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INTRODUCTION

The Chartered Institute of Marketing defines Marketing as 'the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying consumer requirements profitably.' It can also be described as a social process involving the activities necessary to enable individuals and organisations obtaining what is needed and wanted through exchanges with others and to develop ongoing exchange relationships (MBA Manual). There are various definitions of Marketing by and large, but all of them bear the common motive of wanting to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service is desired by the buyer and sells itself. Marketing is all about winning consumers' hearts and influencing them to do business with companies.

It is the ability to satisfy customers that marks the difference between the successful and the unsuccessful company. It is why some retail stores have people crowding the aisles whereas others are virtually empty. If business fails to satisfy its customers, it is bound to fail. This was very evident with Marks and Spencer PLC in the mid to late 1990s when they were making substantial losses due to the fact that focus on short-term profitability had resulted in cost-cutting, staff reduction and uninspiring product lines. Dissatisfied customers began to take their custom to the many competitors in the market place. They came close to collapse, with falling share prices and even threats of takeover (Managing marketing, 2012).

As a result of the desperate need to attract, satisfy and retain consumers, organisations have hence devised ways and means in the form of marketing strategies and communication tools in an attempt to influencing both existing and potential customers so that these organisations can achieve their goals and objectives. A marketing strategy outlines the specific actions a firm intends to implement to appeal to potential customers. It identifies a firm's target market(s), a related marketing mix, and the bases on which the firm plans to build a sustainable competitive advantage (Grewal and Levy, 2014). It is concerned with the selection of target markets and the development and delivery of products that will satisfy consumer needs. Strategy is concerned

with the long term and a focus on how the organisation can be competitive in the market place. Marketing communications is concerned with engagement; the planned, integrated and controlled interactive dialogues with key target audiences to help achieve mutually beneficial objectives (Dahlen et al, 2010). The number of ways of communicating with customers is increasing and diversifying all the time. And therefore, companies need to come up with ways of addressing these rapid challenges in order for them to survive in this very dynamic modern marketing environment. 'Successful companies tend to use a variety of promotional tools such as advertising, public relations, personal selling, digital marketing, sales promotion, direct marketing, sponsorship, events and experiences to position their organisations and products in the minds of consumers' (Gbadamosi et al, 2013, p.257).

TESCO

Tesco is the UK's biggest food retailer offering a variety of services for food and non-food products to include insurance, entertainment, electrical goods and many more. It employs over 440,000 people around the world with over 280,000 in the UK. It has over 2,000 stores in the UK and a growing number of stores abroad in countries such as Thailand, China, Hungary and the United States. It is the biggest private sector employer in the UK and one of the largest retailers in the world. Its two main food brands are its Finest and Everyday Value ranges, each sell over £1 billion per year (Businesscasestudies.co.uk).

The position of Tesco as a leading global brand is clearly illustrated by its expansion of operations into twelve countries. Tesco's 'Every Little Helps' philosophy puts customers, communities and employees at the heart of everything it does. It prides itself on providing a great shopping experience for every customer it serves, whether in stores, online or in its many other service provisions.

A Brand is a name, symbol or some combination of these factors that helps to differentiate one seller's goods from another. Branding means the use of a name, term, symbol, design, or a combination of these to identify a product. It includes the use of brand names, trademarks, and practically all other means of product identification (Perreault et al, 2015). It is a matter of persuading target consumers to think about one's product positively. Mere awareness of the product is not enough. Consumers must know about the product and have an emotional connection with it. You have to convince the consumer that your product produces a meaningful benefit, that it satisfies a goal. And convince them that your product is in this respect different from competitive products (Evans, 2013). A company with a strong brand stands to gain a lot from brand loyalty (the display of steadfast allegiance of consumers to a brand by repeatedly buying it which will generate long- term profit for the firm). Other advantages of Branding include also brand identification and differentiation, and a strong brand can also generate power over distributors.

In May 2011, Tesco committed £1 billion capital and revenue investment to improve the shopping trip for customers. It set out a seven part strategy designed to achieve its goals of being highly valued by customers and enjoying long-term growth. The seven part strategy involves: growing the UK core- this involves increasing employees by 20,000 over two years renovating existing stores and introducing more promotions; creating highly valued brands (range branding)- this deals with developing its own- label brands such as F&F clothing and Tesco Finest (upward stretch) to provide customers with quality products at competitive prices; to be an international in stores and online; to grow retail services in all its markets- generating £1 billion in revenue in 2012, Tesco bank is a focal part of the potential for future growth in retail services; to put its responsibilities to the communities it serves; building a strong team to create more value to the firm; and to be strong in everything they sell as they are in food (www.businesscasestudies.co.uk).

