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The customer's end-to-end journey would be analysed in relation to the touchpoints and how the company: Amazon raises awareness for its product/ brand. In this case we are looking at the Amazon Fire 10.1-inch HD Tablet/Phone and how the company manages, evaluates and communicates with the customer throughout the process of the customer journey in relation to the Keller's brand model.

The customer journey is the full experience that customers would go through when interacting with a company and brand. It is how the customer becomes aware of the brand, their interaction with the brand and beyond(https://en ryte.com/wiki/customer journey}

We could say in brief that the customer journey in marketing refers to the customer's path, via touch points, to their decision to purchase an item.

In analysing the customer journey of the brand Amazon Fire 10.1-inch HD 32 GB Tablet/Phone (as a "Top phone " with special effects) in relation to the touchpoints, we shall be looking at how the company amazon communicates with the customer.

This is because except for very slight difference, the way amazon communicates with the customers is practically the same for all the products.

Fulfilling the expectations of the stake holders mean making profit for the owners among other aspects.

Communication could be viewed as the act of transmission of information and a sharing of meaning. This would include a system of sending and receiving messages using different methods.

This takes the form of advertising, media, sales promotion, public relations, publicity, direct marketing and integrated marketing.

COMMUNICATION is the bid of the company to communicate with its customers and potential customers through the various means cited earlier.

Amazon has created a value product in the Amazon Fire 10.1-inch HD 32 GB Tablet/Phone that resolves around services over the device. With its special features the company tried to communicate to the customer that the product was unique with its features of dynamic perspective among others. The competitors were quick to immediately offer iterations of the Amazon Fire 10.1inch 32 HD Tablet/Phone.

The standard communications model used by most organisations is that of Claude Shanon and Waren Weaver's Macro model which is used to represent the standard steps of any form of effective communication.

This is the same model that Amazon uses which includes the following:

Advertising is a means of communicating with the users and messages that are paid for by the sender are geared towards informing or influencing the receiver.

Media as a means of communication includes the newspapers, magazines, television, radio, cinema and outdoor media.

You would normally see amazon products in both local, national and international newspapers. So too would adverts be placed on television and radio. Amazon would pay those media organisations for airtime to place its adverts on their TV networks, radio, newspapers and magazines. Outdoor communication is carried out for example through billboard in the city and along the highway. During sports events like football or super bowl Amazon buys airtime for huge sums of money for adverts.

Newspapers have the advantage of a wider reach. It however has the short coming in that newspapers are not produced so regularly.

Magazines could be used to target the niche market. Magazine shave the advantage in that the readership could be passed along to friends, family member and even over generations and could thereby play a huge roll in passing over loyalty to the company. Magazines however have a weakness in that they are not produced regularly.

Television and Radio have an extremely wider reach if people have their radios and televisions on. The disadvantage of this type of communication and advertisement is that it could be expensive and only large businesses could afford. A few minutes of advertisement time during a super bowl or football match would cost millions.

Cinema could also be used for communication. Cinema has the advantage in that it could reach all types of people irrespective of gender, sex, age among other. The disadvantage is that cinema Is quite local and could reach only a few people at a time as not everyone goes to the cinema.

Outdoor communication is used when information is put on website, social media platforms and at people's addresses. It is easy and less expensive to do. The disadvantage is that it is situational.

Promotion is a means of communication also used by Amazon to communicate with its customers in the case of the Amazon Fire 10.1-inch HD Tablet/Phone and its other products. Promotion is a type of marketing aimed at the customer or the distribution channel in the form of sales-incentives to introduce a new product, clear out inventories as well as to lift sales temporarily.

When amazon uses promotion to increase sales it would reduce the price temporarily for the product for a period to increase sales. Sometimes the Amazon Fire 10.1-inch Tablet is sold at the same price with/including a free voucher for another amazon product. This could be done using the so-called push and pull strategy.

Public relation is about reputation and is the result of what the company says, does, and what is said by others about the company. Public relations could be said looks after reputation and aims at earning support, understanding and influencing opinion and behaviour. It is an intentional, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its public.

