up to 10 days “Unhappy Leaves” if they are unwilling to work and in bad mood. If the employees are happy and want to ask for a leave, their managers have to approve and cannot reject their application.(Beddington, 2024)

In terms of employee management, DL provides various professional training programs to enhance employees' professional skills and also formulates effective incentive policies to improve employees' motivation, which together offers employees clear career planning and development paths. DL always treats its employees as family members, caring about their mental health and happiness.It advocates that employees should enjoy life better while realising their career aspirations.

When pursuing economic benefits, DL also actively undertakes social responsibility. Through a variety of public welfare activities, the company has made a great contribution to the society. On May 12th, 2008 a violent earthquake with a 8.0 magnitude broke out in Wenchuan, Sichuan Province (Yuan, 2008) and the company immediately donated nearly 10 million yuan and the founder Yu Donglai also led the staff to the front line of the disaster area to participate in the earthquake relief work. (Pengpai News, 2021) In the Covid-19 pandemic, the company donated 50 million to Wuhan Municipal Government to fight against the epidemic. (Wang, 2021)

Meanwhile, DL also voluntarily helps other retail enterprises such as Yonghui Superstores and . DL holds Business School President Class and Supermarket President Summit to introduce its successful experience to other retail enterprises. In 2024, Yonghui Supermarket in Zhengzhou turned a loss into a profit. On the opening day after being reformed by DL, the total sales of the store amounted to of 1.88 million yuan, 13.9 times the previous average daily sales and the customer traffic also surged to 5.3 times that of the previous period.(Chongqing Daily, 2024)

Apart from Yonghui Supermarket, DL also announced to helped Zhonghai Group. It's reported on June 10th 2024, Yu Donglai, CEO of DL was invited to Zhongbai Group for experience communication and business guidance. Yu expressed DL would fully share its

protect catalogue and supply chain information with Zhongbai and also provide technical support for Zhongbai in commodity development. After the news was released, stock prices of Zhongbai Group was goes up, once touching a limit-up. (Sina Finance, 2024)

However, in recent years, such an extraordinary retail enterprise has been involved in several negative press coverage. In June 2024, the food court was complained about due to the food safety issue, for which DL paid 9 million yuan in compensation. In August of the same year, DL was thrown into the spotlight again after customers discovered that one of its shops had sold overnight salmon because DL makes a promise that it will never sell overnight meat and all of the overnight meed is disposed of. (Chinese Food Safety Net, 2024)

Furthermore, along with the popularity of DL, the number of customers surges sharply, causing traffic jams and even traffic paralysis in the neighboring communities. DL has to take the “Limited Flow Policy” to respond to this crazy situation.

What's worse, daigou, who refers to a group of people who purchase a great number of popular products and then sell them at a higher price, crazily flock into DL stores and scramble to get super popular products, which makes ordinary customers unable to buy what they want and or have to pay more to daigou to get these popular products. The selfish purchasing behavior of daigou really affects the ordinary customer's shopping experience and in response to it, DL has to implement purchase-restriction policy to protect the right of ordinary customers. In this situation, evaluating customer satisfaction of DL has some practical significance and can also help the retail company to optimize its customer service.

This paper is based on the Customer Satisfaction Index and 7Ps Marketing Mix, using a questionnaire survey and interviews to evaluate the customer satisfaction of DL Trading Group. Based on the data obtained and analysed, some feasible and practical suggestions are put forward to help DL to provide better customer service and realise the sustainable development in the retail industry. These suggestions can also help some other retail enterprises in China or abroad.

This chapter has introduced the basic information of DL and concisely described the main framework of the paper. The next chapter will examine the academic literature pertinent to DL's circumstance.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Customer satisfaction is a crucial concept in marketing management and the term “customer satisfaction” has been essential to the marketing strategy and business management. (Parker and Mathews, 2001). Satisfied customers are more likely to return for future purchases and high customer retention rates can bring sustained revenue and profitability. (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993) High customer satisfaction can bring a company competitive advantages and help a company differentiate itself in the intensely competitive market.(Sasser and Jones, 1995)

As a major concept in business management, customer satisfaction has different focuses in different historical phases. Historically, the connections between buyers and sellers have been a key factor in satisfaction. Word-of-mouth recommendations and repeating purchasing were common indicators used in local market to evaluate customer satisfaction. (Denove and Power, 2007) Positive communications and interactions between buyers and sellers progressively deepened their relationship and enhanced mutual understanding.

As a result, buyers were more inclined to buy products from the same seller and to recommend them to others. Before industrialization and the emergence of mass marketing, in traditional markets, trade was mainly local and personal. Transactions were not just economic but also social so mutual trust and personal rapport played crucial roles. (Fukuyama, 1996) In this phase, customer satisfaction was directly linked to interpersonal relationships developed between buyers and sellers. The quality of these relationships often determined the commercial success of sellers in small communities.

Technological development promotes production expansion. Efficiency and output became the focus in the industrial revolution period. The focus of customer satisfaction in this era moved from personal relationship to products. (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995) As products became more standardized and widely available, customers began to pay more attention to quality and functionality of products. In this phase satisfaction was increasingly

driven by product attributes and the influence of connections between buyers and sellers on satisfaction was less decisive.

After World War II, companies paid more attention to customer satisfaction. In the post war era, the global economy was booming and the economic prosperity was largely driven by reconstruction and innovation. Consumer wealth and spending power were rising, which expanded the market for various products and services. (Vonyo, 2008) So more businesses entered the market and then the competition intensified. Companies had to distinguish themselves through customer service and satisfaction in the highly competitive global market. A number of marketing concepts such as STP, 4P Marketing Mix and Customer Satisfaction were proposing in the post war era. Businesses formally began to recognize the importance of satisfying customer needs as a central business strategy. (Prabhu et al., 2017)

In the late 20th century, Total Quality Management (TQM) arose, influenced by Japanese manufacturing principles. TQM stressed continuous improvement in all aspects of a company, emphasizing customer satisfaction as a pivotal element. (Mehra and Ranganathan, 2008) Meeting customer expectations through a thorough comprehension of their requirements, both explicit and implicit, is the main goal of TQM and the prerequisite to raise customer customer satisfaction.(Kristianto, Ajmal and Sandhu, 2012) In this period, product quality was still a vital element influencing customer satisfaction. Businesses can increase customer satisfaction by continuous quality improvements.

In the modern era, technological progress and globalization make business more complex and customer satisfaction is a critical metric for global competitiveness. (Cambalikova, 2021) In this time, the focus shifts from products to customers. Whether the company can understand customers accurately and precisely predict their need is crucial in improving customer satisfaction and achieving business success. Advanced data collection and analysis technology allow businesses to more scientifically and comprehensively understand customers and then they can better improve customer satisfaction. According to Jain, Paul and Shrivastava (2021), hyperpersonalization is one typical characteristic in present marketing strategy making and customer relation management.

Besides different focuses through the history discussed before, a number of scholars made different definitions and explanations on the concept. Taylor (1914) believed efficient production techniques would lead to higher quality products at lower prices, which would satisfy customer needs. His view laid foundations for exploring the link between product quality and customer satisfaction.

According to Chamberlin (1933), companies should differentiate their products to cater to a wide range of customer tastes, as this would ultimately affect customer satisfaction. He stressed in monopolistic competition product differentiation was essential because it allowed sellers to meet specific customer wants and increase customer satisfaction by offering slightly different items. Then the father of modern management theory, Peter Drucker explicitly connected products to customer satisfaction. According to Drucker (1954), the purpose of business is to create and keep a customer. His view put the customer satisfaction at the center of business strategy and stressed the importance of knowing and satisfying customer expectations through the appropriate products and services for business success.

Keith (1960) defines marketing activities as meeting the needs and desires of customers. According to Baker and Saren (2016), Keith highlighted that the primary role of marketing should be determining the needs in target markets and then satisfying those needs through appropriate products, services, and promotional strategies. Keith's definition shifted the previous product-centric approaches to the customer-centric philosophy in marketing activities. (Sheth, Sisodia and Sharma, 2000) Hunt (1977) elaborates that customer satisfaction refers to the condition in which the requirements of customers are fulfilled or surpassed over the lifespan of a product or service and that customers tend to repeat purchases, develop loyalty, and spread positive brand image word-of-mouth once they are satisfied with the products or service.

Customer satisfaction should be valued in the whole process of purchasing behavior. Although customer satisfaction is traditionally viewed as a post-purchase indicator, several academic arguments suggest that customer satisfaction is not limited to post-purchase evaluations but is also influenced by pre-purchase expectations. Oliver (1980) stresses the important role customer expectation plays in deciding final satisfaction level. He thinks when

customers' expectations are met or exceeded, they are likely to be satisfied. Conversely, if the product or service falls short of their expectations, dissatisfaction occurs. It is also verified that any difference between pre-purchase expectation and post-purchase service performance may influence consumer satisfaction. (Park, Cho and Rao, 2015)

Not only the pre-purchase expectation, many factors during purchasing activity can also determine customer satisfaction. The interaction between customers and service or product providers is a pivotal one. Surprenant and Solomon (1987) point out that positive service encounters contribute to giving customers long-lasting good impression and instant gratification. Bitner (1990) also states that employees of companies are also variants in customer satisfaction evaluation. Bitner thinks the behavior and attitude of the employees can closely affect customer satisfaction and that there is a positive relation between friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful employees and higher satisfaction levels.

In offline shopping, physical environment is another vital factor affecting customer satisfaction. Ambiance and atmosphere, layout and design, cleanliness and orderliness are all conducive to improving customer satisfaction. A pleasant and well-organized environment can enhance the shopping experience and lead to greater satisfaction (Baker et al., 2002)

Transaction is an indispensable process in purchasing activities so the ease and efficiency of transaction may also determine customer satisfaction. According to Seiders, Berry and Gresham (2000), quick checkout, multiple payment options, and minimal waiting time in the transaction process are vital for customer satisfaction and these elements can improve the efficiency and convenience of customers' shopping experience. Conversely, limited payment method and long wait times or delays can lead to customers' frustration and dissatisfaction. (Dabholkar, Shepherd and Thorpe, 2000)

Personalization care and customer empowerment in purchasing process benefits customer satisfaction, too. Mittal and Lassar (1996) mention that customer satisfaction can be significantly enhanced by providing personalized service and tailoring products to individual customers. Dabholkar (1996) adds that companies should try to promote

customers' sense of participation and give them a sense of control and empowerment. They should allow customers to be actively involved in the purchasing process, such as through self-service options or interactive displays.

