

Assignment Title: Marketing Management- Assessment 1

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Current Environment Analysis- Starbucks.....	5
Pest Analysis	5
Porter's five forces Analysis	7
Critical Analysis of Current Marketing Strategy	8
Issues in Current Marketing Strategy of Starbucks	8
Integration with small and failed brands.....	8
Poor market demand forecasting strategy.....	8
Poor investment in technologies, advertising, and research	8
Low profitability ratio.....	9
Poor strategies to fight the global economic slowdown	9
Recommended Innovative Marketing Plan for Starbucks	9
Marketing Objective	9
Strong Brand Statement	9
Attractive Brand Loyalty and Reward Programme	10
Research on Consumer Lifecycle Value (CLV)	10
Innovative Pricing Strategy.....	10
Product Innovation.....	10
Market Positioning	11
Target Market.....	12
Market Segmentation	12
Communication Marketing Mix	13
Public Relations and Publicity	13
Advertising.....	15

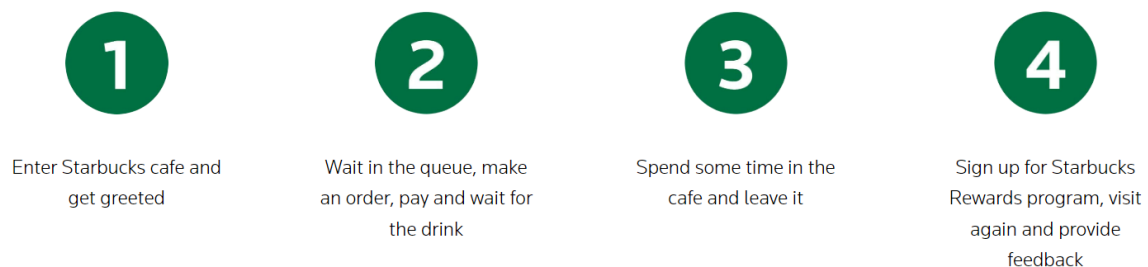
Sales Promotion	15
Direct Marketing.....	16
Suitable Communication Channels.....	16
Promotion and marketing in the conventional communication channel.....	16
Promotion through Modern Communication Channels.....	16
Evaluation of Marketing Strategy	18
Consumer anticipation	19
Consumer Entry	19
Consumer Engagement	20
Consumer Exit	22
Reflection or Feedback	23
Conclusion	23
Reference	25

Introduction

According to Neher et al. (2016), the focus of most of the companies in the 21st century has shifted towards fulfilling consumer experience through touchpoints. Customer touchpoints in retail business is multifaceted. Creating awareness is the first touchpoint established through website, social media, TV and Print advertising, marketing, WOM, and brochures. The second touchpoint is generated from creating a field for compare and contrast through review, store design, POS and online transactions, direct mail and push messages. The third touchpoint is deciding preferences through information, impacts, quality and popularity, FAQs etc. Then purchasing a product depends on mode of payment, queue waiting time, faster delivery, complimentary services, presentation, sales person's behaviour etc. Loyalty of the consumer has to be retained through benefit programmes, loyalty rewards, offers and discounts etc. The companies finally build on consumer commitment through services and newsletters.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

As many companies, Starbucks interacts with customer base via the great amount of touch points. These touch points can be broken down into 4 phases, on which you:



Each of these stages has elements which could be **enhanced**.

Fig: Present Customer Touchpoints at Starbucks

Source: (Hardclient.com, 2022)

In this report, Starbucks has been selected as a company whose marketing strategy ensures customer satisfaction and focuses on personalized touchpoints (Kim and Park, 2021). Starbucks is the largest Coffee chain company in the world based out in Seattle, USA. As of

2020, Starbucks has a total of 34000+ stores in 80+ countries and has a market capitalization of \$30billion (IIDE blog, 2022). The company has a total revenue of 23.5 to billion in the year 2020 with an income of \$1billion (Valérie et al., 2022). In this report, there has been a critical appraisal of Starbucks' current marketing strategy. Alongside that critical appreciation of the current strategy, one innovative new marketing strategy has been provided for this company to evaluate and manage the customer journey across a variety of communication channels in shooting present and future expectations of stakeholders.

