

MARKETING ASSIGNMENT 02

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	Error! Bookmark not defined.
01. Executive Summary	2
02. Company overview	3
3. Market environment analysis	6
3.1 Internal environment Analysis	6
Value Chain Model	6
3.2 The Company's external environmental analysis	7
3.3 Industry Analysis: Porter's Five Forces	9
3.4. SWOT Analysis	10
04. Resources and Competencies of ABC Company	12
05. Marketing Objectives	13
06. Financials	15
6.1 Perform Financial Statements	15
6.2 Sales Forecast	16
6.3 Expenses Forecast	17
6.4 Marketing Budget	18
07. Implementation of the marketing plan	19
08 Action Plan	19
09. Key Performance Indicators and performance management	21
References	22

01. Executive Summary

ABC being in have been operating from long ago and have built its reputation and goodwill for providing quality products to its customers at low cost. It has won this position with its innovations and commitment to quality and dedication to customer service and value. ABC is facing competition from XYZ's Pizza.

It has many opportunities that it can capitalize on and those can be transformed into marketing objectives like growing business revenues, including revenue streams from new channels etc. And also increase the profit contribution to boost shareholder dividends and improve customer retention through customer loyalty innovations.

This marketing plan provides an insight into the supermarket chain ABC, with emphasis on its internal resources, external environment analysis, and competence and capitalizes on the opportunities available to it with the aid of marketing plan.

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02. Company overview

ABC was started in 1958 when Frank and Dan Carney had an idea for a great local pizza restaurant in Wichita Kansas. The small 25 seat restaurant only had room for 9 letters on the sign and the building looked like a hut so it became popular as 'ABC'. ABC's Mission Statement is "We take pride in making a perfect pizza and providing courteous and helpful service on time all the time"

ABC competes in a narrower segment in the fast food industry. It competes with organizations selling pizzas, a special recipe food item. It targets its pizzas and burghers and pasta to the people to the high and middle upper class earning people who seek the best quality for the price paid and want to show off their status. The category is far from extinction due to the acceleration of other quick-service categories like Mexican sandwiches, and snacks. In the last decades, many of the pizza chains seemed to be discouraged by the rising product costs.

When considering the growth, while the fast food industry is expected to grow by about 40% in the next The Company is expected to have a marginal growth of only 5% due to the increasing competition from XYZ's Pizza. Due to heavy promotions and strategic plans, sales at ABCs reached 36.1 billion dollars in 2012. It is an increment of 3.8% from 2011.

Modern consumers are more concerned of time and quality and hence they expect the best quality food to be delivered through every food outlet and the outlets to be clean and neat and they expect their meals to be accommodated with a light music played all throughout the restaurant. They also hate to wait in queues and hence food outlets should use more sophisticated technology in payments, ordering etc.

Its strategy is focus strategy in which the company can strive to capture the income of the high and middle upper class people. They offer high quality and tasty pizzas and hamburgers to the customers with creating a favorable environment for the customers with comfortable environment and seasonal entertainment.

According to a research reports, ABC accounts for about 65% of the total market share in Sri Lanka while the rest is captured majorly by XYZs which is competing severely with ABC. The major competitor for ABC is XYZ's pizza. Currently it has 12500 restaurants across 91

countries and employ over 300000 people. And each of them sells around 1500 food items including pizzas per day.

The rapid growth of ABC restaurants network and the increasing innovative products strengthen its position. There is a high growth potential in the market segment targeted by the ABC because of the population growth and rising income levels.

ABC enjoys the first-mover advantage and establishes a strong local market position before its competitors enter a particular region. The secret recipes owned by this franchise business give it a competitive advantage.