Customers, suppliers, employers, investors, journalists and regulators can have a powerful impact on public relations strategy of a company. The perception these group of people have will impact the customers' decision on whether they want to shop with, work with and support the company. Reputation could be the company's biggest asset and gives the company a competitive advantage.

This is why Amazon has a full PR department to let out the kind of information the company likes to have out there about its products as well help effectively manage the reputation of the company by communicating and building good relationships with the stakeholders of the organisation.

With public relations the company gives out press releases to journalist and the public. Sometimes press conferences are held. This is used to create awareness and give to the public the kind of information and in the way they want the company wants to portray itself.

Publicity is a means of communication that uses something or a figure that attracts the attention of the public. Companies use celebrities to publicise their products. Tigger woods for example for Nike. Amazon in its publicity for the Amazon Fire 10.- inch HD tablet/Phone uses normal families. They want to show that the product is good for both parents and children as it has a tool that blocks "children unfriendly" material.

This method of communication also has a disadvantage in that when the celebrity's image suffers the brand suffers as well. This is the case of Nike when Tiger woods had his private problems.

Publicity also include the word of mouth. But it has a disadvantage in that the company cannot control that information when it is out there.

Sponsorship is a specialised kind of public relations and is gaining popularity especially with bigger companies whereby the organisation would sponsor a team a team, individuals or events to build brand awareness, emphasise social and ethnic credentials and enhance the company's commercial objectives.

DIRECT MAKETING: This is a form of promotion where the company communicates directly with the consumer via text messages, email, websites, online adverts, database phones and others. Amazon use this method intensively in the marketing of the Amazon Fire 10.1-inch HD Tablet/Phone. Amazon keeps a huge database and uses it to send customised messages directly to the customers and potential customers. This is good for the company in its marketing strategy but some in the public worry about the possibility of data breach.

Digital Marketing is extensively used by amazon as an online company in the main for its products. This include on social media, websites, and mobile apps and others.

Integrated Marketing Communication

Integrated marketing communication ensures that all communications and messages are carefully linked together as well integrating all promotional tools so that they work together in harmony. These tools include social network, reviews, in-store experience, emails, TV, Facebook, website, and online ads, network ads, phone and texts, personal relations among others all integrated in it AWS in the case of Amazon

The stages of the Integrated Marketing communication include defining the audience, set the promotional objectives, set the promotion budget, design the promotion and evaluate the result.

Defining the audience means identifying who as the company wants to target. Families with children for the sale of the Amazon Fire 10.1 HD Tablet/Phone. They portray the image of the instrument being one that is made for both adults and children and children could use it without the attention of their parents.

Presenting the objectives of the campaign involves defining what they want to achieve with that message.

Setting the promotional budget involves estimating the finances that would be needed to carry out the promotion.

Designing the promotion mix involves establishing all what will be involved in the promotion to harmonise all the aspects involved.

To Evaluate the results the team will assess the outcome of the campaign when it is done.

The New Strategies that Amazon could use to raise awareness of the brand: Amazon Fire 10.1-inch HD Tablet/Phone could include making group visitors to the fulfilment centres aware of such new products. Amazon has a program whereby bus load of group visitors come to the site and at the end of the tour they are taken to a room where they are given refreshment. The company could use such visits to show the visitors their new products and innovations. These visitors would go home with a good impression and spread with the word of mouth.

The Amazon Fire Tablet itself could be designed to suite the country and zone where it is meant to be sold. That means the version produced for the American market will be slightly different to the one sold in say Asia, Africa or Europe depending on the tastes and wishes of the region. It could then be marketed as region-specific. It may cost the company more to produce region-specific-designs but that could be rewarding.

The Amazon Fire Tablet could be adapted to include some the features of the Kindle. In this way it could be marketed as a multi-purpose instrument that include features of an e-book.

The inclusion of dynamic perspective into the brand has given it an extra that the competitors went scrambling to catch up. This invention could be highlighted more in communication with potential customers.

Amazon needs to do more advertisement offline as well and not just online where it is excelling. This is necessary because not all people search for products online.