Current Environment Analysis- Starbucks

To analyze the present external marketing environment PEST and Porter's 5forces analysis has been considered here-

Pest Analysis

Political:

- Because of Brexit increased business participation
- EU regulations are no more valid
- Strong relationship with suppliers because of low tax

Economic:

- Stable market position while advertising in social media
- Exports are rising after Pandemic got over
- Digital data has been one of the rising trends which can be tapped easily

Socio-cultural:

1. Rising social media influence on young generation
2. No geographical boundaries to promote or share the word of mouth

3. Strong social movements towards environmental impact and rising reusable cups and packets trends

Technological:

- Global traffic on internet is expected to grow 95% till 2025
- Massive usage of Instagram stories, influencers page, Facebook and Instagram reels to spread the popularity at cheaper cost.



Fig: Starbucks consumer touchpoints as competitive advantage

Source: (Enjoy Starbucks, Blogspot, 2022)

Porter's five forces Analysis

<i>Competitive Rivalry: High</i>	There are different sizes of coffee competitors in the market with different strategies and specialties working on consumer touchpoints (IIDE blog, 2022). Most of the companies are working on providing unique taste and blend of coffee with ice-cream or chocolate providing it a personalised touch at cheaper rates.
<i>Bargaining power of Buyers: Low</i>	High switching cost for consumers is major threat for Starbucks while choosing another brand providing variety of blends and options at cheaper price but compensated quality. The local brands are providing faster home delivery options which has also been initiated by Starbucks in UK (LinkedIn, 2022).
<i>Bargaining Power of suppliers: Moderate</i>	The power of suppliers bargaining for the cost of coffee seeds is a moderate force with the rising prices of premium coffee beans (Pratap, 2022). A good number of suppliers have various strategies and competency strategies against each other to gain profit from the market supplying exclusive coffee materials (Hutt, 2018).
<i>Threat of Substitution: High</i>	New flavours and variety according to market trends by Costa Coffee, Barista, and other small-scale breweries potentially impact the business of Starbucks Coffee houses in a negative way (Haskova, 2018). The high availability of alternatives in the market makes it easy for consumers to shift their decisions depending on pricing
<i>The threat of new entrants: low</i>	The Threat of new entrants in the market is a low or weak force. Most of the small Coffee houses are performing on a lower scale of consumers where the cost of operating the coffee house is much lower than Starbucks (Guler, 2018). It becomes difficult for new entrants to work on consumer touchpoints before establishing the business in market.

Critical Analysis of Current Marketing Strategy

Starbucks as a premium brand has established its market since 1985 (Starbucks, 2022). This company primarily targets the premium segment of consumers looking for premium quality and exclusive taste of coffee. Starbucks is a company that has a growing market in developing countries. In addition, with coffee and roasting services the company has diversified its business towards food and other drinks as well as merchandise such as coffee mugs, scoops, coffee presses, and tumblers. The company is focusing on aggressive expansion franchises through a fair-trading policy (Harvard Scholar, 2022). However, the company faces certain issues in its current marketing strategy as a multinational brand dealing with premium quality products and marketing channels.

Issues in Current Marketing Strategy of Starbucks

Integration with small and failed brands

Starbucks's current marketing strategy has integrated some small coffee brands which have failed in the market and have completely different work cultures (Kim and Park, 2021). This company has not been very successful in terms of mergers and acquisitions in the market as it dealt with completely different work culture-based companies.

Poor market demand forecasting strategy

Starbucks has missed multiple opportunities in comparison with market competitors in product demand and growth forecasting through market research and analysis. Because of poor market research and not being very good at forecasting market requirements and demands the company has ended up keeping massive inventory both in the channel and in-house framework compared to its competitors (Joshmeah, 2022). Therefore, the company has unnecessarily loaded its inventory engaging a lot of capital locked.

Poor investment in technologies, advertising, and research

The company has a poor investment in technologies and market research. Provided the international expansion and its conduct in different demographic locations Starbucks is required to invest more in technology to provide a global brand reach in the market (Guler,

2018). Currently, the investment behind technical advantages is not in line with the competitor's technical advancement in the market and the vision of the company.

Low profitability ratio

Starbucks' net contribution and profitability ratio are also been in the industry average as the company has not been able to tackle the challenge of rivals, small coffee brands, and upcoming entrants in the market (Kim and Park, 2021). There are huge gaps in the product range marketed by Starbucks. The pricing strategy of the company is also a premium pricing strategy that does not hold a strong footprint in the market while the rivals are rising in competitive pricing strategy.