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Marketing Mix

Product description

ABC's product portfolio consists of Italian products, Pizzas, breads and pastas. ABC has gone local as well with its food item Birizza which is a type of Biryani. However it is more popular for its tasty variety of Pizzas. The product characteristic of ABC pizzas is that the pizzas are high quality and are served in sizeable portions. Thus, people love the rich taste of pizzas and pastas of ABC. Home delivery pizza is an added product characteristic. (Kotler, Armstrong, 2006)

Pricing strategy

This is very important among the components of the marketing mix because this is the revenue generating factor.

ABC has a premium pricing strategy where it offers most quality products to the middle upper and high income category. The associated outlet characteristics, demographic characteristics like the pride in consumer minds justify the premium pricing strategy of ABC. The profitability of ABC is declining owing to the market share capturing by XYZ's Pizza. Its sales revenue declined from 324.4 in 2011 to 308.2 in 2012. But the company still managed to increase sales marginally in the following years.

Place mix

ABC has established its restaurants in the top urban areas where there is a maximum reach of the targeted customer group. It also targets at places where such classy people wander and often walk about for business meetings and near workplaces.

It has diversified its business with added features like the home delivery service which has added more value to domestic and corporate customers.

Promotion Mix

ABC promotes its new products and services. It has many advertising media such as the TV advertisements, advertising and connecting via social media websites like Twitter, Facebook. It can also use newspaper advertisements and sales promotions.

ABC is very smart in its promotions and the marketing team designs more attractive TV advertisements and bill boards, newspaper advertisements that capture the attention of the target customers. It is smarter in promotions during festive seasons with the discounts like the free Coca cola with meal and other discounts given specially for corporate customers.

3. Market environment analysis

3.1 Internal environment Analysis

Value Chain Model

Primary Activities

Inbound logistics

The company is always efficient in this task since it incorporates customer choices and taste requirements to the recipes and restaurant service. It applies superior quality control and stock control procedures and hence it ensures the abolition of unnecessary costs and thus adds value.

Operations

The company mainly involves in retail food service production. Conducting business in accordance with trading hours as informed to customers, maintaining the food displayed in the menus are important in carrying out the daily operations smoothly. The company should consider operating extra hours. But this may be prohibited by law if it has no proper procedures especially concerning the laborers.

Outbound logistics

Households and offices can order goods via mobile or the website and have it delivered to their doorstep not only throughout Colombo, its main city but also in suburbs of Sri Lanka. It can improve further with automating the processes and providing facilities like parking facilities etc. and add more value.

Marketing and sales

The company's marketing and promotional activities carried out both online and offline channels have succeeded in adding value and resulting in increased sales. Trade offers discounts and creates loyal customers.

Support Activities

Company Infrastructure

Physical infrastructure in terms of buildings, refurbishments at stores are with superior quality. The company has installed new security systems and payment infrastructure which saves customer time. So the prices of goods and services would no need to be increased to cover those threats thus adding value to the price paid by customers.

Human resource management

It has a learning culture and the employee training is aligned to the goal of providing best to the customers. The properly trained labor force at ABC would always be customer minded and provide the best quality products, services and inspire customers and produce repeated customers thus adding value.

Technology development

ABC's new technologies include integrated Point of Sale solutions, online ordering, intranets, Enterprise Resource Planning (SAP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) with loyalty programs and automated SMS alerts on key performance indicators (KPIs)

This involves providing innovative products or solutions to the anticipated customer requirements. It is also a key competitive advantage that adds value.

3.2The Company's external environmental analysis

Political Factors

The company's performance is influenced by the political and regulatory frameworks of the countries in which it operates. The company's operations and its goals should be in line with and accepted by the governments. Therefore the company should have a complete

understanding of the political framework and the rules and regulations pertaining to retail business in each country. (Kotler, Armstrong, 2006)

Economic Factors

Economic factors are likely to influence the demand, costs, prices and profits. The company would be badly affected by any changes in market conditions. More specifically, high rate of inflation could bring down the real value of money and hence the consumers with fixed income sources would be affected.

