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Skills for the Workplace

Module Assignment Submission

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Statement of Confirmation of Authenticity

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1. Introduction

The entire study mainly provides an ample amount of information regarding the customer experience in Thomas Cook. The study gives a clear image of the different aspects that are related to the concept of customer satisfaction. Moreover, the below study also provides a detailed description of the approaches of the customer satisfaction and customer experience.

In order to sustain in the competitive business environment, every business organisation these days need to enhance the customer support service. Along with that, the business organisations also need to enhance their overall service quality to maintain the healthy rate of customers (Berguson, 2002).

In turn, to conduct the study, Thomas Cook has been taken into consideration. The main aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of the customer service management in order to manage organizational growth. Along with that, the study also aims to satisfy the fact that how the different aspects that are related to the customer's service management help the chosen organisation to enhance their overall mode of operation.

The study would also derive the different quality control models that Thomas Cook may implement into their function in order to enhance their overall performance. Furthermore, the study would also derive the approaches of Thomas Cook in order to handle the huge rush of their customers. In addition to that, the study has also provided an ample amount of information regarding the fact that how the organisation, Thomas Cook maintains a large number of customers. Based on the different aspects, the study finally provides an appropriate set of recommendation so that the management of Thomas Cook can easily enhance their customer services along with their brand name and brand image.

2. Different quality modules, standards and models

There are different standards that Thomas Cook considerers while providing customer service. Below are the standards that Thomas Cook provides to their customers.

Availability

As the customers always expect some sort of information from the organisation, therefore 24/7 availability is essential for the organizations (Gummesson, 2002). Thomas Cook maintains this aspect in a proper way.

Courtesy

Treating the customers in a positive way is the best way to meet with their first experience. The organisation has the highly qualified set of employees who at least know that how to handle people and how to treat them. Therefore, it helps the organisation to meet the expectation level of the customers.

Consistency

Level of service needs to be consistent enough in order to gather the confidence of the customers. Thomas Cook maintains this particular phase in a proper manner and helps them to handle the rush of the customers.

Accuracy

Providing the correct set of information is another important thing that Thomas Cook needs to maintain. Their customer support team is available for 24/7 and they are always ready to help the customers with different kind of queries. Therefore, this aspect helps them to maintain the service standards (Goodman, 2009).

Responsiveness

Thomas Cook is very much prompt in terms of answering the different customer queries. Therefore, it helps them to have a bunch of satisfied customers. Therefore, this aspect helps them to maintain the standards of service delivered to their customers.

Efficiency

Efficiency lies in terms of the proper management of the different resources such as the human resources along with the financial and any other type of resources. Thomas Cook maintains all these aspects in a proper way so that they maintain a proper standard of the service, which can satisfy the customers of the organisation.

When it comes to the different customer-service experience models. Gap model is one of them that the management of Thomas Cook can take into their consideration. It is also known as Five Gap Model and it is also known as an important framework of customer satisfaction (Leppard and Molyneux, 1994). The model has derived the fact that there are five main gaps that hamper the customer's expectation based on their experience. Therefore, the management of Thomas Cook needs to be double sure while handling the customer's experience and the service level delivery to their customers.

Gap 1: Distance between customers and managers

It is a gap that the management of Thomas Cook needs to take into reflecting, is the gap in terms of thinking. Therefore, the manager of the organisation needs to understand the exact requirement of the customers (Chen et al. 2015). In order to reduce this gap, the organisation can implement a survey program in order to retrieve information from the customers regarding their requirements.

Gap 2: Perception of management and customer's specification

Perception varies in terms of people. Therefore, it is quite hard for the managers to presume the requirements of the customers. Therefore, it is very much essential for the managers to make sure one particular thing that the organisation should define the exact level of service that they can provide to their customers.

Gap 3: Experience specification and the delivered experience

In order to reduce this particular gap, the management of Thomas Cook needs to make an audit regarding the aspect of customer experience that they currently provide to their customers.

Gap 4: Delivered customer experience and the communicated experience

It is the gap in terms of expected service level and the communicated service level (Aryee et al. 2015). Therefore, the management of Thomas Cook needs to make sure one thing that their advertisement regarding the different services needs to be appropriate and proper enough so that the customers can gather a positive experience in terms of the service offered by the organisation.