Tesco's 'Healthy Eating' brand came about as a result of Tesco being able to anticipate change in customer's preferences. And in order to be able to anticipate change, an organisation needs to have an antennae which is highly sensitive to changes taking place in the buying population- for example, how are taste and preferences altering as lifestyles change, what is happening to incomes and buying patterns etc. Tesco has led the way in healthy eating through developing healthy versions of other foods- it is these products which have the large healthy eating symbol on their packs. These foods are made to very strict standards, which limits, in particular, their fat content, but Tesco also control the amount of sugars and sodium the product can contain. By Tesco coming up with the 'Healthy Eating' concept, they have effectively developed Brand equity which is 'the value the firm derives from consumer's positive perception of its products' (Hunt and Mello). The 'Healthy Eating' brand has a positive brand equity due to the good consumer perception and experience of the brand.

By also using Keller's Brand Equity Model, Tesco can further strengthen their brand to become even stronger. According to this model, there are several factors responsible in influencing the strength of a particular brand or product. From figure 1 below, the four steps of the pyramid represent four fundamental questions that customers will ask- often subconsciously- about the product/brand. The first stage is brand salience: who are you? This is where the product's/brand's unique selling proposition comes into play. What customer need(s) does the product/brand satisfy? Stage 2 on the pyramid is concerned with the meaning of the product/brand both performance and imagery. The third stage is all about response of consumer, and the final stage determines whether the consumer will become loyal to the brand or not.

Fig 1 – Keller's Brand Equity Model



Fig 2- Service Quality Five Gap Model

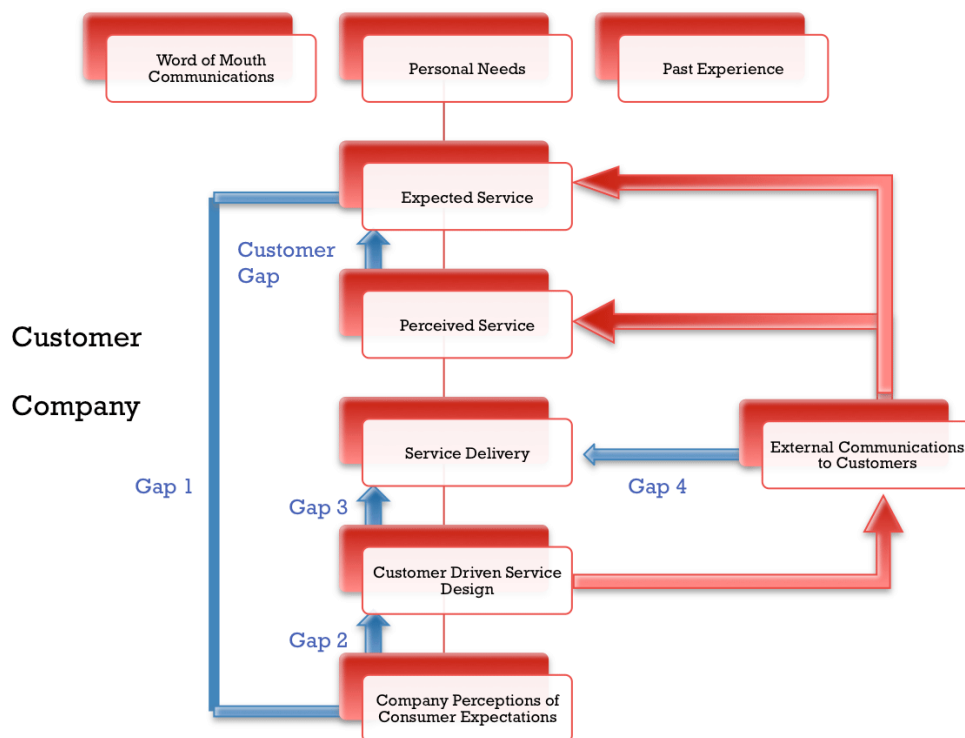


Fig 2 is a diagram of the Service Quality five gap model which illustrates the five major gaps that face organisations seeking to meet customers' expectations of the customer experience. This is also a valuable tool for business to use to be able to meet the constant change in customers' needs and desires. Tesco using this analytical tool will also enhance their brand equity.

Marketers recognise that in the modern world of Marketing, there are many different opportunities and methods for contacting current and prospective customers to provide them with information about a company and/or brands. Communication can be viewed as a transmission of information and a sharing of meaning, and there are broadly two types: Impersonal and Interpersonal. Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) encompasses 'a variety of communication disciplines- advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, and online marketing including social media- in combination to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communicative impact' (Grewal and Levy, p.550). Tesco uses the IMC model to reach out to its customers and potential customers as well. It uses various media to communicate to its customers during the journey of the customer. With the ever rise of the digital economy, Tesco is now shifting marketing focus more towards digital marketing rather than traditional forms of marketing (Newspaper and TV ads). Social media (Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp) and the internet are becoming more and more popular and attractive to promote brands/products.

CONCLUSION

Earning customer loyalty is crucial and Tesco focuses on this by aiding customers in little ways which together can make a big difference. 'Every Little Helps' is more than just a slogan. It describes Tesco's way of working with all of its stakeholders, and that includes colleagues as well as customers. Tesco works in a competitive market where products, stores, tastes and even the way customers shop are constantly changing .

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