The combination of advertisement that Amazon uses include the traditional and modern method. This include direct marketing with customised messages and digital marketing which include pop-ups in web pages, social media like Facebook, You Tube, among others. Amazon also uses sales incentives as well as the push and pull strategy.

The promotion amazon uses include celebrity endorsement, images of regular people, the Amazon Prime Day, and special offers.

BRAND EQUITY

Brand Equity refers to the value premium that a company generates from a product with a recognisable name when compared to a generic equivalent. It is the financial value of the company if it is sold. Currently Amazon is worth over 1Trillion. Brand equity could also be viewed as the consumer perspective of the company when the consumer sees the company. Companies could create brand equity for their product by making them recognizable, memorable, reliable and superior in quality in relation to the competitors. The competitors for the Amazon Fire 10.1-inch HD Tablet/phone include among others the Samsung galaxy Tab. A 2019, Apple I Pad Mini 5WiFi and the Huawei Media Pad MS Lite 1.

According to Keller, there are different stages of branding. He developed his “Customer-Bases Brand Equity”(CBBE).

For Keller the stages of brand equity moves upward towards the apex and the specificity and advantage of the model is that it is easy to tell at what stage the brand is and what it requires to go higher in terms of improvement.

Keller's customer brand equity model is built like a pyramid with four levels that include the following: meaning, response, relationships, and identity. According to Keller's model, the brand identity is located at the bottom of the pyramid while relationships are at the top of the pyramid. Keller suggests that for a company to create a strong brand for itself the pyramid needs to be built on a solid base from the ground upwards.

Identity of the brand according to Keller is figuring out and communicating what your brand is all about. You want to make sure your customers are getting the right message you want them to get. You are competing with other quality products. If your product is expensive you want to make sure the customer understands why your product is expensive. In the case of the Amazon Fire 10.1-inch Tablet/Phone the price is moderate relatively to the competitors. While Amazon Fire Tablet/Phone cost approximately £199, the competitors sell Apple IPad Mini 5 WiFi for 399 and the Huawei media Pad MS Lite 1 for £269 though with its "dynamic perspective" the Amazon Fire stands out as unique.

Meaning has to do with carving out for your brand a strategy to building a loyal audience to your brand. It is intended to add more dept to what the company is doing than the branding and societal marketing concept. The company could claim they are supporting a social cause and if you buy their product you are also supporting that course. With regards to the Amazon Fire tablet/Phone, the company tries to portray the image that they are promoting family values. If you buy that instrument you are also supporting family values.

Response has to do with what happens after the customer has purchased the product. The company wants to know if they met the expectations of the customer. The company wants to live up to the reputation that has been built earlier on in the pyramid.

Relationship is concerned with the concept of emotional resonance. The customer feels connected to the brand. They do not just buy the product because they like the function of the product but because they have reached that final level of relationship with the brand. A good example is the case where Kellogs cereals have eaten in family for breakfast over generations. No matter what other cereals are in the market for the same value/quality that family buys only the brand from Kellogs. That is because they have built that emotional connection to the brand. It is in the same light that Amazon has created the Amazon Fire Tablet/Phone to which parents and children could relate to in the hope of binding them to the product and creating that emotion over generation from parents to children.

Building brand equity is a challenge that ordinary organisations face but it is quite a great opportunity to create excellent value. The model adds deeper meaning to the brand and could be done with societal concepts. A good example is what we see with the "pret a manger" which donates food to the homeless.

However, the brand must be credible to get a positive response and be able to connect with the population or customers at a deeper level.

The Advantage of the Keller's brand equity model is that it tells the brand which stage the brand belongs to and what could be done to take the brand higher up the pyramid. It guides the brand in building brand equity which is vital in meeting the expectations of the stakeholders.

The disadvantage of the Keller's brand equity model is that there are many stages of the brand equity and building it up the pyramid could take so many years and too much finances and resources so that it would be difficult for start-up firms and smaller firms to build as it requires a lot of effort going into the product and services. The Keller brand equity model is not easy to build.

THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The customer journey and customer touchpoints are important for any company to create innovative marketing strategies for raising awareness of the brand. The customer journey refers to the path of the customer through touchpoints to the decision of the customer to purchase the item.