Additionally, customer satisfaction may be increased by establishing trust and providing assurance throughout the purchase process, which can be realized through open and honest communication and transparent procedures. Consumers must be confident in their purchasing process. (Gefen, 2002)

For retail companies, customer satisfaction is involved in the whole process of shopping. Pre-purchasing expectation, during-purchasing activity and post-purchasing perception all influence the indicator so it's important to measure the indicator scientifically. Some models are invented and developed.

The Dis-confirmation of Expectations Model is one of the most influential frameworks in the study of customer satisfaction introduced in the early 1970s by Richard Oliver. (Wirtz, 1993) Oliver assesses customer satisfaction by comparing customer expectations before a purchase with their perceptions of the actual performance after the purchase. This model assumes that customer satisfaction is primarily determined by the gap between prior expectations and actual performance.

When performance meets or exceeds expectations, positive disconfirmation occurs, leading to satisfaction. Conversely, negative disconfirmation leads to dissatisfaction. (Zwick, Pieters and Baumgartner, 1995) Oliver's model has laid foundation for numerous subsequent studies and models in customer satisfaction research. However, the model has some limitations.

Both customer expectations and perceived performance are inherently subjective and can vary widely among individuals, which makes it difficult to standardize measures across different customers. The model presupposes the relationship between disconfirmation and satisfaction is direct and linear but the reality is that satisfaction is a complex construct influenced by numerous factors such as emotions, situations as well as individual differences (Tse and Wilton, 1988)

Then the SERVQUAL Model was developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry in 1988 (Magasi, Mashenene and Ndengenesa, 2022) The model also measures also the discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of the actual service received. (Qadri, 2015) The model is widely used across various service industries to diagnose service quality issues, guide improvements, and enhance customer satisfaction. Compared with The Disconfirmation of Expectations Model, SERVQUAL Model gives a more detailed framework based on five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988)

American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is another significant and influential model used to measure customer satisfaction across various sectors and industries. This model was developed and proposed in 1994 by Claes Fornell. (Fornell et al., 1996) Fornell viewed ACSI as a macroeconomic indicator that provides a uniform measure of the quality of economic output as perceived by consumers.

There are five key components in Fornell's ACSI: Customer Expectation, Perceived Quality, Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction as well as Complaints & Loyalty.(Biscaia et al., 2017) Customer Expectation refers to the preconceived feeling about the general performance or quality of a product or service that a customer has before using it. Perceived quality is assessed by reliability and customization. Reliability means the product or service performs consistently while customization means how well the product or service meets the individual needs of the consumer. Perceived value is a comparison of quality and price. It considers whether the quality of a product or service is worth the cost paid by the consumer, including the fairness or reasonableness of the price. Customer Satisfaction is derived from a comparison of perceived quality and value against expectations. It's worth mentioning that ACSI model also incorporates customer complaints and loyalty which are significant outcomes of the satisfaction or dissatisfaction experience. A low rate of complaints and a high degree of loyalty are indicators of high customer satisfaction.

Serving the similar purpose, European Customer Satisfaction Index (ECSI) was proposed to measure customer satisfaction across multiple European countries. Different from ACSI, ECSI places more emphasis on the European market context, and takes two

additional drivers, Corporate Image and Customer Trust, into consideration. (Eklöf and Westlund, 2002)

The two models are distinct in their geographical focus and both provide essential benchmarks for understanding customer satisfaction in various sectors and industries. For example, Thompson and Sunol (1995) adopted ACSI to study patient satisfaction in healthcare services. Zhou, Lu and Wang (2009) applied ACSI to measure customer satisfaction and loyalty in the e-commerce industry. Fornell, Rust and Dekimpe (2010) used ACSI to explore how customer satisfaction in the telecommunications sector impacts consumer spending growth. Askariazad and Babakhani (2015) used ECSI to evaluate customer satisfaction in the context of Business to Business (B2B) and Ehsani and Hosseini (2021) adopted the same model to investigate the elements that can influence customer's satisfaction in the context of Business to Customers (B2C) retailing markets.

In order to better understand Chinese customers, Chinese Customer Satisfaction Index (CCSI) was introduced by China National Institute of Standardization (CNIS), an organization under the Chinese government in the early 2000s. (Jian and Yi, 2001) CCSI is a localized system tailored to the Chinese market while maintaining consistency with international standards. According to Xu (2001), CCSI consists of six variables and they are Perceived Quality, Customer Expectation, Brand Image, Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty. Among them, Perceived Value interacts with Customer Expectations, Perceived Quality, and Brand Image and they together decide Customer Satisfaction, which directly influences Customer Loyalty.

American and European studies on customer satisfaction are more mature than those in China. Although the research on customer satisfaction in China started late, it has developed rapidly. However, previous studies mainly adopt International standards such as ACSI or ECSI to evaluate Chinese customer satisfaction in various Chinese sectors. Compared with the two international models, CCSI is better adapted to the Chinese context and suits China's economic development and prospect. Therefore, this paper takes the existing research as the basis, adopts CCSI as the theoretical model to explore a Chinese

retail enterprise, DL Trading Group. This paper firstly explores the impact of various factors on DL customer satisfaction and then put forward improvement suggestions.

This chapter has examined the academic resources relevant to DL's business. The next chapter will detail the research methodology used in this research!

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter will examine the research methodology used by the researcher. This chapter is composed of four parts. Firstly the methods adopted in this research will be introduced and then major principles guiding this research will be described. Following the guiding principles, research tools and chosen theoretical models will be demonstrated.

3.1 Research Methods

Both qualitative method and quantitative method are often used in researches. According to Flick (2004), qualitative research seems like a mirror which can help people better understanding social realities and precise and thick descriptions can be collected through this method. The interview is often used to collect data in qualitative research. Usually semi-structured and open-ended interviews are favorable because they are more flexible for both the interviewer and interviewees and more ideas can be expressed. (Jackson, Drummond and Camara, 2007)

Different from qualitative method, quantitative method focuses on quantifying data and uncovering patterns, relationships, or trends by using statistical or mathematical techniques. Quantitative method is often used to measure variables, test hypotheses, and generalize findings from a large sample. (Martin and Bridgmon, 2012). According to Wong, Ong and Kuek (2012), the questionnaire as a data collection tool is often used in quantitative studies. Cost-effectiveness, standardization, anonymity, widespread distribution are the key advantages of using questionnaires. (De Vaus, 2013)

The mixed-method research, which means both quantitative and qualitative approaches are adopted in a single study, integrates the advantages of the two major methods. Both of the two major approaches have their own limitation and the mixed methods seem to build a link between them. Just as Creswell (2013) stressed, divisions between quantitative and qualitative research only served to narrow the approaches and the opportunities for collaboration. So the researcher decides to conduct a mixed-method study to evaluate DL's

customer satisfaction. Interviews will be adopted to determine the principal influence factors and then these factors will be further classified and refined, which will be reacted through specific questions on the questionnaire. Questionnaires will be distributed, collected and analyzed. Descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, validity analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis will be carried out through SPSS to find the specific degree that each factor has on the final performance of DL's customer satisfaction. Other research instruments such as focus groups etc were considered but a questionnaire plus an interview method was selected as most appropriate

3.1.1 Interview Method

Firstly, the interview method in qualitative research will be adopted to explore the main elements affecting the customer satisfaction of DL Trading Company. The prerequisite to implement the evaluation is finding the various factors influencing DL's customer satisfaction. Interview Method is an effective way to collect potential factors and through interviews, some factors affecting customer satisfaction can be reflected in a more real way.

Four Specific Steps of Adopting Interview Method

Step 1: Choose Interviewees

Three types of interviewees are going to be chosen in this study. The first type is the customers who purchasing products in DL because customers are the direct research object of customer satisfaction and they have a clear perception of the products and services provided by DL.

The second one is the grass-roots employees in DL Shopping Mall. These employees work in sale front line and can have direct interactions with customers so they have better understanding of customers' expectations and feelings. Besides, these employees also the practitioners of DL's management standards so it's easy for them to find the DL's deficiencies in their daily work.

The third one is DL's senior managers. Confronted with the customer complaints and feedback reported by each department, the managers can put forward more realistic

solutions that fit DL'S actual situation based on their own management experience. These experts can also combine relevant marketing theories with the DL's practice and then offer more professional suggestions for designing the evaluation system in this study.

Step 2: Determine Interviewee Sample

The aim of this research is to explore customer satisfaction, so customers should account for the large proportion of the interviewees. Considering time limit and other objective restrictions, I intend to interview 6 people, among whom 3 are DL's customers, accounting for 50% of the total number of interviews; 2 are grass-roots DL's employees, accounting for 33.3% ; 1 is DL's senior managers, accounting for 16.7%.

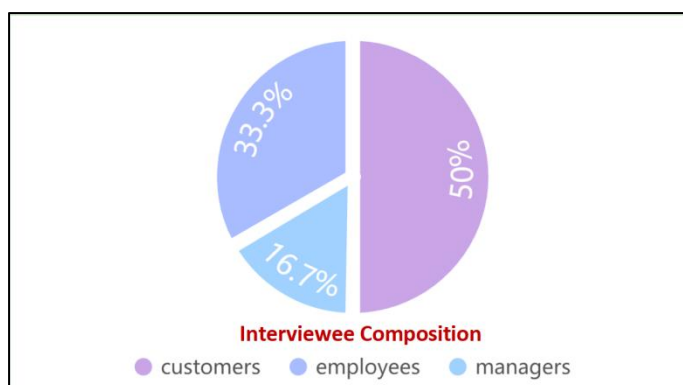


Fig.1

Step 3: Design Interview Questions

In order to accurately demonstrate the various indicators that influence DL's customer satisfaction, different interview questions are designed for the three different types of interviewees . The specific interview questions are shown in the Appendix.