Poor strategies to fight the global economic slowdown

Also, economic slowdown due to the covid-19 pandemic and breaks has increased the trend of the UK economy towards isolationism (LinkedIn, 2022). This is usually affected the sales of Starbucks. The shortage of talented workforce in the global market has challenged the steady growth of the company. Small reach in developing countries such as India has also blocked the reach of a huge market base with highly profitable demanding products in the premium customer segment (Joshmeah, 2022).

Recommended Innovative Marketing Plan for Starbucks

Marketing Objective

Strong Brand Statement

For a global giant in the coffee business and a huge operating income Starbucks has faced a lot of difficulties in maintaining its revenue over the last two years (LinkedIn, 2022). The recommended marketing objectives for Starbucks should be targeted towards and unique positioning of the brand in the market. Currently, the positioning statement of Starbucks is "to inspire and nurture the human spirit- one person one cup, and one neighborhood at a time" (Starbucks, 2022). This statement is very difficult and big for an effective positioning towards the emerging young customer base in developing countries. Starbucks has to change this strategy and use statements that will attract customers in a simple, short, and effective

manner. The brand statement should also be consistent, clear, and simple so that customers find it very catchy and attractive.

Attractive Brand Loyalty and Reward Programme

Starbucks has to build a potential brand loyalty program by designing the theme as a loyalty or reward program. As the company focuses on the premium customer segment in the market which consists of 20% of customers providing 80% of revenue, the company should highly concentrate on the reward and loyalty program designed to spread an optimistic vibe in the market (Mahobia and Jain, 2018).

Research on Consumer Lifecycle Value (CLV)

For a loyalty program first, the company needs to do research on the customer acquisition cost for a particular period and evaluate the cost against the total revenue from each customer. This way the company will be able to determine customer lifetime value and by estimating the CLV the affordability of the company against offers, discounts, deals given to the consumer under loyalty or reward program can be evaluated (Marketing Strategy, 2022).

Innovative Pricing Strategy

Most of the coffee brands coming into the market are providing a competitive pricing strategy creating a serious threat to the future sales and revenue of Starbucks. Irrespective of its brand value and market reach Starbucks is finding it difficult to fight with competitive pricing strategy. Therefore, setting objectives for the company should also focus on developing a segment for mediocre level two small level customers in developing Nations. This way the company can also engage a huge customer base in developing countries considering age, income, gender, race, ethnicity, education, family size, and religion with the growing coffee culture analyzing the psychographics of customers.

Product Innovation

Alongside the world's best coffee in terms of taste and quality, Starbucks should use the formula of concentrating more on food and other beverage items which has several advantages in attracting the young population in developing countries' marketplace (Pratap, 2022). The superior quality and great taste of coffee beans are the central pillars of the brand

image in the market. However, with time the requirement of customers has changed in terms of diversifying the items in the market from one brand. Starbucks stores should come up with more innovative food products like sandwiches, burgers, muffins, pastries, different types of mocktails, refreshing drinks, coffee blended dessert items, other dessert items, etc (Mahobia and Jain, 2018). This will increase the population of this brand providing it a scope to increase its reach in the developing market and result in higher sales as well as enhanced brand awareness.

Market Positioning

Starbucks has already established a position in the market in terms of premium coffee brands (Starbucks, 2022). However, despite the great quality and taste of coffee the value proposition of the brand has to provide an unparalleled customer experience. For this Starbucks can come up with targeting developing countries and its metro cities for expansion.