Social and Cultural Factors

Social and cultural factors such as the demographic patterns, geographic patterns, beliefs, attitudes, religions, races, seasonal changes etc. affect the businesses. Demographic changes such as the aging population, an increase in female workers mean that retailers are also focusing on useful products and services. And also the increasing attention on health issues has moved customers to demand more of natural and safe food items which poses a threat to ABC's food items.

Technological Factors

ABC's new technologies include integrated Point of Sale solutions, online ordering, intranets, Enterprise Resource Planning (SAP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Technology is a major macro-environmental factor that changes constantly and hence is a very dynamic factor.

Environmental Factors

Environmental impacts of businesses are a major concern in today's world. The society always expects the company to be socially responsible and minimize the negative impacts on the natural environment as well as the society. The government and pressure groups are always in alert of business impacts on environment. The waste recycling system of Keels can be cited as an example.

Legal Factors

Various government legislations like policies for monopoly controls, employment legislations, consumer protection rules etc. have a direct impact on the performance of the company. Hence the retail industry is featured with cutthroat competition; legislations are an essential factor that all participants should adhere to. (Kotler, Armstrong, 2006)

3.3 Industry Analysis: Porter's Five Forces

Threat of New Entrants

ABC is facing cutthroat competition from XYZ's Pizza. Although ABC had been enjoying the economies of scale and the first mover advantage, the competition from the major competitor is stronger in capturing the ABC customers.

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

The company deals with suppliers who supply different food items and cutlery of expected quality to the restaurants. As the suppliers hold a major role in delivering value to the customers they have more power over bargaining higher prices and other conditions. It is important to maintain good relationships with the established and well known quality suppliers because it can affect the strategic position and profitability.

Bargaining Power of Customers

ABC has been successful in retaining customers and increasing the profitability. And also the customized services, affordable prices, more choices, store promotions have made it to be outstanding among other retailers. These differentiating factors have led to higher switching costs and thus reduce the bargaining power of customers. It should be noted that the competitors are tracking the behavior and strategies of the company in every moment and thus there is a risk that those factors may not be differentiating its products and services anymore.

Threat of Substitutes

The substitution effect refers to the ability to use one product in place of another that would give the same amount of utility. The emerging competition from XYZ's Pizza's food products increase the amount of substitutes available for ABC food products is highly affected.

Threat of existing Competitors

As far as the large retail chains are considered, the company is in competing in a duopoly with the dominance of XYZ's Pizza. There is significant interdependence and rivalry among those organizations. Each player is in alert of each and every other player and thus the prices set by all should be rigid. If one player increases the price, it will lose a big share of the market and if anyone reduce the price, it will end up with only a small increase in market share because all other players monitor and match the prices.

3.4. SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Brand value: The Company has an international, strong brand image that is associated with good quality, safe goods and is a token of value to customers. The company's innovative ways and its efforts to diversify its product portfolio have added to its brand value.

Customer Loyalty: As identified earlier, the company aims at market niche strategy and so it is important to retain the customers of the niche market. The company has been successful in winning customers and turning them to loyal customers.

Economies of Scale: ABC is a large scale retailer and hence deals with suppliers at large scale. Therefore it can gain advantage of price reductions on bulk purchases. And also hence the advertising and promotions are carried out for all stores at once; the average advertising cost would be very low.

Own brand products: Its own brand food products account for a considerable amount of its sales and these are indicators of quality and safety. They are strengths to ABC in serving the loyal customers and attracting more.

Weaknesses

High financial leverage: The Company has large capital expenditure plans due to its continuous investment in new stores and it relies more on debt finance since equity is more costly. The competitive nature in the industry has made these investments to be a vital factor.

The high rate of labor turnover: The turnover of the trained laborers can have a negative impact on the strategic position of the ABC if they join with the competitors.

Opportunities

New Technology: This is another opportunity that leads to increasing efficiency of operations by automating the processes.

The growing population can make it possible to increase the revenues due to increased sales of all products and services.