Step 4: Analyze Interview Result

Based on the interview results, combining the two variables in CCSI "Brand Image" and "Perceived Value", extract and catergorise the interviewees' answers. Then analyse and calculate in the form of percentages of the number of interviewees, to obtain the specific results of the interviews.

3.1.2 Questionnaire Survey

Based on the results obtained through interviews and the theoretical model CCSI, summarize the key factors that affect DL's customer satisfaction. A concrete evaluation system will be built based on the key factors and DL's own business characteristics. Important indicators in the evaluation system will be conveyed as specific questions that can be contained in the questionnaire. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix.

Four Specific Steps of Conducting Questionnaire Survey

Step 1: Questionnaire Design

The following four standards should be noticed in designing questionnaire. Firstly, to guarantee the validity and effectiveness of the questionnaire survey, the respondents should be those who consume or purchase products in DL. Secondly, to make the questions easily and accurately understood, use concise and clear descriptions and avoid terminology and obscure words in questionnaire design.

Thirdly, five-point Likert Scale is adopted in questionnaire to make the respondents accurately understand the question and give their answers. According to Jenn (2006), Likert Scale provides a measure of strength for a particular attitude or belief. It is possible to calculate mean scores for any given responses to statements. In the Likert Scale, an interval from 1 point to 5 points is set. The attitude change from the lowest score representing "Strongly Disagree" to "Disagree", "Neutral", "Agree", to highest score representing "Strongly Agree". Using Likert scale can not only make respondents efficiently express their attitudes but also their reduces their resistance and impatience due to the over-complexity and time-consuming of the questionnaire. Fourthly, the number of questions should be below 40. because too many questions will also lead to the resistance of the respondents, thus affecting the accuracy and authenticity of the questionnaire.

Step 2: Questionnaire Distribution and Collection

The headquarter of DL Trading Company is located in Xuchang, Henan Province and most of DL's stores are distributed in Xuchang, so to ensure the accuracy and representativeness of this research, the object of this study should mainly be the customers living in Xuchang. The online questionnaire platform "WJX" is adopted to make the

distribution of questionnaire more efficient. Online questionnaires can, to some extent, reduce the problems that often occur in paper questionnaire distribution. For example, when using paper questionnaire, respondents are likely feel impatient due to time consumption and the validity may also be reduced due to emotional resistance. Questionnaire distribution will last two weeks.

Step 3: Invalid Questionnaire Elimination

After distributing questionnaire for two weeks, collection work starts and online platform “WJX” will also be adopted in this process. The platform can quickly collect all the distributed questionnaire and show the time respondents spend in answering each questions. Invalid answers will be eliminated guided by two principles. Firstly, if obvious regularity shown in answers, the questionnaire will be eliminated. For example, if in one questionnaire a respondent give the same answer to all the questions, the questionnaire will be invalid because of illogicality. Secondly, the questionnaire on which respondents spend significantly less time will also be excluded.

Step 4: Questionnaire Analysis

SPSS software will be used to analyze the collected data. Descriptive analysis, validity analysis, correlation analysis as well as regression analysis will be conducted by SPSS. The results of all the analyses enable us to know the degree to which each factor influences DL’s customer satisfaction and then some targeted recommendations will be given.

3.2 Guiding Principles

3.2.1 Customer-oriented

Customer-oriented is the most important guiding principle of this research. The design of the evaluation system should be based on a deep investigation and understanding of customers' real expectations and needs. The constructed system constructed should be able to comprehensively and objectively reflect the real intentions of customers, rather than just catering to the investigated enterprise or meeting the enterprise' desire.

Customers are the primary participant in the daily business of enterprises and understanding customers should be the aim of this customer satisfaction survey. Accurately reflecting DL's customers' real expectations and needs is not only the original intention of this study but also lays a solid foundation for future studies on improving customer satisfaction.

3.2.2 Controllable

The purpose of evaluating customer satisfaction is to help enterprises truly understand the needs of customers, identify their own deficiency and improve their service. The precondition of conducting the evaluation is that all the indicators in the system should be in the control of the enterprise. If the evaluated enterprise lacks ability to implement improvement or reformative changes, then the evaluation is meaningless. Therefore, when designing the satisfaction evaluation system, it is necessary to exclude those uncontrollable indicators for DL.

3.2.3 Quantifiable

In this research, how to convert abstract measurement indicators into concrete data is a problem worth considering. Only after converting abstract indicators into concrete data can scientific statistical analysis and evaluation be implemented, and then the key factors that can improve customer satisfaction can be derived. If the selected indicators are not quantifiable, there is data standard for customer satisfaction, and the whole evaluation work is empty and vague. It should be noted that these quantifiable indicators must be able to reflect the customer's true feelings and thoughts towards DL.

3.2.4. Industry characteristic-related

The retail industry has its own characteristics, and these unique characteristics of the retail industry must be taken into consideration in the evaluation system. According to Nawi and Mamun (2017), the typical characteristic of the retail industry is that the evaluation of customer satisfaction runs through the whole process of pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase. In addition, the customer satisfaction of different retail industries has different

focuses due to different modes of business. Hence, the evaluation system needs to suit the DL's reality otherwise it will be inaccurate and improvement suggestions given based on result derived from the system may not correspond with DL's actual needs.

3.2.5 Standardization

ACSI, ECSI, CCSI are the mature and standardised models invented for measuring customer satisfaction, so this paper will draw on the relevant structural variables of the CCSI model, combined with the actual situation of DL Trading Company, to design a targeted and scientific evaluation system.

3.3 Research Tools

3.3.1. Transcript Software “IFLYREC”

“IFLYREC” is a smart application developed by IFLYTEK co., Ltd, a Chinese High-tech company. The app can provide multi-language translation and speech-to-text transcription, offering users efficient and accurate speech-processing. Multiple dialects and accents can be recognized when the app transcribes speeches to texts and the transcriptions are highly accurate. Additionally, the app can also perform real-time language translation service between multiple languages, facilitating and cross-cultural communications. At the same time, users can also edit and organise the transcribed text and quickly generate meeting minutes or interview scripts.

In the interview, the role that IFLYREC plays is particularly prominent. Firstly, interviewers can get real-time transcripts in the process of interviewing without manual recording, which greatly improves the efficiency of interviews. Secondly, the accurate transcription provided by IFLYREC also reduces the possibility of information distortion caused by manual recording errors. Thirdly, the real-time speech-to-text transcription can also enable both sides to concentrate more on the interview itself. Besides, the app also supports numerous languages and dialects, adapting to the needs of different interview scenarios.

In summary, IFLYREC, as a smart transcription and translation platform, plays an important role in interviews, providing interviewers with efficient, accurate and convenient voice processing solutions.

3.3.2 Online Questionnaire Distribution and Collection Platform WJX

WJX is a professional free online questionnaire survey platform, on which users can design questionnaires, distribute and collection respondents' answers as well as carry out basic questionnaire result analysis. Compared with tradition data collection methods, this online platform is more efficient and economic, which can help users collect the required data in a relatively short time.

Firstly, in terms of questionnaire design, WJX platform provides a simple and clear operation interface and diverse questionnaire templates, so that users can quickly design questionnaires without professional skills. At the same time, it supports a variety of question combinations and makes questionnaire design more flexible.

Secondly, the platform supports multi-channel distribution of questionnaires. The questionnaires designed on this platform can be distributed via hyperlinks that can be shared on some social media platforms such as WeChat, Weibo or some traditional channels like emails and messages. WeChat as a Chinese-developed social media was initially launched in 2011 by Tencent (Matthias, 2024), has grown to become one of the world's largest standalone apps. According to Turner (2024), WeChat, a leading social media app, is estimated to grow to 1.427 billion monthly active users in 2024 and nearly 75% of the China's population use it. The main respondents of my questionnaire are Chinese customers who visit DL, so they can turn on their phones, open Wechat, and scan the QR code and fill out the questionnaire and submit it.

In terms of questionnaire collection and analysis, WJX has real-time viewing function that enables me to know how many people complete the questionnaire and how many time each respondent spend on each question. The platform also provides a variety of statistical charts to visualise the results of questionnaire completion. I can download the raw data to Excel for further analysis.

It is worth mentioning that the platform attaches great importance to respondents' data security and takes a series of measures to protect users' data privacy, so that users can carry out questionnaire surveys and data analysis safely.

3.3.3 Analytical Software “SPSS”

SPSS as the acronym of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, is a software platform widely used for statistical analysis, particularly in social science, business.(Kulas, 2021) SPSS provides a wide range of functions that can support various stages of data analysis, and in this research, SPSS is used to conduct Descriptive Analysis, Reliability Test, Correlation Analysis and Regression Analysis.

3.4 Theoretical Models

3.4.1 7Ps Marketing Mix

7Ps Marketing Mix is developed based on traditional 4Ps Marketing Mix model. According to Yudelson (1999), the 4Ps Marketing Mix was initially introduced by E. Jerome McCarthy in 1960s and the four “P” respectively refer to Product, Price, Promotion, and Place and they are the core elements that should be focused in marketing activities. Then Booms and Bitner in 1981 incorporate three new elements “People” “Process” and “Physical Evidence” into the existing 4Ps framework.(Rafiq and Ahmed, 1995)

Adopting 7Ps Marketing Mix can help businesses strategically position themselves in the marketplace and meet customer needs effectively (Jain, 2022), which is particularly crucial in service-heavy and customer-centric sectors like retail industry. In this research, the model is adopted to explore potential imperfections DL has in its daily running and these flaws negatively affect is customer satisfaction.

3.4.2.Chinese Customer Satisfaction Index

The analysis based on 7Ps Marketing Mix demonstrate the necessity and urgency to investigate DL's customer satisfaction. A scientific evaluation model system is the premise of evaluating of customer satisfaction of the private retail enterprise and an assessment

system is designed based on the combination of existing model CCSI and interview results. CCSI has already contains five primary indicators and they are Perceived Quality, Perceived Value, Customer Expectations, Customer Loyalty as well as Customer complaints. These five indicators will be subdivided and new factors analyzed from interviews will also be added and they together compose a new customer satisfaction evaluation system, which lays a foundation for questionnaire survey.

This section has featured the research methodology used. The next chapter will analyse the results obtained.