A common end-to-end customer journey represents all the interactions in between a customer being totally unaware to becoming aware, investigate, buying it, using, assimilating through becoming an advocate of the company. In this light encouraging other to buy from or use the same company(https://transformation.ai/customer-journey-definition).

The Major stages of the customer journey include the following:

Awareness is the first step of the customer journey whereby the potential customer develops the awareness that they have a need that needs to be fulfilled and they are actively looking for information to meet that need.

As a seller the company needs to know the needs of the customer and make it easier for the customer to find and purchase that product. Amazon is good at storing information about their customers and potential customers using their huge database and could immediately place adverts to influence the customer.

Evaluation and Consideration comes after the customer has done some research and is aware of some options and is evaluating, considering and comparing different brands to choose from. Is our brand good enough for the customer? What information are we providing to make the customer know that our brand is the best option. We need to make sure that our positioning strategy is correct.

Decision is the stage where the customer is now ready to select from the pre-selected options. The customer review and testimonials are important here.

Retention is the ability of the company to retain its customers over a certain period. A value has been gained over time through regular usage. Royalty has been created to the brand.

It is no longer about the physical aspect of the product. As a company you try to get feedback and the customers are awarded and given incentives. Amazon has its Amazon Prime Membership used to retain its customers through price reductions as well as more special offers on “Amazon Prime Day”.

Advocacy is the stage where the customer becomes an active advocate of the company and spreading positive word of mouth and could be rewarded for that. A good example is the case of a mother who sends her daughter for extra classes/tuition to a private teacher. The daughter performs excellently in the GCSE/ A Levels. The mother gives that good word of mouth to her friends and neighbours and the tutor gets good-paying students which is financially lucrative for him.

THE CUSTOMER TOUCH POINTS

The customer touchpoint is created every time your customer or audience interacts with your brand or service.(https://www.makeitclear.co.uk/what-are-customer-touchpoints/)

The customer touchpoints take place in three phases: before, during and after purchase.

Touchpoints before the purchase include the following:

Social Media, which includes Facebook among others to enhance the image of the brand. Online advertisement. Digital marketing which includes any material a company puts online. Company adverts which includes exhibitions. Peer referrals given to potential customers by their family and friends as they would trust them more than any information from a company.

Touchpoints During a Purchase include the following: Conversations with the representative of the company. They could be quite persuasive. Product catalogues are used which gives information about what is available on Amazon or any other company. Productive reviews are used extensively by Amazon to get reviews from its customers. Website is also used by companies. Amazon has its own website called the “AWS”. The point scale is touchpoint used to minimise the competition.

Touchpoint After Purchase involves the company trying to keep the customer engaged. They send “Thank you Letter”, expressing gratitude to the customer for purchasing from your brand. The company tries to get a feedback and get the customer to say their experience and if they were satisfied. The company may try to upsell or cross something to the customer. Upselling meaning suggesting to the customer to upgrade while cross-selling involves suggesting to the customer to buy some complementary products.

Companies use subscription and renewals of subscriptions to keep the customer engaged. To do this they use membership like the “Amazon Prime Membership”.

The Customer Journey Map is a visual representation of every experience the customers have with the company’s brand from the first engagement to the possible log-term-relationship.

The Benefits of the Customer Journey Map is that the business is able to step into the shoes of the customer to see things in their perspective and to make amends where necessary to satisfy them in the future.

The benefits of the customer journey map include helping the organisation know how the customers interact with the company. It focuses the company on specific needs of the customer as well as show the gap between the anticipated and the actual received experience could be closed. It also helps the company effectively optimize its operations.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP of The Amazon Fire 10.1-Inch HD Tablet/Phone 32GB