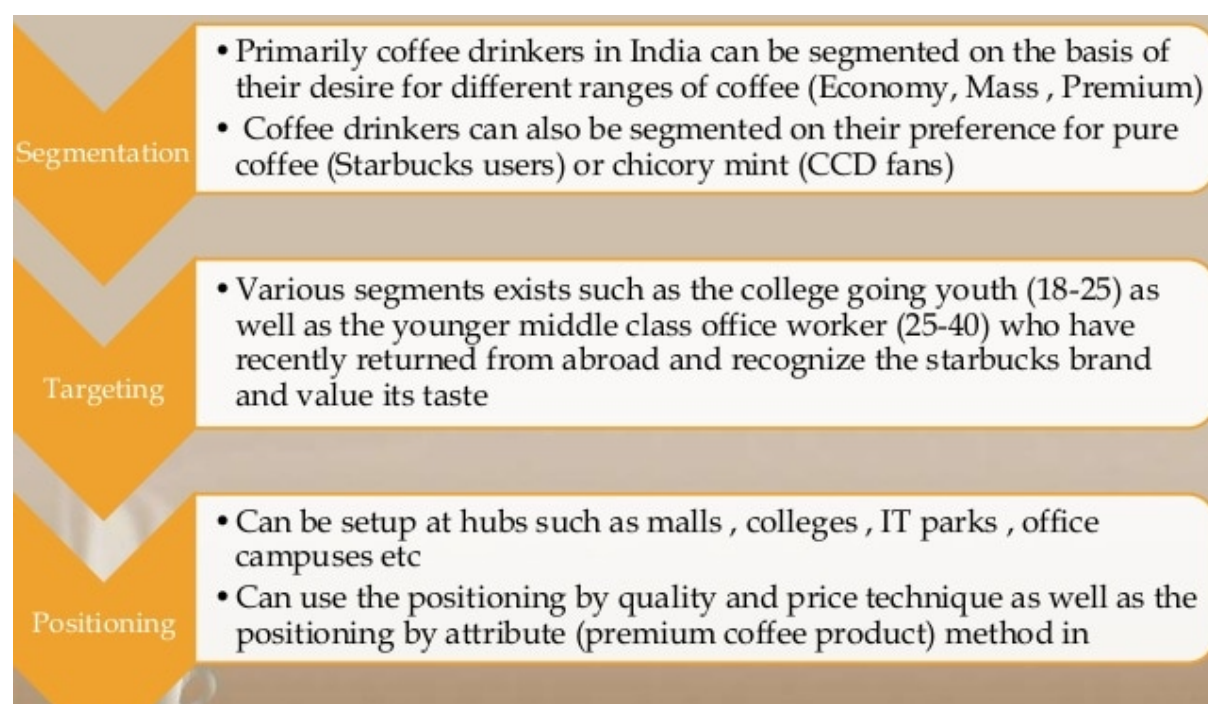


Fig: Starbucks' Segmentation-Target-Positioning Approach

Source: (Statista, 2022)

University campus, IT hub campus, malls, theatres, office campus, corporate house campus, certain developed areas should be targeted for setting up small to medium outlets and come

up with differentiation of Store ambiance and design attracting customers in a space to get relaxed and stress-free after office hours, business hours or college hours (Mageplaza Blog, 2022). This strategy should position the company as an entirely customer-oriented, ethical, and quality-based product and service provider. Starbucks has to target markets like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, African Nations, etc.

Target Market

Age	Premium segment: 20-50years
	Medium to premium segment: 18-25 years
Gender	Male, Female, Trans-community in all countries
Income status	Economy, medium, high, premium
Psychography	Coffee lovers, emerging coffee culture markets, people who want refreshment and relaxation after busy office, college, and business hours (Mageplaza Blog, 2022)

Starbucks since its inception has focused on the upper economic segment of the society in terms of the upper-middle class and upper-class people as a customer base (Scaleo Blog, 2022). It has to shift its strategy towards targeting people in groups 20-50 and specifically youngsters including both male and female segments in Urban, Semi-Urban and metro cities (Mageplaza Blog, 2022).

Market Segmentation

The company has to shift its target towards young business owners, budding businessmen, medium to high wage-earning professionals, the medium end consumer, college youngsters, freelancers, bloggers, and gig workers as well. People mostly in the group of 20 to 50 in markets like India, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, etc. are moving towards a fast lifestyle (Pratap, 2022). This targeted customer base is growing quality coffee culture and needs a

cozy, comfortable and peaceful space for having a cup of coffee and some small bites after a tiresome day for relaxation. Starbucks should also concentrate on health-conscious carbon and class-conscious consumers who want to spend 20% higher than other brands for the unique quality and taste of coffee (Porter Analysis, 2022). The tech-savvy modern generation who are also interested in phenomenal digital technologies of customer engagement and social media promotion should also be targeted by Starbucks.

Communication Marketing Mix

Public Relations and Publicity

Advertising the brand image through viral marketing and social media channels to gain more population is a public relations strategy. Starbucks has to innovate its public relations strategy and make the brand more famous through positive implications of brand value proposition and sales.



Fig: Starbucks Rewards

Source: (Starbucks, 2022)

The company can offer free pastry on muffins with the coffee through a campaign within a fixed timing such as Happy hours in bars or restaurants in different countries where 1:1 item is offered to customers for a fixed timing (Pratap, 2022). For strengthening the publicity and public relations, companies can come up with loyalty cards for customers' loyalty programs where purchasing a coffee will add a certain number of stars to the card which the customer can later use for or get a free cup of coffee.