Chapter 4 Main Analysis

This chapter consists of four parts. Firstly, the uniqueness of DL's marketing strategies will be introduced based on the research's field visit and observation. Secondly the potential influencing factors affecting DL's customer satisfaction will be extracted from the analysis on interview results and guidance of 7Ps Marketing Mix. Next, taking DL's marketing uniqueness and potential influencing factors into consideration, the researcher has designed a systematic evaluation model and made a questionnaire in which those abstract measurement indicators in the model has been converted into concrete questions. The last part mainly focuses on the interpretation of the data obtained through questionnaire.

4.1 Researcher's Observational Analysis—— DL's Marketing Strategies

To deeply understand DL Trading Company, the researcher has visited DL's stores in person and made a careful observation and records. In the first part of this chapter, five typical characteristics of DL's marketing strategies perceived by the researcher will be discussed.

4.1.1 Localization: Rooted in Henan Province, Especially in Xuchang City

Headquartered in Xuchang City, Henan Province, DL Trading Group now owns 13 stores, all of which are located in Henan Province, with 11 in Xuchang City and 2 in neighboring city Xinxiang. (CGTN, 2024) As one of China's most popular and famous supermarkets, DL is always rooted in a medium-sized city in the province, which makes it criticized for never going out of Xuchang, not even Henan.

As the ancient capital during Three Kingdom Period, Xuchang has a rich history and cultural atmosphere and it is now a fourth-tier city located in Henan Province, adjacent to the provincial capital of Zhengzhou. (South China Morning Post, 2016)

Xuchang, as a prefecture-level city in central Henan province in Central China (Wikipedia , 2024), covers a total area of about 4,996 km² and as of the end of 2023 the total

permanent resident population of Xuchang reached 4.38 million, with a population density of 880 people per square kilometre. Xuchang is composed of two districts, two cities and two counties.(Xuchang City People's Government, 2024)

In a narrow sense, Xuchang City refers to the two districts—— Weidu District which is located in the centre of the city and Jian'an District surrounds Weidu District. Apart from the two districts, two county-level cities “Yuzhou and Changge” and two counties “ Yanling and Xiangcheng” are also under the administration of Xuchang. Among DL’s stores, eleven are located in Xuchang and among the eleven, ten are in the Weidu and Jian'an and only one is in Yuzhou. The other two are located in Xinxiang, another city in Henan Province.

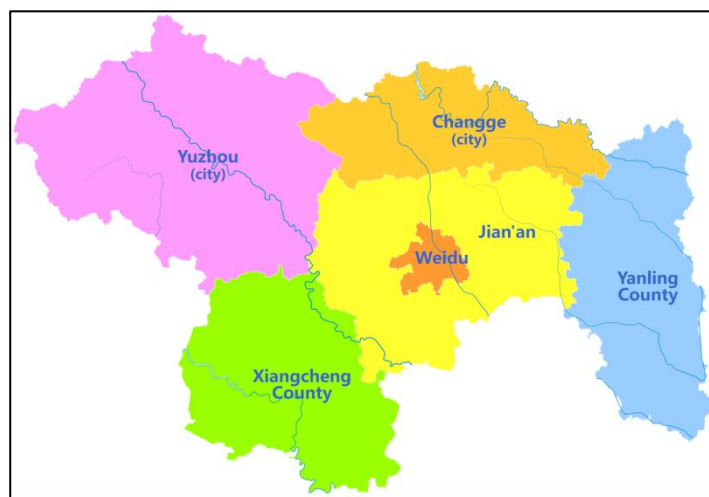


Fig.2

Since its establishment, DL has never gone out of these two cities for large-scale expansion, and has always been mainly rooted in Xuchang area. After nearly 30 years of localization strategy, the enterprise has successfully won the trust and loyalty of Xuchang residents and has also become a symbol or representative of Xuchang.

Since the opening of *Zhengzhou - Xuchang Line*, an intercity underground line in 2022, increasing numbers of tourists have been travelling to Xuchang for shopping and sightseeing in DL stores. According to statistics, during the 2023 May Day, one of legal holidays in China, more than 156 thousand people visited DL per day and in 2024 the number amounted to incredible 310 thousand. (Sina News, 2023)

The heat of DL has also boosted the tourism of Xuchang. During 2024 May Day holiday Xuchang welcomed a total of 4.8 million tourists, and the total tourism income reached over 3.7 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of respectively 115% and 118% in 2023 and a more considerable year-on-year increase of 169% and 196% in 2019.(Xuchang City People's Government, 2024)

Although DL has never expanded out of Henan Province, it has achieved a legendary annual sales revenue exceeding 10 billion in Xuchang such a fourth-tier city and also promoted development of local tourism industry. The retail enterprise helps this ancient city revitalize in the new era and also makes more Chinese and even foreigners know Xuchang so it deserves the symbol of Xuchang City.

The successful implementation of DL's localization strategy can be attributed to its constant generous contribution to the infrastructure construction in Xuchang city and the thoughtful kindness to Xuchang people, which is a kind of idealistic interaction between local enterprises and local citizens.

Since its establishment, DL has always been contributing to building Xuchang for the public welfare. In 2008, DL donated nearly six million fund to build a pedestrian bridge in Wenfeng Zone where one of its store named *Times Square* is located. In April of 2009, the project named *Donglai Love Bridge* was officially completed and put into use. The bridge has not only eased the traffic congestion in the area but also protected the commuting safety of neighboring residents because more people can walk on the bridge to get to Times Square and children didn't have to cross the road on the way to school or back home.



Fig.3

Furthermore, DL also made great contribution in 2020 Xuchang Pandemic Prevention and Control. During the hard time, DL announced that all vegetables and fruits were sold at the purchase price, which to a large extent guaranteed the basic live of the local people. (Wang, 2021a) In contrast, some unscrupulous stores forced up price during the pandemic-stricken time, DL's righteousness and generosity is admirable and commendable. At the same time, the DL also donated supplies and money to support local government to fight against Covid-19.

It is such a charitable and benevolent virtue that makes DL win the deep trust of local people. DL always regard local people as their family and spares no effort to build the city and help the people so that's why it hardly has rivalries in this city. Many Chinese retail giants such as Dennis Department Store, Century Mart tried to enter the local market and nearly all of them suffered defeat and decided to retreat. (Yang, 2013)

Localization strategy is an important factor of DL's success. The enterprise has been rooted in Xuchang and developing the local market for the past 30 years , which makes it natural for Xuchang people to unconsciously combine shopping with DL stores. Localization strategy enables DL to strong customer loyalty and responsible brand image in local community, which is why this local private enterprise has been able to create a selling legend of more than ten-billion annual revenue.

4.1.2 Put Customer First and Offer Impeccable Service

With the rapid development of online shopping platforms, shopping for many consumers has changed from essential requirement to life experience and whether the shopping experience can make consumers feel comfortable largely depends on whether the service they can receive.

DL has always been adhering to the service philosophy "Customer is God" and is firmly committed to providing customers with meticulous and thoughtful service. Its high quality service is also one of the important reasons why many foreign tourists come from far away. Specifically speaking, DL offers impeccable and considerate service in four aspects: general service, public area service, shopping area service as well as some stores' special services

Firstly, in terms of general service, DL persists in using high-quality products to win customers' loyalty. All the products that customers purchase in DL store can be refunded if customers are dissatisfied with them and DL even provides door-to-door after-sales service.

Secondly, with respect to public area service, clean lavatories installed with high-end equipment are provided. In DL's Angel City, Dyson water faucets with both washing and drying functions are equipped. The manager revealed each device cost around 20 thousand RMB. Basic tools such as combs, cotton swabs, as well as hair elastics are also provided in every DL's toilets. To meet the requirement of special customers, baby care rooms and accessible restrooms are set in DL's stores as well.



Fig.4



Fig.5



Fig.6

Thirdly, as for public area service, DL provides portable shopping baskets and different kinds of trolleys with different capacities and special functions for customers to choose. Senior customers can choose the trolley equipped with one seat and magnifying glass (The fourth one in the following picture) so that they can rest and see details carefully while shopping. The little trolley (The third one in the following picture) designed for children increases their sense of participation while shopping with their parents.



Fig.7

Ice Fetching Place and Microwave Heating Place can be found at each store. Ice can keep food fresh and some ready-to-eat food after heating is better for customers' health. Disposable gloves provided for customers in the exposed-commodity areas such as Seafood Zone, Meat Zone and Nut Zone, which can, to a large extent, ensure food sanitation. Magnifying glasses are hung in each shelf for the elderly customers to select goods. DL can help customers clean and cut seafood, meat, vegetables or fruits for free.



Fig.8



Fig.9

At checkout counters, free disposable degradable straws, forks, and gloves are offered. Each store is equipped with AED for emergency medical situation. A rest space where there are no promotion and product demonstration is left in every store for customers to rest.



Fig.10



Fig.11

Besides, self-service pet depository is prepared in each stores. Customers can deposit their pets before entering the store for shopping. At this place, necessary food and water and umbrella are all offered to customers' pets.



Fig.12

Finally, as special service, Jewellery Zone provides free jewellery identification service; At DL Pharmacy, customers can enjoy free decocting service when purchasing Chinese herbs with prescriptions; Optical Zone provides free eyesight examination, glasses cleaning and repair service; Electrical Appliance Zone provides free home delivery, installation, cleaning and repairing service. Besides, if you are not satisfied with a film you have watched in DL Cinema, you can get an unconditional refund of 50% of the ticket price.

DL firmly holds the concept that service should be the core for a retail enterprise rather than something incidental. DL thoroughly puts customer first and spares no effort to offer its customers with perfect service and high-quality products. DL holds sincere attitude, offers superior service and sells good-quality goods to bring customers brilliant shopping experience. Purchasing products in DL allows consumers not only received sense of satisfaction but also enjoy being respected and valued, which improves DL's customer stickiness and repurchase rate and in the end cultivate customers' loyalty to the enterprise.

4.1.3 Word-of-Mouth Marketing

Animadvertising plays a vital role in boosting sales and many enterprises invest much in this aspects. According to the statistics, the grocery giant Tesco invested more than 80 million British pounds in advertising in the United Kingdom in 2020 (Statista, 2022).