Gap 5: Customer's perception and customer's expectation

According to Cook (2017), the expectation of customers is based on the concept of word of mouth. Therefore, Thomas Cook may implement routine transactional surveys after providing a proper level of service to their customers.

From the above-mentioned model, it is clear that the management of Thomas Cook needs to make sure that they fulfil the mentioned gaps in order to provide their customers with a good level of experience.

3. Customer service approaches

When it comes to the different approaches to customer service, the management of Thomas Cook implements some measures that can help them to meet the customer's expectation. These are described below.

Understanding of the customer requirements

Thomas Cook tries to understand the requirements of their customers and for that, they implement the process of the survey. Based on this aspect the management can gather an ample amount of information regarding the requirements of the customers (Shire et al. 2017). Therefore, these aspects help the management of the organisation to make reliable tour packages for their customers.

Tracking the touch points

Touchpoints are considered as the areas where the business organizations can ping the customers in order to understand the feedback of them. The organisation can use email marketing, social media as the tools to understand the requirements of their customers. Along with that, the organisation Thomas Cook also has their 24/7 online help centre to track the customer queries.

Work on the satisfaction level

Along with that, Thomas Cook also needs to work on the satisfaction level; of the customers. The management needs to enhance the level of satisfaction of their customers and for that, they need to enhance their level of services. The organisation may implement the health support system along with the proper security of the customers.

Proactive

Management of the organisation needs to be much more proactive in terms of providing customer support. They need to give prompt reply to their customer queries so that the customers can get satisfied. The company, in turn, enhances the aspect of reliability of service so that the customers get satisfied. Along with that, it also provides assurance of good service to the customers.

4. The aspect of customer centrality

Customer centrality is the process that helps the business organizations to identify the needs of the customers (Menguc *et al.* 2017). Therefore, Thomas Cook group focuses on this aspect largely in order to enhance their customer base. In order to analyse the customer needs, Thomas Cook group focuses on five different aspects. These are described below.

Current product needs

Needs are based on the features of the product and services. Therefore, the organisation needs to make their packages attractive enough so that it can satisfy the requirements of the customers. In 2013, Thomas Cook launched a holiday package that ensures the full safety of their customers. That package met with the safety requirements of the customers. In addition to that, Thomas Cook needs to ensure the reliability of the products and services that they offer to their customers.

Future needs

Along with that the organisation also need to look after the future needs of the customers. Therefore, they need to ensure the exact requirements of the customers in order to meet with the expectation of them (Aryee *et al.* 2015). In order to provide assurance to the customers regarding the fact that their needs will be fulfilled, the management of the organisation needs to improve their operational processes.

Desired pricing level

When it comes to the pricing of the packages, Thomas Cook tries to provide their customers with a low level of pricing scheme. Along with that, the management of the organisation helps their customers to save an ample amount of money in their selected packages. This aspect shows the empathy of the organisation towards the customers.

Information needs

The website of the organisation provides an ample amount of details to the existing and new customers. Along with that, their 24/7 helpline also provides help to the customers. In the web page of the organisation, there are the different set of information regarding the different holiday packages, which can help the customers to choose their packages (Cook, 2017). Therefore, it can be said that it comes under the responsibility of the organisation to make their customers aware of the information regarding different packages.

Product availability

Availability of the different set of information along with the different kind of attractive packages can help Thomas Cook to enhance their service level that can, in turn, increase the satisfaction level of the customers. Along with that, the management also needs to understand the requirement of the customers and based on that they need to design the service packages for their customers which can easily meet with the expectation level of the customers.

5. Aspects of customer relationship management [CRM]

The customer relationship management of Thomas Cook has four aspects, which includes the strategy for business development through CRM, operations of customer relationship management, CRM analytics and collaboration. In this context, Goetsch and Davis (2014) orated that the strategy for CRM is developed for retaining the value customer and to develop the new customer base.

On the other hand, campaign management, customer service and marketing are to be considered as the operational; aspects of customer relationship management as these tools are used for knowing the customer feedback and serve the customers as per the requirement of the customers. In this same context, Rushton et al. (2014) added that the analytics in CRM is crucial for deriving information from the data collected from the customers. On the contrary, Khodakarami and Chan (2014) argued that the communication barriers are required to be removed from the process by collaborating with other bodies of operations.