Advertising

Starbucks has a total expense of 258.8 million dollars behind advertising and marketing in 2020. In the year 2019, this budget was 245.7 million dollars (Scaleo Blog, 2022). The company has to invest more in marketing and advertising through print and communication media like social media, using email, push messages on notification, revolutionizing its mobile app, etc (Research Methodology, 2022). The company has to set up its marketing strategy and advertising approach with the strong message of exclusive experience of superior quality coffee drinking in its outlets.

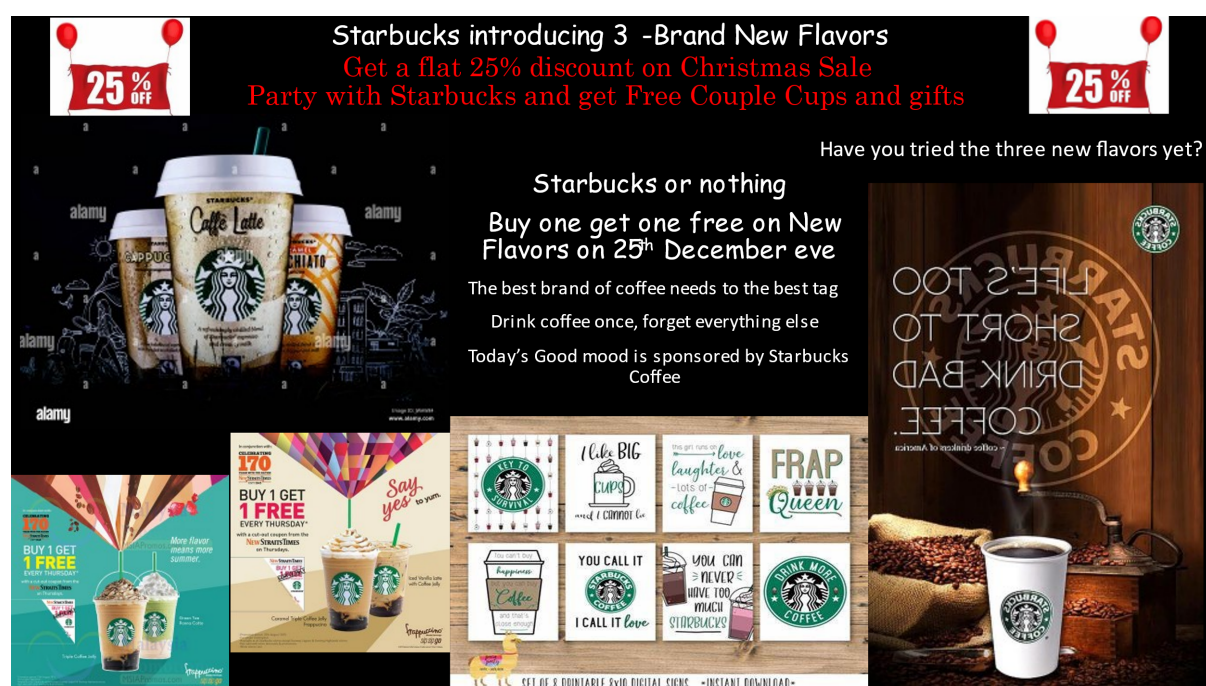


Fig: Starbucks Social Media Sales Campaign

Source: (Self-made)

Sales Promotion

Starbucks can also use point of sales materials, offers and discounts, gifts such as buy one get one free every Friday in its merchandise section, winter sales, Christmas sales, Starbucks red holiday cups are Christmas holiday promotions regularly for boosting the sales of the company (Starting Business, 2022). For sales promotion, different posters can be spread through social media websites like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to attract customers

with #tweetacoffee or #BlondeRoast, etc keywords (Scaleo Blog, 2022). This will also spread the popularity of the company amongst youngsters.

Direct Marketing

Starbucks can also sell its products directly from the outlets through a referral program. Customers should be given a feedback form and a unique code which the customer will be able to share with friends who have not yet visited the Starbucks outlet. Once any new customer comes to the outlet with the unique code of his friend, he can get a certain amount of discount using that code after purchase of coffee, beverages, food, or merchandise items.