The development of e-commerce platform and the popularity of social media make retail enterprises realize the importance of E-marketing and leave the advantages of traditional word-of-mouth marketing in the basket. In contrast, DL as a local company attaches great importance to word-of-mouth marketing and consumers seldom can see its commercial advertisement on various channels.

DL insists on depending superior goods with sincere and friendly service to win customers' loyalty. It realizes and values the importance of word-of-mouth marketing and use this strategy to build and maintain its good reputation in local region.

If customers are not satisfied with the DL staff service, they can go to the Reception Desk to complain or call DL complaints hotline. After careful investigation, if indeed for the staff fault, apart from sincerely apologizing to the customers, DL also offer 500RMB complaint award to the customers to express gratitude because customers' feedback and complaints can help DL do better.

In addition, DL has also set up a We-chat Official Account, a platform where customers can make suggestions or complaints and all the feedback proposed by customers are required to get solved within 24 hours. Relevant staff must contact the customer, effectively solve the problem and if necessary, make necessary compensations or remedial measures, which helps DL shape the responsible corporate image and build a good reputation.

DL gains customers' trust by introducing various related details about the products that are sold in DL. In the fruit section, DL clearly describes the planting area , purchase price, selling price and other basic information such as acidity, sweetness as well as storage method.



Fig. 13



Fig.14

By subverting traditional business thinking logic, DL builds deep trust with consumers through genuine and transparent attitude. While shopping in DL, customers can not only have enough space for free choice but also have easy access to clear product information.

Meanwhile, DL distinguishes itself from other retailers by provide consumers with high-quality products and distinctive service. Customers spontaneously have good comments of DL and unconsciously spread its positive brand image through word-of-mouth recommendation so that more consumers come to DL for shopping and then contribute to building DL's positive brand image.

4.1.4 Build Own Brand

Branding is a major influence when consumers buy products because brands indirectly enable consumers to associate products with quality, functionality and design. Therefore, in marketing, brand is often the main competitive advantage among products. DL has build a reliable and trustworthy corporate image in consumers' heart and it should spend effort to build its own brand.

DL has already had its own dessert brand named DELICIOUS, which mainly produces on bread, cakes, Chinese pastries, western pastries and other kinds of dessert. In recent years, the excellent quality control and tasty flavor enable DELICIOUS product constantly hot on the Internet. For example, DL's big mooncakes, which appeared in 2022 Mid-Autumn Festival, are often immediately sold out as soon as they are put on the shelves, triggering a

long queue of customers to scramble for just one. Some crazy customers even queue up all night just to get one and some are even willing the big cake at a higher price from daigou.



Fig.15



Fig.16

Besides the dessert brand, DL also with the attitude of pursuing outstanding quality, strictly controlling the production from the source and adopting direct supply from the manufacturers, has created its own brand “DL” which covers alcoholic, beverages, food, kitchenware and household products. The goods labeled DL logo represent the extraordinary quality.



Fig.17



Fig.18



Fig.19

DL adheres to the standard of “Selecting the best among the best” and develops each product with the spirit of craftsmanship. For example, IT cooperated with Baofeng Winery to develop “Free Love 1995” liquor, hoping that consumers can drink grain liquor with real quality and affordable price and without harming their health. At the same time, it also hopes to guide the liquor industry to return to a state of truthfulness and to push the Chinese liquor industry to progress and develop on the reasonable road. Therefore, once the “Free Love 1995” liquor is released, it’s often sold out just in a short time.



Fig.20



Fig.21

From desserts to daily necessities to liquor and beverages, DL has repeatedly reinforced the relationship between DL and high quality and trustworthiness in consumers' heart through the creation of self-owned brands. This branding effect has helped the company create a positive image on the one hand, and boosted product sales on the other.

4.1.5 Emotional Marketing: Spread Love

Emotional marketing plays a considerable role in DL's business success. DL attaches importance to build positive enterprise culture and cultivates positive energy. Making customers feel relieved, assured and comfortable and meeting or exceeds customers' expectations are always DL's goal and DL trusts its customers comprehensively, actually stands on customers' point of view to consider the problems.

Apart from commercial success, DL is committed to spreading positive life philosophy and cultivates customers to live a warm, healthy and happy life. In DL's stores, customers can easily find those wisdom words spreading love and warmth rather than those eye-catching promotional slogans.



Fig.22



Fig.23

In addition, in rainy and snowy weather, DL arranges special staff to cover water-proof cloth on customers' motorbikes and bicycles and clear rain and snow on customers' vehicles to facilitate customers' travelling after shopping. In burning hot summer, free icy water is provided for customers to cool themselves.

Nowadays, shopping for consumers does not just meet their essential life and actually prefer to get emotional satisfaction and psychological recognition through shopping. DL is devoted to creating love, spreading love, sharing love and it aims to make every customers make feel at home while shopping in DL's stores. Just as the slogan "Love in DL", the enterprise is an inclusive warm harbour for customers where are full of love and warmth.

4.2 The potential factors affecting DL's customer satisfaction based on 7Ps Metric

The 7Ps Marketing Mix proposed by Booms and Bitner in 1981 is a comprehensive framework used to analyze businesses and it's developed based on 4Ps Marketing Mix proposed by Jerome McCarthy in the 1960s. (Eti, 2020) As marketing evolved, particularly with the rise of services and the importance of customer experience, three additional elements (People, Process, Physical Evidence) were added to create the 7Ps model.

The 7Ps framework highlights that customer satisfaction is influenced by multiple factors not just the product. By optimizing these seven elements, businesses can create a more satisfying and engaging experience, ultimately leading to customer loyalty.

Then the problem that DL has will be pointed out based on the model. By optimizing aspects can DL improve its customer satisfaction.

3.5.1 Limited Product Range

Firstly, consumer demand tends to be diversified, with limited shelf space and geographical restrictions, DL can only choose some well-known representative brands to meet the needs of the general public, which leads to the limited variety of goods. Based on the needs of the public customers to select the goods, homogenisation phenomenon of the goods sold by DL is also passively caused.

Secondly, the range of the goods produced by DL is relatively small, with only one alcoholic beverage, some instant food products and household cleaning products and dessert, leaving consumers with little space to choose from.

The booming development of e-commerce platforms and live streaming selling has made DL's shortcomings exposed more obviously. For example, e-commerce platforms sell a larger variety of goods, and if customers can not find desirable products in DL'S physical stores and then they are likely to shop in the e-commerce platform to obtain a sense of satisfaction and DL's customer satisfaction is harmed.

3.5.2 Higher Price

Vegetables, meat and fruits are essential foods. The price these goods sold in DL's stores is generally higher than the market price, and the interview results also support this view.

One of the interviewees, Customer A, says, "*Once walking into DL to go shopping, nearly 100 RMB is spent immediately but actually I just buy a few kinds of products.*"

Customer B, who has been shopping at DL for more than 10 years, comments that although DL provides high-quality product and warm service, the service cost is burdened equally among each customer in the end, resulting in the phenomena that a bottle of soya sauce is more expensive than that in common stores.

Customer C complained, "*DL sells a lot of fresh goods in finished packages, which is clean and hygienic but is a form of forced selling. I originally want to buy 5 cupcakes, but the package is 12. Because of the short food shelf life, a lot of them are wasted.*"

Although DL provides nearly perfect service, customers' ultimate focus will still be on price. If consumers will feel that they are not getting what they pay for when they buy goods from DL and their satisfaction will be greatly reduced.

3.5.3 Single Promotional Approach

At present, DL has almost no fixed promotional activities throughout the year, except for the regular 9.5 discount. The lack of promotional methods not only fails to fully exploit

advantages of DL's membership system and reduces customers' desire to consume, but also harms customer loyalty and, to a certain extent, inhibits the potential customers' passion for purchasing.

3.5.4 Lack Diverse Marketing Channel

DL as a traditional retail enterprise with its brand influence has been developing in this year but with the rapid development of the E-commerce platform and the popularity of online shopping, DL did not follow the pace of the times and still mainly rely on traditional offline sales channels.

In the post-epidemic era, e-commerce and retail industry are deeply integrated. E-commerce with its convenience, flexibility, variety of competitive advantages continues exploring the fourth and fifth-tier cities, which has a considerable impact on the DL and potentially leads to more customers to shop on the e-commerce platform, then affecting customer satisfaction and loyalty.

3.5.5 Unqualified Employee

Although DL provides regular training with its employees, there is still a disconnect between theory and practice, resulting less professional service of these employees.

When customers ask for product information, DL's front-line service is often not very familiar with the products and they often need to go to check the information, resulting in the fact that consumers become impatient and lose purchasing desire while waiting for reply.

Customer A, who was interviewed, complained, *"When I asked whether a cooker was in stock or not, I waited for the shopping assistant who went to the warehouse to check for almost ten minutes to wait and I gradually lost patience."*

Good service should be built on the professionalism of service personnel, otherwise it is difficult to retain customers only by friendly service attitude

3.5.6 Problems of Shopping Procedure

Customer satisfaction is affected through the whole process from pre-shopping, while-shopping, post-shopping and DL in these three aspects needs to be strengthened.

In pre-shopping, DL has been criticised for its inconvenient traffic. Two of DL's large stores, Time Squire and Angel City are both located in the centre of Xuchang, the geographical location is very superior, but due to the limited room of DL's parking lot, serious traffic congestion and the traffic paralysis are often caused and customers have to queuing up for more than 1 hour to park their vehicles before enter the store for shopping. Such traffic chaos not only seriously affects the normal travelling of the surrounding residents, resulting in damage to the corporate image of DL but also seriously harms the mood of customers, resulting in a significant reduction in customer satisfaction.

In post-shopping, DL's checking-out speed needs improving. The researcher found that DL's stores set in medium-sized community are not equipped with enough check-out machines or cashier desks and customers often have to wait in long queues to check out. Although there are many checkout windows in DL's large shopping malls, some of them are closed, which really affects the customer satisfaction.

3.5.7 Limited Physical Evidence

Comfortable and reasonable physical evidences can bring customers closer to the enterprise, and then improve customer stickiness. DL still has some deficiencies in this aspect, which are mainly reflected in the layout and atmosphere.