Therefore, it can be said that the implementation of CRM strategy is done through collaboration and analytics.

6. Customer expectation management

In order to meet the customer's demand, the management of an organisation needs to identify the specific requirements of the customers. In this regard, Payne and Frow (2015) stated that the expectation of customers in a service industry is one of the most crucial aspects which deals directly with customers. In case of Thomas Cook, the customer expectation management is required to be properly managed in order to maintain its customer base. The management of the company focuses on statistical approaches for identifying the need of customers. According to David (2012), identification of the customer need is the base of managing the expectation of management. Apart from the identification of customers' need regarding the service of the company the company also focuses on the evaluation of the requirement or expectation of customers. In order to evaluate a specific expectation of the customers, the company prioritises the expectation of the customers on the basis of their impact on the current market situation. In the initial phase of the customer expectation identification process, the company considers the customer feedback, which is gathered through the CRM system. Therefore, it can be stated that the management of customer expectation initiates with the customer relationship management system of the company.

In addition to the system for managing the customer expectation management, the company focuses on the prioritisation of the expectation of the customers after getting the feedback from them. In this same context, Jayachandran et al. (2015) cited that the companies that involve in delivering customer-led services are required to gain detail feedback and feedback from customers and therefore, the front line executives are to be properly trained as they make face-to-face interaction with the clients. Thomas Cook adopts the similar strategy in order to get the customers opinion. It provides regular training to the front-line staffs and focuses on gathering information from the customers. Apart from face-to-face interaction with customers, the company facilitates its customers to outlet their grievances through the company websites. Finally, the opinion of the customers is processed for further processing in order to serve relevant information from the data. In this context, it can also be added that the company provides realistic promises to its customers, which also helps the company to enhance the consumer surplus (Soltani and Navimipour, 2016). On the other hand, Tsou and Huang (2018) contended that the consistent policy for the customers is an effective tool for enhancing the reliability of the services of the company services to the customers. Therefore, the company discloses the report regarding its responses towards the fulfilment of the customer's query and feedback.

7. Customer experience

The experience of customers affects the base of customers in terms of numbers as this kind of experience has more impact on the prospect customers than the paid promotions. In this context, Soltani and Navimipour (2016) commented that different level of customers' involvement, which include rational involvement, emotional involvement and physical involvement of customers develop the experience of the customers of a profit-seeking organisation and therefore, the companies in this field are required to focus on these types of involvements in order to develop positive customer experience. On contrary to that, Rahimi and Kozak (2017) argued that the experience of customers is basically the customer's perceived value in the services or products of an organisation. Due to this reason, Thomas Cook focuses on the enhancement of total customer benefit and the minimisation of customer cost as the difference between customer benefit and cost is considered as the perceived value to the customers.

Furthermore, the company's pre-sale and post-sales operations are also developed in order to help the customers, which could be identified as another tool to enhance the customer experience. The company makes the investment in human resource capital for enhancing the experience of customers while having face-to-face interaction with the executives. Apart from getting valid information regarding the service of Thomas Cook, this kind of interaction helps to build a healthy buyer-seller relationship between the customers and the management of the organisation. In addition to that, the company provides different benefits, in addition, the service of the company as a part of the value creation to its customers. In this context, it is to be added that the company serves hygienic foods to its customers while having the services of the company. This could be considered as an important tool that helps in the betterment of customer's experience. According to Jayachandran et al. (2015), non-paid additional services enhances the involvement of customers in the business and therefore, it can be said that Thomas Cook's policy of serving non-paid additional services facilitates them to get a higher customer involvement in the operation.

8. Different ethical considerations in the buying process

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9. Appreciation of the quality control by the customers

Total quality control helps to enhance the customer's perceived value as it helps the customers to get adequate or expected utility from the purchased product or service. In this context, Rahimi and Kozak (2017) opined that the products or services with higher quality create a positive perception regarding the service or product that a company sales. Therefore, it can be concluded that the quality management has a direct impact on the customer value.