Suitable Communication Channels

Promotion and marketing in the conventional communication channel

Traditional marketing channels such as TV, Radio commercials, newspaper ads, outdoor advertisements are losing their global reach. Starbucks has to shift its focus towards modern marketing channels like social media, search engine advertising, YouTube ads, sponsorship for cricket, football, tennis, and other sports are gaining popularity (Starting Business, 2022). These channels have no boundaries in terms of geographical reach, are more popular and attractive to emerging technically educated populations, and are cost-effective as well.

Promotion through Modern Communication Channels

Starbucks has to also focus on the promotion of its products and loyalty programs through different social media sites, email, websites, and other channels like push messages in mobile to the business and customers to create brand awareness (Taecharungroj, 2016). Social media campaigns, blogs, posters, media influencers' paid partnership programs, young bloggers, or social media celebrities can be approached for coffee brands' promotion and spreading brand awareness in the young population.



Fig: Starbucks' CSR Campaign through social media channels and website

Source: (Starbucks, 2022)

Starbucks also needs to spend more on marketing and advertisement and use social media handles for a cost-effective opportunity (Starting Business, 2022). The company can also undertake the HubSpot CRM framework which will help the company promote its products even in remote locations. The company needs to also focus on the pricing strategy. The company has to use Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram or WhatsApp campaigns for promotion and advertising. It can use logos such as "beware of cheap and cheater coffees. Best coffee comes with a price", or "Compromise leaves really bad aftertaste... Choose Starbucks" etc. in

its campaigns. Starbucks has to make investments behind inorganic paid advertisement through Google Search Engine ads (Taecharungroj, 2016).

Evaluation of Marketing Strategy

Evaluation of the marketing strategy can also be grabbed through the sales achievements and growth registered by Starbucks within a stipulated period of 6 months (Valerie et al., 2021). Through Google analytics, likes, followers, or subscriptions in Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Google Plus, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc., it can be evaluated with the marketing strategy is working properly or not though after purchase feelings and feedback (Lombardi et al., 2021). Different marketing strategies can be evaluated through the following evaluation of customer journey map-