Threats

Threat of a price war: This is an inherent feature in an oligopoly market. Others are growing with expanding their market shares. So there is a risk that the oligopolistic nature of the market would cause a price war.

Critical Success Factors

Branding and Reputation

The company's brand is a major force of bringing strategic advantage to it. The company had been operating since long ago and it had been famous for the high quality food items. It had been the agent of innovations in many areas and has maintained good relationships with its suppliers and customers. Hence the brand implies all this excellence of ABC.

IT Integration

Modern business environment is dynamic and very complex and thus forecasting future performance is very difficult. Continuous change is a must and information technology plays a major role. These tools enable to handle big volumes in business with minimum cost.

Supplier Management

The company obtains many inputs from suppliers who are majoring in quality at agreed prices. Since it is a large scale retailer, suppliers are more important in ensuring a smooth flow of goods to the market place and to ensure customer satisfaction.

Customer Loyalty

The company has been successful in winning customers and turning them to loyal customers through various tools like the nexus card system and this is critical factor in ensuring success of the company.

04. Resources and Competencies of ABC Company

Organizational resources of ABC are the assets used during the production process which are typically stated as human, financial, information, natural resources, raw materials, entrepreneurial skills etc.

organizational capabilities means the ability and capacity of an organization in terms of human resources, physical resources, financial resources, information resources and intellectual resources such as copyrights, designs and patents.

Threshold resources

Threshold resources are the resources needed for ABC Company to meet the minimum requirements to compete in the market and they should be possessed by all players in the retail industry in order to survive in the market.

It can be cited as an example that all retailers should have the minimum capabilities to efficiently deal in food preparation and also maintain restaurants with proper floor area, parking facilities, alternative methods of bill payment, specified level of employees etc.

Unique resources

This refers to the resources that are unique to ABC. These are very difficult for competitors to imitate and core competencies could be a unique resource. Unique resources critically underpin the competitive advantage of the company.

The long established brand name, technological platform of ABC is unique resources.

Core Competence

This means the systems that have been established to deploy resources throughout the operations that bring in superior performance.

Over time, ABC has developed its core competencies basically in the operational work routines, financial services, strong brand proposition, innovative customer loyalty programs

and in its IT platform. These would result in long term customer relationships and successful operations.

Its core competencies have led to enter into new markets. For instance, Brand proposition is the core competence that enabled to generate loyalty. And it always tries to deliver benefits to the customers.

Marketing Research

Market research is an essential factor in collecting information about the target customer group and is carried out in the initial stages of the marketing plan. ABC can use several tools in carrying out market research.

It can use the interview technique where several interviewers do a face to face interview with customers in restaurants. ABC can also use a comprehensive survey where a detailed questionnaire will be distributed among a sample of customers and information is collected. Then this information would be analyzed to gain insights on the customer portfolio.

05. Marketing Objectives

The future marketing activities confined to the five year planning horizon are designed with the objectives of growing business revenues by 35 percent, including revenue streams from new channels and also increase the profit contribution to boost shareholder dividends and improve customer retention through customer loyalty innovations, increase the market share by 10%.

Aligning opportunities with marketing strategy

ABC should aim at capitalizing on the opportunities as analyzed by the SWOT analysis and those could be related with the marketing objectives and progress with forming a marketing plan.

One of the opportunities available to ABC is seek expanding its business around the country in profitable markets. This can be transformed into a marketing goal so as to attract the most number of customers in those targeted international markets. It can conduct a comprehensive marketing program to reach the potential customers specially with using the online tools such

as social media sites, ABC website, online advertisements etc. in order to reach the maximum number of potential customers.

These marketing strategies can be positioned with using the STP model. The company can segment the market according to type of customers like domestic consumers, business customers children etc. and also according to the regional and personal characteristics. Then it should determine who the actual and potential customers are and analyze and select the attractive customer segments.

After the most attractive segments are selected, a company should start targeting all these segments. Then the competitors and the abilities of the company should be analyzed.