Thomas Cook focuses on its service quality as a part of its value creation process (Thomascookgroup.com. 2018). In this context, it is also to be noted that the company sets benchmarks for controlling its operation. Here, it is to be stated that the company has made the investment in the areas or communities in which they offer travel and tourism packages (Thomascookgroup.com. 2018). This kind of investment in human resource capital helps the company in getting dedicated employees. According to Leppard and Molyneux (1994), dedicated employee base helps to generate quality services and therefore, it can be said that the quality of services of Thomas Cook is the result of its investment in human resource.

In addition to that, the issue of security while rendering the tourism service is to be recognised as another issue of quality for Thomas Cook. As cited by Berguson (2002), the security issue includes the quality of service provided by a travel and Tourism Company as this issue is considered as one of the basic requirements of the customers in this industry. In this context, it is to be stated that Thomas Cook collaborates with the security experts in order to maintain and control this issue. The foods that the company offers to its customers are maintained by the health standards and the company controls this matter by appointing suppliers, having international recognition for delivering healthy foods. Apart from this, the company provides destination teams for helping the customers and providing them valid information regarding the services of the company. The company implements this strategy by providing training to the destination teams. The company provides assurance to its customers regarding the service quality in terms of security and the quality of foods and other services, which is to be recognised as the principle of the quality control of the company.

10. Customer value

The customer value in Thomas Cook is generated by focusing on the tangible assets and the intangible assets of the company. In this regard, it is to be stated that the company invests in its assets in order to improve its service quality. On the other hand, it is to be noted that the company invests in the destination teams in order to enhance its service by delivering information to the customers. The customer value creation is also made by considering the customers as the main component as the company belongs to a customer-led industry. Due to this, the company gathers the customer feedback in an effective manner to derive reliable and valid information for making future plans for enhancing the customer value. In the initial stage, the customer needs are identified and this information is used for developing the strategies, which is focused on the responsibilities towards the customers. The possible solutions are generated by considering the gathered information from the customers. In this stage, the values for the customers are created by putting empathy towards the customers. The company also makes the prioritisations of the feedbacks in the final stage for developing new strategies (Goodman, 2009).

11. Recommendation / Conclusion

The above study the customer relationship management and the customer's expectation management have been discussed by considering the value creation process of Thomas Cook. From the analysis, it has been seen that the company focuses on the value creation through investment in tangible assets and intangible assets. In this regard, it is also to be added that the company is required to emphasise more on its human resource as this business is based on rendering services to the customers. On the other hand, it is also to be stated that the company focuses on the destination communities in order to invest in intangible or human resources. Thus, the company is recommended to train its staffs in destination communities with modern ways of customer relationship management.

The customer relationship management is required to be considered as the key tool to get feedback from the customers and to engage customers in building the better relationship with the organisation. In this regard, it is also to be added that the CRM system of Thomas Cook is to be modified in order to facilitate the customers in outlining their grievances in an effective manner. In order to do this, the management of Thomas Cook is recommended to focus on the aspects of CRM. Thus, the company is to set strategy for the betterment of customers experience and perceived value which would help the company retain the existing customers and to attract the prospect customers into the business process.

After summarizing up the entire study, it can be concluded that the proper management of the customers' maintenance can help Thomas Cook to enhance their mode of operation. In addition to that, the study also derives the importance of the different models used by Thomas Cook to enhance their overall customer experience. Therefore, it can be said that the management of the business organisations is solely responsible for developing the brand image. Therefore, it is necessary for the management of Thomas Cook to understand and interpret the different aspects that are related to the customer service manager. Moreover, the implementation of Total Quality Management is also an important factor that the study has derived after witnessing the advantages of it over the business process of Thomas Cook.

In addition to that, the main thing is that the management of Thomas Cook need to take into consideration is the proper management of the different aspects that are related to the customer relationship management. Moreover, the study has also provided an ample amount of information regarding the customer value and how the customers are responding towards the services provided by the management of the organisation. The study has also provided a clear image regarding the experience of the customers having witnessed the services offered by the organisation. The main thing that the management of the organisation needs to take into consideration is the fact that how the people are reacting towards the services offered by the management, how the business organisation is able to handle the queries of the customers and

how well those queries are resolved. Therefore, it can be said that the management of the organisation needs to take a positive step in order to enhance the overall customer experience and the brand image of the organisation.

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