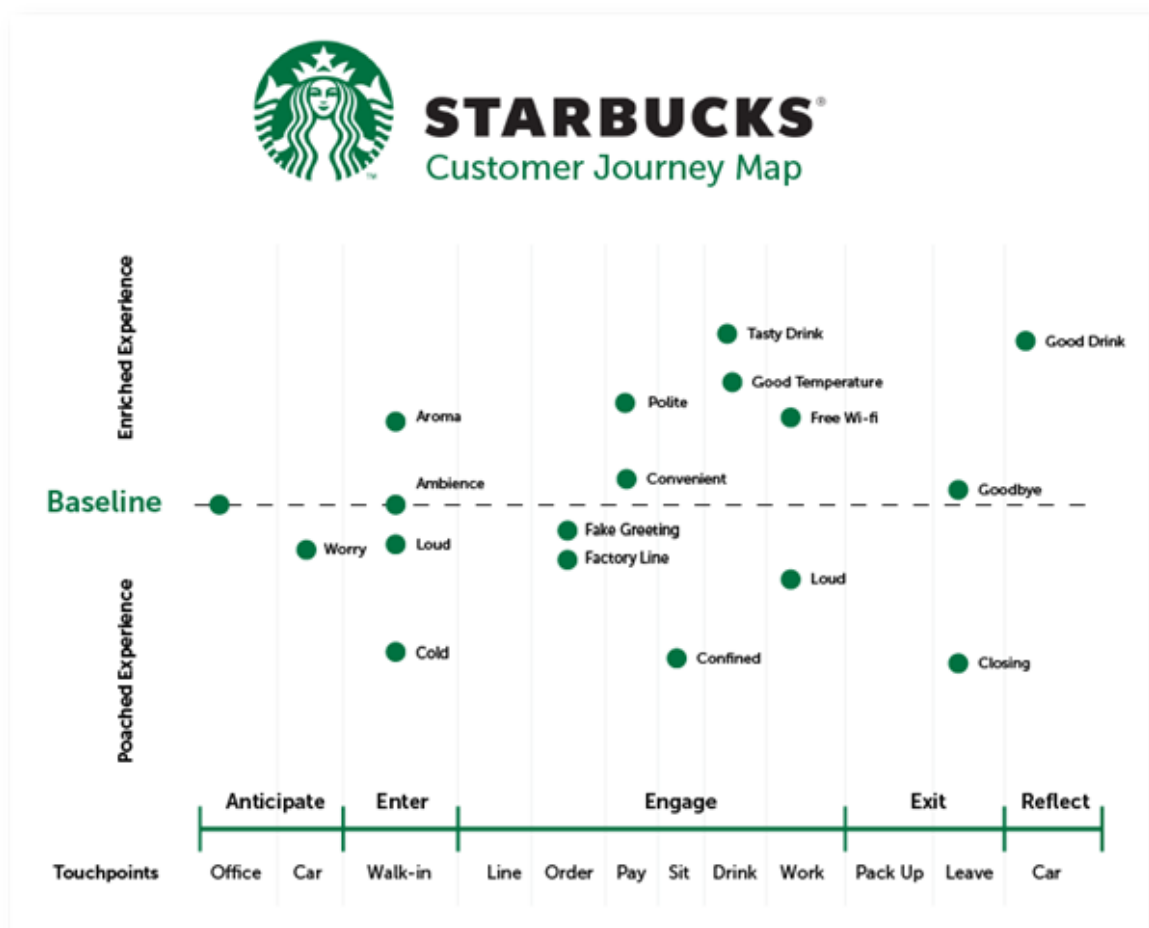


Fig: A Customer journey map in Starbucks including all touchpoints

Source: (Self-made)

Consumer anticipation

Office

Most of the office going consumers discuss important meetings with different persons at local places near to their office by grabbing a coffee. Starbucks should decide to anticipate office locations where it is easier for people to go to the retail outlet for meetings or working on design reports.

Car Parking

The consumer hopes to find a proper parking spot close to the retail store. The consumer should find an available place to park his car and the parking spots should not be overly crowded. The company also needs to consider alternative places for parking if the parking spots are full.

Consumer Entry

Once a consumer walks into the retail outlet the space should be wide and open layout so that the customer does not feel congested or confined. The consumer should be provided proper ambience where the light should be pleasant, not overly bright or too dim.

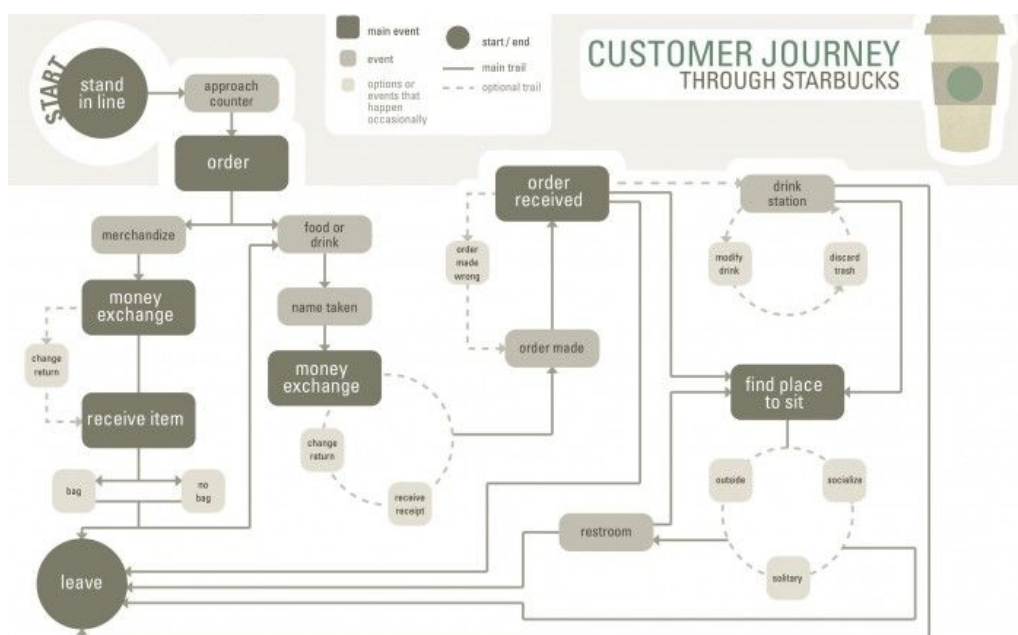


Fig: Customer Journey at Starbucks

Source: (Pinterest, 2022)

Aroma of Roasted Coffee

The Aroma of roasted coffee should robust the sensation of smell along with mixed sweet. Sugar level should be perfectly fine and the temperature of coffee should also be appropriate. The climate of the room has to be ethnic with soft style of music according to the consumers test in different geographical locations. The temperature inside the coffee retail stores should be mild and cold which makes the customer feel comfortable.