In terms of the layout of the stores, DL's large shopping malls integrate supermarkets, clothing, electrical appliances, cinemas and entertainment facilities, but the overall layout is confusing. Take the fifth floor of Times Square Store as an example. The floor is a collection of restaurants, home appliances and electrical appliances, kitchen utensils, cinema center and Game Arcades. Due to the limited area of the floor, the theme of the commodities sold are not clear, and the boundaries of the functional areas are blurred. For example, home appliances and kitchen utensils are all arranged in the same area, which makes it uneasy for many consumers to find the products they need to buy and even get lost. In addition, the restaurant area is full of fumes and the game arcade is noisy, which brings an unpleasant shopping experience to customers. Other DL's large comprehensive shopping stores also have similar problems.

In terms of the atmosphere, firstly, the lighting in the mall lacks softness, especially in the fitting rooms and dining areas, which are privacy-oriented areas. Secondly, the lighting has not been adjusted according to different types of business. The internal lighting of the mall is too uniform and lacks characteristics. Thirdly, there is a lack of innovation in the ambience of the external lighting of the malls, and the peripheral lighting of the malls has never been changed since the malls were opened, which does not reflect the high-end nature of DL. Fourthly, the air circulation in some stores is not good. The lack of physical evidences reduces DL's brand image and further development in the future.

4.3 Interview Result Analysis 1000

Based on the analysis of interviews and CCSI model, seven first-level indicators are extracted and to make this evaluation more accurate, the seven indicators are sub-divided into several second-level indicators.

4.3.1 Enterprise Image

Enterprise image stems from the two-way interaction between the enterprise and the consumers, as well as the consumer's recognition of the enterprise and the overall perception formed on this basis. As an intangible asset, corporate image is difficult to be imitated by competitors.

At the same time, influenced by individual experiences and psychological factors, consumers' perception of one enterprise varies. DL's enterprise image is the concrete result of its consumers' emotions, opinions, impressions. Based on the interview results, the first-level indicator "Enterprise Image" is further subdivided into 4 factors: The Complete Images, Social Responsibility, Enterprise Reputation, and Employee Image.

4.3.2 Perception of Goods

Perception of Goods refers to consumers' subjective feelings about goods attributes such as quality, types, prices and brands. Combined with DL's current situation and the interview result, the first-level indicator "Perception of Goods" is further subdivided into five

secondary indicators: product quality, product variety, product price, product brand and promotion.

4.3.3 Perception of Service

Good service is the key for DL to retain customers. Customer retention rate is the best measurement of service quality. Taking DL's current situation and actual interview results into consideration, the first-level indicator "Perception of Service" is subdivided into four factors service attitude, flexibility, after-sales service, and problem-solving ability.

4.3.4 Shopping Environment

Shopping environment is important to consumers' shopping experience, customers through the five senses (visual, auditory, odour, touch, taste) on the DL to implement perceptual assessment, and ultimately decide their purchasing behaviour. The primary indicator "Shopping Environment" into five factors: Cleanliness & Tidiness, Reasonability of Layout, Comfort of Soft Loading, Inner Air Quality as well as Special Area.

4.3.5 Perceived Value

Perceived Value is consumers' subjective perception in relation to the use of a particular brand, product or service. The primary task of any business is to create value for the customer while extracting value for the company. As the first level indicator, "Perceived Value" is subdivided to three factors: Mood while Choosing, Purchase Desirable Products, Cost Performance of Goods.

4.3.6 Shopping Convenience

Shopping convenience refers to the time and effort consumers spend in shopping. The less time and effort consumers invest, the greater the convenience. Based on the interview result, the first-level indicator "Shopping Convenience" is subdivided into Parking Space and Transportation and Payment Method.

4.3.7 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction refers to the overall consumer attitude towards the products and services provided by a company. In this study, customer satisfaction is further subdivided

into five main factors: Satisfaction towards Products, Satisfaction towards Service, Satisfaction towards Shopping Environment and Overall Satisfaction.

Based on the interview results and CCSI Framework, the key influencing factors of customer satisfaction are extracted as the basis for the evaluation system. The seven factors, working as the first-level indicators are further divided into several second-level indicators and they are reflected in the questionnaire through specific questions.

Customer Satisfaction Index Evaluation System of DL Trading Company	
First-level Indicators	Second-level Indicators
Enterprise Image	The Complete Image
	Social Responsibility
	Enterprise Reputation
	Employee Image
Perception of Goods	Quality
	Price
	Variety
	Brand
	Promotion
Perception of Service	Attitude
	Flexibility
	After-sales service
	Problem-solving ability
Shopping Environment	Cleaniness & Tidiness
	Reasonability of Layout
	Comfort of self loading
	Inner Air Quality
	Special Area
Perceived Value	Mood while Shopping
	Purchasing Desirable Products
	Cost performace of Goods
Shopping Convenience	Enough Parking Space
	Transportation
	Payout Method
Customer Satisfaction	Satisfaction towards Goods
	Satisfaction towards Service
	Satisfaction towards Shopping Environment
	Overall Satisfaction

Fig.24

4.4 Questionnaire Analysis 1000

303 questionnaires are collected on WJX platform and 13 invalid are excluded and there are 290 left and the effective rate is 95.71% . SPSS is used to carry out descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis

4.4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Through SPSS22.0 software to calculate the mean and standard deviation of 7 variables, the mean value of DL's enterprise image satisfaction is 3.493 points, relatively the highest; the mean value of perception with goods is 3.572 points, the mean value of customer satisfaction with service quality is 3.466 points, the mean value of customer satisfaction with the shopping environment is 3.479 points; the mean value of perceived value is 3.438 points; the mean value of customer satisfaction with 3.416 points, and the mean value of customer satisfaction with shopping convenience is 3.403 points, relatively the lowest. The average value of perceived value satisfaction is 3.438 points; the average value of customer satisfaction is 3.416 points, and the average value of shopping convenience is 3.403 points, which is the lowest. The mean values of the above variables are all in the range of average to relatively satisfied, indicating that the overall satisfaction of DL is in the middle level and there is still much room for improvement.

Descriptive Statistics of Samples					
Variable	Number	Min	MaX	E	Standard Deviation
Enterprise Image	290	1	5	3.493	1.241
Perception of Goods	290	1.2	5	3.572	1.32
Service Quality	290	1	5	3.466	1.399
Shopping Environment	290	1.2	5	3.479	1.186
Perceived Value	290	1	5	3.438	1.240
Shopping Convenience	290	1	5	3.403	1.260
Customer Satisfaction	290	1	5	3.416	1.309

Fig.25

4.4.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability Test of the questionnaire was based on the Alpha coefficient, which ranged from 0.7 to 0.8 as the minimum acceptable value, 0.8 to 0.9 as the ideal value, and above 0.9 as the ideal value. The Alpha coefficient of the 29-item Customer Satisfaction Scale for the total scale reached 0.924, while the Alpha coefficients of the sub-scales were greater than 0.8, indicating that the reliability of the questionnaire was very high. This indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire is reliable.

Reliability Test		
Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Terms
Enterprise Image	0.869	4
Perception of Goods	0.921	5
Service Quality	0.888	4
Shopping Environment	0.909	5
Perceived Value	0.822	3
Shopping Convenience	0.888	4
Customer Satisfaction	0.869	4
The Whole Questionnaire	0.924	29

Fig.26

4.4.3 Correlation Analysis

Correlation Analysis shows the degree of association between two variables. Using the seven variables extracted in the previous section, they are described by Pearson correlation coefficients. As shown in Fig 27, enterprise image (0.349), perception of goods (0.341), service quality (0.378), shopping environment (0.337), perceived value (0.303), and shopping convenience are all moderately strongly correlated with customer satisfaction ($P < 0.01$).

Correlation Statistical Analysis							
		Enterprise Image	Perception of Goods	Service Quality	Shopping Environment	Perceived Value	Customer Satisfaction
Enterprise Image	Pearson Correlation	1					
Perception of Goods	Pearson Correlation	0.345**	1				
Service Quality	Pearson Correlation	0.311**	0.365**	1			
Shopping Environment	Pearson Correlation	0.285**	0.313**	0.349**	1		
Perceived Value	Pearson Correlation	0.338**	0.271**	0.328**	0.327**	1	
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.349**	0.341**	0.378**	0.337**	0.360**	1
Shopping Convenience	Pearson Correlation	0.288**	0.393**	0.296**	0.339**	0.344**	0.303**

When Confidence coefficient is 0.01, correlation is significant

Fig.27

4.4.4 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is on the basis of correlation analysis. In the following regression analysis, the independent variables are enterprise image, perception of goods, service quality, shopping environment, shopping convenience; the dependent variable is customer satisfaction.

Model Summary B					
Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard error of estimate	Durbin-Waston(U)
1	.525 ^a	0.276	0.261	1.12573	2.091
a predicative variable: service quality, shopping convenience, enterprise image, shopping environment, perceived value, perception of goods					
b dependent variable: customer satisfaction					

Fig.28

Anova						
Model		Sum of Square	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance
1	regression	136.666	6	22.778	17.974	.000 ^b
	residuals	358.64	283	1.267		
	Total	495.305	289			
a dependent variable: customer satisfaction						
b predicative variable: service quality, shopping convenience, enterprise image, shopping environment, perceived value, perception of goods						

Fig.29

Coefficient a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		Standard Coefficient	t	significance
		B	Standard Error	Beta		
1	Constant	0.609	0.283		2.151	0.032
	Enterprise Image	0.155	0.060	0.147	2.565	0.011
	Perception of Goods	0.118	0.059	0.119	2.013	0.045
	Shopping Environment	0.135	0.064	0.123	2.13	0.034
	Perceived Value	0.166	0.061	0.157	2.727	0.007
	Shopping Convenience	0.070	0.061	0.067	1.144	0.253
	Service Quality	0.163	0.054	0.175	3.004	0.003

Fig.30

According to Fig.28 and Fig.29, we can see that D-W is 2.091, which indicates that there is no auto-correlation between the random error terms. F is 17.974, $P < 0.01$, which indicates that the regression equation is very significant. Fig.30 shows that the five constants of enterprise image (0.011), perception of goods (0.045), shopping environment (0.034), perceived value (0.007), and service quality (0.003) are positively and significantly correlated with the dependent variable of customer satisfaction, and the constant of shopping convenience (0.253) is significant because of the $P > 0.05$. > 0.05 , so there is no significant positive correlation between shopping convenience and customer satisfaction. Therefore, according to the regression coefficients, the influence of the five factors of service quality (0.175), perceived value (0.157), enterprise image (0.147), shopping environment (0.123), and perception of goods (0.119) on DL's customer satisfaction is weak in order.