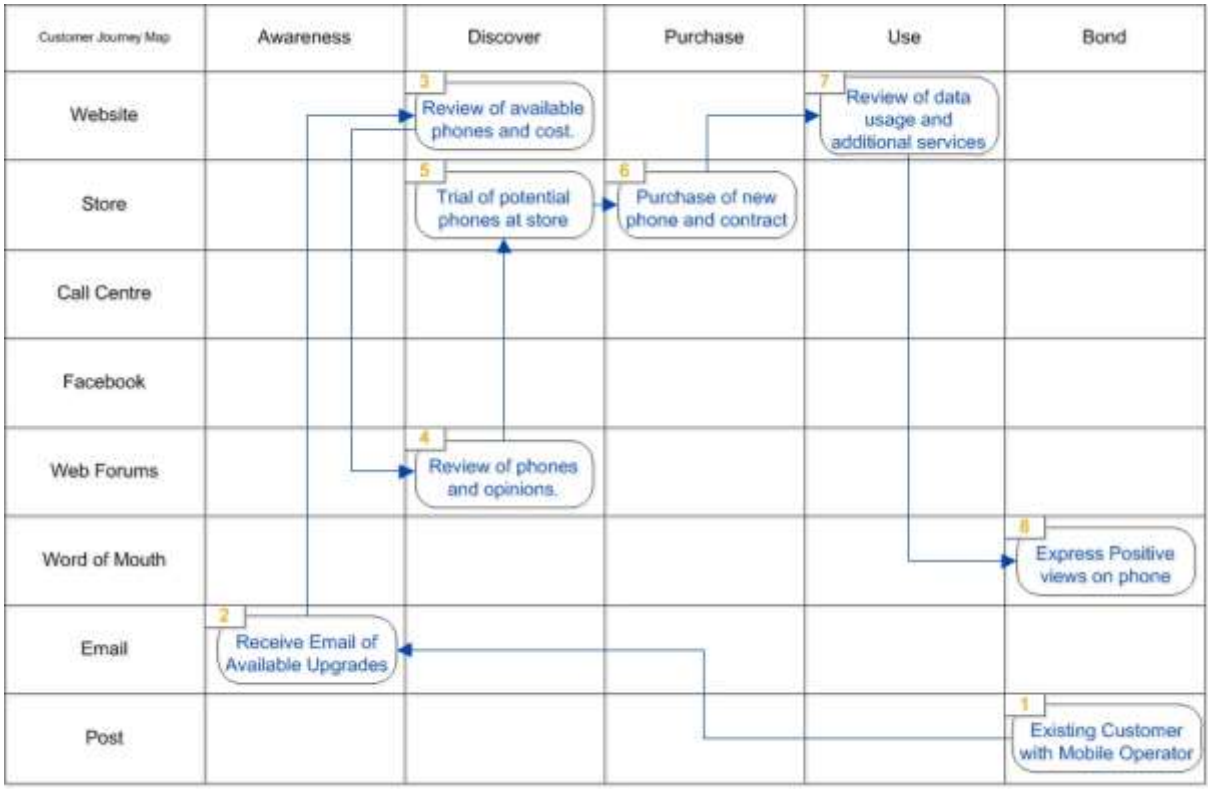


Fig 4

The strengths of the customer journey map used by amazon for the Amazon Fire Tablet/Phone has the advantage as it is the same used for all phones/tablets sold by the organisation. It is therefore cost effective for the company. The touch points with the customer is direct, so the representatives of the company could get direct feedback from the customer as well as be persuasive to sell more to the customer.

A disadvantage is that the process is over-digitalised and may be difficult for the customer to easily develop that emotional connection.

The Total Engagement Model

The success of a business is driven by whether customers decide to purchase its product.it is vital for companies to engage their customers for them to do more than one purchase .This is important because increased sales increases the performance of the organisation and therefore growth which enables the company to meet the expectations of the stake holders which among others is profit.

To get engaged customer the company needs to effectively design the following:

The Brand which is effectively the total of who you are as a company and what you stand for must be well designed. Amazon defines itself as a brand of high quality but very moderate price. That is why a quality product like the Amazon Fire Tablet/Phone is sold for around just £199 whereas its competitors are sold at higher prices like the Huawei media pad MS lite for £269 and the Apple IPad Mini 5Wi-Fi for £399.

Culture refers to the way things are done in the company. These are internal aspects like goals, values and internal behaviour.