Consumer Engagement

Queues or line

The customer should not wait for a longer period in cues to get the coffee. When you should be available at the counter and it is easy to read. The orders can be placed very fast and the sales representative works as swiftly as possible to avoid the crowd. The ordering process should be smooth and consistent with the structure of service.



Fig: Starbucks Counters

Source: (Starbucks, 2022)

Easily placed order

When the consumer is placing an order, the salesperson should acknowledge with a smile. The ordering menu has to be better colourful and kept in varieties of flavours. A quick beverage selection will get the consumer the flavour and taste as per his requirement. The staff will always confirm the selection and ask the name of the consumers to write on the coffee cup. It will provide them with a personalized experience.

Easy payment

While doing the payment cash credit card and online payment option through Google pay or PayPal should also be available. The consumers should be asked whether they want the receipt. If they do not want the receipt then only SMS in their mobile phones will do the job. The sales representative says thank you using the name of the consumer.

Enough space for waiting

For people who are coming just to grab a cup of coffee there should be enough space in the waiting or sitting area. The consumer should not stand in a cube for a long period of time and get his order within 5 to 10 minutes. Once the drink is prepared the sales representative will flash the token ID or call the name of the consumer.

Proper Structure of Retail outlet

After grabbing the drink, the consumer has to look for the place most comfortable for him to sit. Sales representatives scan the health of the consumer getting a comfortable seat in the outlet specifically asking whether he is on an official visit or casual visit. For an official visit the placement has to be in a quiet corner. For other purposes anybody can sit anywhere.

Proper Seating Arrangements

The consumer is most preferably asked with his preferences of seating. The work space has to be broad and practical with enough space to keep the laptop or MacBook. The chairs have to be soft and cushioned enough to provide comfort as long sitting posture can create discomfort to the consumer. Chairs should be armed.

Personalised high-quality roasted coffee

The most personalized service is the cup of the coffee which is hot steaming and smells sweet and roasted. The consumer should feel energized with the first sip into the coffee cup and feel happy with the taste. The sales representative has to ask the consumer whether he is satisfied with the coffee cup and the sitting area as a warm gesture.

Comfortable ambience

The consumer should feel comfortable while working on the table placing his phone and other material such as a bag and the coffee cup on the table. The crowd is talking in a circle way which should not bother office working candidates too much and the music is too soft for people to concentrate.

Unlimited Wi-Fi Usage

Starbucks also provides free wireless Wi-Fi connection for the time one person is visiting the retail outlet and staying there. Welcoming environment the coffee cup consumer service food service personalised experience product consistency free Wi-Fi or together provides a wonderful experience to the consumer.

Consumer Exit

After finishing his coffee, the sales representative should ask the consumer whether he needs something else to eat or drink and suggest the best options for the day. The consumers should not be discouraged to leave the place until the final closure of the retail outlets. The closing time of the retail outlets should be kept according to the office and college timing in the town so that people can find a place even in the odd hours to sit and work with a cup of coffee.

Reflection or Feedback



Fig: Digital Marketing consumer touchpoints of Organisations

Source: (Shutterstock, 2022)

Customer feedback is one of the most important tools in the evaluation of the marketing strategy that a business house is using currently. Customer feedback provides an idea regarding what are the loopholes of the current strategy and what are the requirements of customers (Taecharungroj, 2016). For after purchase feedback Starbucks can use Promos, email, events, social media live, Instagram reels, news, conduct online surveys, provide excellent consumer service, create unique loyalty programmes, get the gen Z packaging ideas, create colourful and impactful websites. Starbucks has to analyse the discussions on open forum, collaborate with influencers, share personal blogs of individual clients to let every viewer know the experience.

Conclusion

It has been seen that Starbucks started its business from the USA in the coffee market and targeted international growth since its foundation. Starbucks has significantly developed its business in China and other developing leading markets for coffee and beverages. The marketing strategy of Starbucks starts from premium quality products. The supreme brand and taste of coffee is the primary driver of development for Starbucks. This company has

utilized the quality business differentiation technique to make its coffee unique from its rivals. However, to tackle the present upcoming problems Starbucks has been recommended a marketing strategy change to continue its strong market hold in the future.

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