To sum up, the degree of influence of each index affecting DL's customer satisfaction is service quality > perceived value > enterprise image > shopping environment > perception of goods. Therefore, in order to effectively improve DL's customer satisfaction, it is necessary to focus on the service quality, perceived value and enterprise image and other aspects of the proposed targeted countermeasures to improve. This also provides a strong theoretical support and scientific basis for the specific improvement strategy of DL customer satisfaction.

This chapter has interpreted the interview result and analyzed questionnaire data. The next chapter will make a final conclusion for the research and then some feasible suggestions and practical recommendations will be proposed for DL.

Chapter 5 Conclusion & Recommendation

Based on the previous analysis, on the one hand among all the indicators that affect customer satisfaction, service quality is the most influential and then Perceived Value, Enterprise Image, Shopping Environment and Perception of Goods so DL should make improvements from the five aspects.

According to the analysis guided by 7Ps Marketing Mix, among the seven potential factors, there is a partial crossover among the five factors: Product Variety, Price of Fresh Food, Promotional Methods and Perception of Goods and Perceived Value. There is also a partial crossover between Selling Channels and Perceived Value. There is a partial crossover between Employee Quality and Service Quality. There is a partial crossover between Physical Evidence and Shopping Environment and Service Quality. Therefore, the potential influencing factors mentioned above should be considered when making strategies.

The following four strategies with several specific improvement suggestions are proposed to help DL promote its customer satisfaction performance.

5.1 Improve Service Quality

Service Quality is the most influential among the five factors affecting DL's customer satisfaction, which indicates that customers have higher demands and expectations for the service DL provides. Extraordinary Service is also a factor that DL distinguishes itself from other competitors so its importance is self-evident. However, this competitive advantage is easily imitated by its competitors or even transformed into a disadvantage affecting DL's own development. The following four suggestions are given to improve DL's service quality.

5.1.1 Provide Multidimensional Employee Training

Employee Quality has an impact on service and DL has formulated a set of detailed policies to manage and train its employees but there are still gaps between theories and daily practice. Therefore, it is very necessary to strengthen the standardised staff service training and three specific suggestions are given.

First, strengthen training focusing on service attitude., to let the staff really feel the fat Donglai everything comes from the customer, to take the initiative to understand the needs of customers shopping, learn to think differently, with the most patient answers, the most sincere greetings so that customers really feel at home feeling. Through effective training, DL should make its employees understand that it's nearly impossible for DL to achieve present accomplishments without customers' support. DL's employees should learn to stand in customers' shoes and answer customers' questions with patience and warm attitude and they should make customers feel at home.

Secondly, DL should provide employees with language art training. Apart from the basic requirements of speaking Mandarin and using civilized languages, DL should also teach its employees expression skill. The training can help DL' employees communicate well with different kinds of customers, especially those who have strong dissatisfaction and successfully implement DL's slogan "Shop Happily in DL"

Thirdly. DL should also give employees practical professional skill training and manage to bridge the gap between theories and practices so that employees can use their professionalism to help customers.

5.1.2 Improve Hardware Facilities

Inside the store, the layout should be adjusted to strengthen physical evidence, so that the function of each floor will be more consistent and reasonable.

Taking *Times Square* as an example, the functional area on the fifth floor should be adjusted. Cinemas, Game Arcade and Restaurants are all located on this floor. However, Kitchen Utensil Area that is also arranged here should be moved to the first-floor supermarket so that customers won't be confused of the function of the fifth floor.

In addition, the map showing the distribution of each functional area of the mall should be set up in a prominent position so that customers can quickly find where the goods they need are placed. And DL's Logistics Department should take regular inspection to check the equipment failure and implement timely repair and maintenance.

5.1.3 Provide differentiated Customer Service

Firstly, DL should give full play to the advantages of its membership system, using the big data of members to provide differentiated services for different types of customers. DL can give customers birthday gifts on their birthdays to make them feel cared for.

Secondly, for different customers with different genders and preferences, differentiated services can be provided through accurate positioning of potential consumer needs. For example, by analysing customers' preferences through the customers' consumption records, DL can accurately recommend products for customers to meet their needs.

5.1.4 Offer “Zero-interference” Service

For many of today's consumers who pay attention to privacy, excessively warm service can aggravate their psychological burden and make them feel uncomfortable. Therefore, DL should teach their employees to keep an appropriate distance from its customers and hold the principle of moderation.

Specifically, it is to provide customers with zero-communication self-service convenience facilities in the conspicuous position in the store, so that customers can quickly understand the basic attributes, characteristics and prices of the products even if they don't want to communicate with others. When the customer expressed further requirements, the employees can provide appropriate service meticulously and warmly. “Zero-interference Service” meets the mental requirement of today's customers and also indicates that the reality that consumers tend to shop rationally.

5.2 Improve Perceived Value

Among all the factors affecting DL's customer satisfaction, the second important is service quality. Essentially, what customers purchase is not goods but to meet their own expectations. Enhancing the Perceived Value of DL customers is to fully consider the trade-off between consumers' perceived benefits and perceived costs.

Therefore, to improve the value judgement of the products or services provided by DL, specifically by improving customer “Perceived Benefits” or reducing “Perceived Costs” to improve customer perceived value, the following three specific recommendations.

5.2.1 Improve Customers' Shopping Experience

With the continuous upgrading of consumption, customers value more shopping experience itself. Therefore, DL should catch up with the new demands in consumption demand and provide more value-added service to enhance the customer's purchasing experience.

In terms of reducing perceived costs, firstly, DL should strictly control the procurement costs at source and offer cost-effective products to meet the needs of local consumer.

In terms of enhancing customers' perceived benefits, DL needs to enrich its selling channel. The questionnaire analysis indicates that young people from 26 to 35 years old youth group have become the main consumer force. The consuming demand of the young generation is not limited to the common products on the market and the pursuit of higher quality and delicate goods has become a trend. Therefore, DL can provide diverse products at different prices in types for customers in order to give consumers more choice space.

5.2.2 Diversify Promotional Methods

The survey reveals that in DL's daily operation, there are limited promotional methods. Only with superior service can not stimulate customers to make the final purchase decision.

On the other hand, the questionnaire survey shows that a large part of DL's target customers is the price-sensitive type, so effective promotional methods are essential to improve customers' perceived benefits and reduce the perceived cost. Specifically speaking, DL can enrich customers' shopping experience through advertisement promotion, holiday promotion, membership discount, shopping coupon and other forms.

5.2.3 Strengthen the developing of DL's Own Brand

DL has gained a good reputation through its integrity management of its own-brand products and these products has frequently become the internet hot topics but DL has been criticized for limited variety and serious homogeneity of its own-brand commodities. Therefore, strengthening the development of its own brand is not only conducive to enhance the ability of DL's commodities but also can enhance its core competitiveness.

DL needs to increase its own-brand product variety, not only limited to liquor, beverage, and dessert but also can produce some fresh products like vegetable salad and cooked food customers for customers to choose. At the same time, DL should also strengthen the protection of its own brand and cooperate with relevant law enforcement departments to severely punish counterfeiting and malicious infringement.

5.3 Build Distinctive Enterprise Image

If DL wants to distinguish itself from other competitors, it should highlight its core spirit “Freedom • Love”. Although in the highly developed cyber world, information asymmetry exists so DL should find and make full use its core competitive advantages, on the basis of which to determine the spirit and mission of DL.

5.3.1 Utilize New Media

New media have the characteristics of fast-speed, low-cost and strong interaction with customers. Therefore, DL can publicise its corporate image on these platforms. Meanwhile, DL can monitor and analyze customers’ feedback to understand customers’ attitude

DL can use the platforms such as Tiktok, Weibo to build its positive enterprise image and communicate with customers and narrow the distance between customers and the enterprise.

However, it should be noticed that when new media is a double-edged sword that contains both opportunities and risks. When using this platform, DL should realize the uncertainty and make agile response.

DL practices a highly responsible spirit in some public emergent events and it can use these new media to spread its contribution and thus enhance its image in the public's mind. In some public emergencies, DL responds quickly and immediately takes actions, which shows DL’s responsibility of caring for the society and demonstrated DL’s philanthropic spirit of caring for the country.

5.4 Optimize Shopping Environment

A comfortable shopping environment can make consumers feel happy and relaxed and then enhance their shopping experience. Therefore, it is necessary to optimise the shopping environment. Taking DL's present condition into consideration, two specific improvement suggestions are proposed.

5.4.1 Adjust Light Arrangement

Lighting decorations are important to the overall shopping atmosphere inside and outside the stores. Therefore, DL needs to differentiate the colour and intensity of the lights in different functional areas of DL's stores.

In DL's indoor areas, the light in fitting rooms should be soft and because too dark or too bright light may cause customers' vision deviation. Yellow warm light can be used in dining area because it builds a relaxing atmosphere. As for the light choice of clothing areas, light should match characteristics of clothes and offer customers a comfortable visual experience.

In DL's outdoor areas, the lights should be suitable for the thematic decorations and give customers unforgettable impressions.

5.4.2 Improve Air Quality Inside DL's Stores

The air quality inside the shopping mall affects customers' shopping experience. The researcher finds that the air circulation in DL's underground supermarket is terrible and customers may feel uncomfortable so unwilling to stay there for a long time. Therefore, DL needs to strengthen replacement and maintenance of the ventilation equipment to improve customers' sensory comfort.

5.5 Build Multiple Selling Channels

In the post-epidemic era, there are obvious changes in customers' consumption habits and shopping behaviour. Therefore, DL should follow the trend, rely on online information, improve online retail channels and integrate online and offline integration.

First of all, through the differentiation of online and offline business, different marketing strategies should be made to meet different customers' need.

Secondly, DL can also cooperate with existing mature e-commerce platforms. For example, DL can undertake live streaming on Douyin (Chinese Tiktok). DL can also cooperate with e-commerce platforms such as Jingdong and Taobao. Through regular live interactions, DL can build the enterprise image and promote new-product launch activities. Cooperation with existing mature e-commerce companies can not only reduce the difficulty of conducting online business and enhance the connection with customers, but also expands DL's market shares and then improve customer satisfaction.