The customer experience is the combination of physical and emotional elements the customer experiences when they interact with the organisation.

The customer value proposition is the value that is offered by the company to the customer making a point on why he should buy from the company rather from the competitor. For companies to keep their customers engaged they must deliver on their promise and communication values.

Stake holders are individuals or groups that have a legitimate interest in the company. There are internal and external stake holders.

Internal stake holders would include employees working for the company. There are also the owners who are those who own the organisation through shares, partnerships or other forms of financial ownership.

Amazon communicates with its stake holders through video conferences, periodical share-holder meetings, through regular postal mails among others. The Shareholders receive annual reports on how the company is doing.

The board of directors are a group of individuals who control the company. They initiate the direction of the company. Managers are those who manage a specific department and focus on the day to day running of the business while the leaders of the company focus on the vision.

External Stake holders would include suppliers who provide the company with raw materials. In a good number of cases at Amazon, it is those who provide the products for sale on its portal. We also have the customers who are the buyers and the intermediaries who are the marketing channels.

Competitors are the rival who compete with your company for resources and the market. Amazon fire for example has rivals in Samsung Galaxy Tab. A 2019 and Huawei Media MS Lite 1 among others. Competition is good as it motivates the rivals to do better in terms of quality and price. But for the competitors they steal the market/customers from each other in the rivalry. The government is an important element as they enact the laws that regulates the companies. How companies succeed or not may be influenced by the government in that if they put into place favourable tax and labour laws that would be to the financial advantage of the company as against unfavourable laws. Each company has a responsibility to the society where it operates. If it is a quiet and an economically viable society that will be good for the business. Sometimes there is misinformation as well from the company. "Pret A Manger" gives the impression that it sells fresh products whereas the dough from which the bread is made is prepared in France, frozen and brought to the UK. It could be frozen for up to a year. It is not sold fresh as it is claimed.

Business ethics is also vital for the business to be successful and to be able to meet the expectations of the stake holders. The business needs to make society believe that they are practically and actively doing what is right for society as well. For example, "Pret a Manger" it is giving food to homeless for free. For others it could be reducing plastic for environmental protection. Sometimes negative publicity could arise if the public thinks the company is not doing enough for the society. For example, amazon was criticized for not taking care of the environment as a result of the amount of packaging involved in the business.

However, measures have been taken to recycle some of the waste on site while the remainder is environmentally recycled elsewhere. So too are the goods that were not sold at Amazon that used to be destroyed now being donated to charity to be given to the poor and needy. Sometimes, things just go wrong. This is the case of the girl in the "Natasha's case" where a girl in a BA flight ate some baguette from "Pret a Manger" that had some seeds on them against which the girl had some allergies. She died and that was bad publicity for "pret".

Amazon has established itself as one of the greatest success in the online retail sector and it is expanding with more physical shops in the city and on the high streets. They have built a strong reputation and topped "You Gov" Ranking of brand sentiments (http://www,momenttology.com/4448- Amazon-top-list-of-best-u-s-brands). and named them the "earth's most customer-centric company" by marketing expert Bryan Eisenberg. The key strength of the brand is their reputation for exceptional customer service. Their high-class logistic service has helped to take the company forward.

With its "frequently bought together" section amazon enables itself the opportunity to upsell further products to the customer and creates useful touchpoint for consumers with its "customer questions and answers". Apps on mobile phones offer synchronized "basket" from previous desktop sessions. The company has simplified the path to purchase and the reviews are a valuable resource for consumers

At Amazon the consumer could buy about just anything. An incredible reputation has been built as the " most visible company" ranked as number one (http://www.nielson.com/us/en/insights/reports/2024/the-reputation-of-the most-visible-companies-htm)

The company is expressing vision with its project for delivery drones in the future. The company amazon comes across extremely well in terms of customer expectations and consumer-centric excellence as its strategy is designed around positive reputation with regards to its customers. Where there is trust in the way the company does business the journey to the next purchase could be simplified to a few ere steps. It could comfortably be said that Amazon is for the time-being the leader in customer-centric online retail.

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