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Appendix

1. Interview questions

These questions were asked by the interviewer in Chinese and both the questions and answers have been translated into English for easy understanding.

Part 1: Interview Questions for 3 Customers

1. How often do you usually visit DL's retail shops?
2. Which goods and services provided by DL do you like most?
3. In which aspect do you think DL does better?
4. Which part makes your very satisfied?
5. In which aspect do you think DL still needs improving?
6. Which part makes you very dissatisfied?
7. Please describe an unpleasant experience you had when visiting DL's stores and please introduce how did DL deal with it. Did you accept the solution or result?
8. Please describe what factors affect your satisfaction with the goods or services provided by DL and then rank the importance of these factors.

Part 2: Interview Questions for 2 DL's Employees

1. Have you received any suggestions from customers in the course of your work? If yes, in which aspects are these suggestions made?
2. In your work, have you ever received complaints from customers? If so, what are the main aspects of these complaints?
3. Have you ever received customers' praise in your work? If yes, in which aspects?
4. Combined with your working experience as a gross-root salesman in DL, please talk about what demands and expectations that customers have for DL?

Part 3: Interview Questions for 1 DL's Senior Managers

1. What are the main areas in which you have received feedback from your staff about the problems encountered by customers when shopping?
2. What aspects do you think DL is doing better compared with competitors?
3. In what aspects do you think DL needs improving compared with competitors?
4. In your opinion, what aspects of DL still need to be improved in the future development. Rank them in order of importance.
5. What factors do you think are most likely to have an impact on customer satisfaction in the traditional retail industry?
6. What are the factors that retailers should pay attention to when providing goods and services to customers?
7. In the current environment, what do you think are the most effective ways for traditional retailers to improve their customer satisfaction?

2. Questionnaire

Questionnaire Survey on Customer Satisfaction of DL

Dear Sir/Madam! Thank you for spending your precious time filling in this questionnaire. The survey is used to investigate customer satisfaction of a DL Trading Group, a Chinese private retail enterprise.

Your answers are just for academic research and your answers will be kept strictly confidential, only for researchers to carry out the statistical data analysis. Your answers will directly determine the accuracy of this study so please read each question carefully and answer each question truthfully.

There are two parts containing 36 questions in total in the questionnaire. Part 1 includes 7 single-choice questions and Part 1 include 29 questions and you can use 5-point Likert Scale to show your attitude. Sincerely appreciate your participation and cooperation and wish you a happy life.

Part 1 Personal Information

1. Your gender: [Single Choice]

A male B female C other

2. Your age: [Single Choice]

A under 25 B 26-35 C 36-45 D above 45

3. Your education level: [Single Choice]

A high school or below B junior college C Bachelor D Master or above

4. Your career: [Single Choice]

A Freelancer B student C enterprise staff D individual business

E government department staff F retiree G other

5. Your monthly income [Single Choice]

A under ¥3000 B ¥3001-6000 C ¥6001-10000 D above ¥10000

6. In the past half year, how many times did you shop at DL?

A 0~3 B 4~6 C 7~9 D more than 9

7. When was the last time you shopped at DL? [Single Choice]

A in this year(2024) B 1~3 year ago C 4~6 year ago

D 7~9 year E 10 years ago or more years ago

Part 2: Customer Satisfaction Assessment (5-point Likert Scale)

Please give points based on your true feeling. You can give one mark from 1 to 5 to show your feeling or attitude.

1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4=satisfied, 5=very satisfied

Brand Image

8. Your attitude towards DL's whole brand image []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

9. Your attitude towards DL's reputation[]

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

10. Your attitude towards DL's taking social responsibilities []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

11. Your attitude towards DL's employees []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

Product Perception

12. Are you satisfied with the products sold by DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

13. Are you satisfied with the price of the products sold by DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

14. Are you satisfied with DL's commodity variety? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

15. Are you satisfied with brand diversity in DL's stores? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

16. Are you satisfied with DL's product promotion strength? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

Service quality

17. Are you satisfied with DL's employees' service attitude? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

18. Are you satisfied with professionalism and flexibility of DL's employees? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

19. Are you satisfied with DL's after-sales service? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

20. Are you satisfied with warm help when you have difficulties while shopping in DL?[]

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

Shopping environment

21. Are you satisfied with cleanliness and tidiness in DL's stores? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

22. Are you satisfied with commodity layout in DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

23. Are you satisfied with DL's soft-loaded comfort? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

24. Are you satisfied with air quality in DL's stores? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

25. Are you satisfied with different functional zones like toilets, leisure areas in DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

Convenience

26. Are you satisfied with transportation convenience near DL's stores? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

27. Are you satisfied with the parking lot in DL []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

28. Are you satisfied with checking-out speed when shopping in DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

29. Are you satisfied with the diversity of payment method when shopping in DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

Perceived Value

30. What's your satisfaction degree when shopping in DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

31. Can you often purchase appropriate or satisfactory products/services in DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

32. Are you satisfied with cost-performance of the products/service sold by DL? []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

Customer satisfaction

33. Your attitude toward product quality sold by DL []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

34. Your attitude toward service quality provided by DL []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

35. Your attitude toward DL's shopping environment []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

36. Your attitude towards DL []

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5

3. Figures

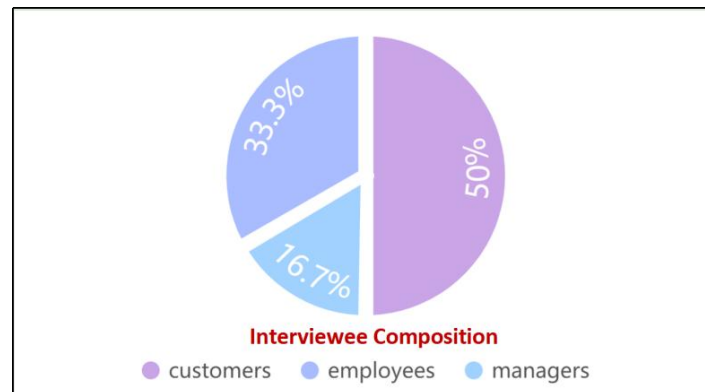


Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig.5



Fig.6



Fig.7



Fig.8



Fig.9



Fig.10



Fig.11



Fig.12



Fig.13



Fig.14



Fig.15



Fig.16



Fig.17



Fig.18



Fig.19



Fig.20



Fig.21



Fig.22



Fig.23

Customer Satisfaction Index Evaluation System of DL Trading Company	
First-level Indicators	Second-level Indicators
Enterprise Image	The Complete Image
	Social Responsibility
	Enterprise Reputation
	Employee Image
Perception of Goods	Quality
	Price
	Variety
	Brand
Perception of Service	Promotion
	Attitude
	Flexibility
	After-sales service
Shopping Environment	Problem-solving ability
	Cleanliness & Tidiness
	Reasonability of Layout
	Comfort of self loading
Perceived Value	Inner Air Quality
	Special Area
	Mood while Shopping
	Purchasing Desirable Products
Shopping Convenience	Cost performance of Goods
	Enough Parking Space
	Transportation
	Payout Method
Customer Satisfaction	Satisfaction towards Goods
	Satisfaction towards Service
	Satisfaction towards Shopping Environment
	Overall Satisfaction

Fig.24

Descriptive Statistics of Samples					
Variable	Number	Min	MaX	E	Standard Deviation
Enterprise Image	290	1	5	3.493	1.241
Perception of Goods	290	1.2	5	3.572	1.32
Service Quality	290	1	5	3.466	1.399
Shopping Environment	290	1.2	5	3.479	1.186
Perceived Value	290	1	5	3.438	1.240
Shopping Convenience	290	1	5	3.403	1.260
Customer Satisfaction	290	1	5	3.416	1.309

Fig.25

Reliability Test		
Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Terms
Enterprise Image	0.869	4
Perception of Goods	0.921	5
Service Quality	0.888	4
Shopping Environment	0.909	5
Perceived Value	0.822	3
Shopping Convenience	0.888	4
Customer Satisfaction	0.869	4
The Whole Questionnaire	0.924	29

Fig.26

Correlation Statistical Analysis							
		Enterprise Image	Perception of Goods	Service Quality	Shopping Environment	Perceived Value	Customer Satisfaction
Enterprise Image	Pearson Correlation	1					
Perception of Goods	Pearson Correlation	0.345**	1				
Service Quality	Pearson Correlation	0.311**	0.365**	1			
Shopping Environment	Pearson Correlation	0.285**	0.313**	0.349**	1		
Perceived Value	Pearson Correlation	0.338**	0.271**	0.328**	0.327**	1	
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.349**	0.341**	0.378**	0.337**	0.360**	1
Shopping Convenience	Pearson Correlation	0.288**	0.393**	0.296**	0.339**	0.344**	0.303**

When Confidence coefficient is 0.01, correlation is significant

Fig.27

Model Summary B					
Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard error of estimate	Durbin-Waston(U)
1	.525 ^a	0.276	0.261	1.12573	2.091

a predicative variable: service quality, shopping convenience, enterprise image, shopping environment, perceived value, perception of goods

b dependent variable: customer satisfaction

Fig.28

Anova						
Model		Sum of Square	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance
1	regression	136.666	6	22.778	17.974	.000 ^b
	residuals	358.64	283	1.267		
	Total	495.305	289			
a dependent variable: customer satisfaction						
b predicative variable: service quality, shopping convenience, enterprise image, shopping environment, perceived value, perception of goods						

Fig.29

Coefficient a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		Standard Coefficient	t	significance
		B	Standard Error	Beta		
1	Constant	0.609	0.283		2.151	0.032
	Enterprise Image	0.155	0.060	0.147	2.565	0.011
	Perception of Goods	0.118	0.059	0.119	2.013	0.045
	Shopping Environment	0.135	0.064	0.123	2.13	0.034
	Perceived Value	0.166	0.061	0.157	2.727	0.007
	Shopping Convenience	0.070	0.061	0.067	1.144	0.253
	Service Quality	0.163	0.054	0.175	3.004	0.003

Fig.30