Positioning involves the decision of the most suitable marketing mix. The analyses done of the market, competitors and abilities of the company are necessary to create a good positioning statement. When the positioning statement is created, one can start on creating the marketing mix. For example, in areas where there is more business customers are coming to the outlets, the banking facility would be of great importance.

ABC can take advantage of the rising population locally by expanding its operations in rural areas while adequately covering the urban areas and also by introducing customer loyalty programs to retain the loyal customers and to reward their loyalty.

It can also focus on introducing modern technology and save customer time and also introduce other more sophisticated service outlets within ABC supermarkets and ensure a great taste experience to all customers.

In applying STP model, the market should be classified by the level of exposure to technology and the more sophisticated technology in payment settlement should be introduced to the customers with a high exposure.

The loyalty card program and the own brand products can be used for the most loyal customers and then position the loyalty card advertisements and own brand products to them.

How this marketing plan does would help to achieve the objectives

It was recommended that ABC should engage in developing and introducing new products and services. These extra facilities would increase the footfall into the outlets and this will result in customers be subjected to instant purchases due to the psychological factors. This will also be useful in advertising and promotion efforts which will help to reach a big crowd at one time. These factors will eventually increase the sales revenue of the ABC and hence achieving the objective of growing business revenues and also meet the unmet consumer needs in a more effective manner.

The increased sales due to the increased purchases and the rental income from the service providers would result in increasing the profitability and hence enable the company to pay off its shareholders with dividend and share the operational success with them. With automating the processes, it can cut down its costs to a greater extent which will again lead to increased profits.

The proposed loyalty card system can be more important in maintaining the loyal customers. And also by increasing the number of own brand products and increasing awareness on them with promotions may help the company to retain the customers and maintain a loyal customer base.

It can conduct marketing campaigns in areas where it hopes to establish its new outlets and also engage in public relations activities like sponsoring the rural events organized by the groups and societies. It is obvious that ABC can meet the unmet consumer expectations of the people in different areas.

06. Financials

6.1 Perform Financial Statements

Sales of ABC are projected to grow by 20% with successfully overcoming the fact of increasing competition from XYZ's Pizza. Other revenues will maintain its present trend. Its cost of sales is expected to grow by 15% which is high with comparative to increase in sales owing to the fact that the oil prices and input prices are expected to rise.

Due to the expectation that oil prices will rise in the coming 5 year period, distribution expenses are forecasted to rise by 12% and due to the increased marketing activities and sales efforts, marketing expenses are forecasted to rise by 20% in each year. The general and

administration expenses are also projected to rise as per the trend given the expansion of the restaurant coverage and change in management. All other expenses and tax are expected to be as they show in trend.

The statement of comprehensive income shows that the profitability of the company is projected to be increasing due to the increase in sales owing to the increased marketing efforts despite the competition from XYZs and the rising energy costs.

values in millions of dollars						
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sales	329269	311901	374281	449137	538965	646758
Other revenues	1130	912	736	736	736	736
Total revenue	330399	312813	375017	449873	539701	647494
Cost of sales	-273493	-	-	-	-	-
Gross Profit	56906	54732	78224	108561	147192	196109
Distribution expenses	-2464	-2672	-2993	-3352	-3754	-4204
Marketing expenses	-14656	-13716	-16459	-19751	-23701	-28441
General & Administration expenses	-13088	-13203	-13319	-13436	-13554	-13673
EBIT	26698	25141	45453	72023	106183	149790
interest revenue	19	13	9	6	4	3
interest expenses	-774	-851	-582	-398	-273	-187
Profit before Tax	25943	24303	44880	71630	105914	149606
Tax expense	-7462	-5739	-4414	-3395	-2611	-2008
Profit after tax	18481	18564	40466	68236	103303	147598

6.2Sales Forecast

Sales are forecasted to increase due to the increase in online sales and the increase in sales in restaurants due to the increased promotions.

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sales Revenue	311901	374281	449137	538965	646758

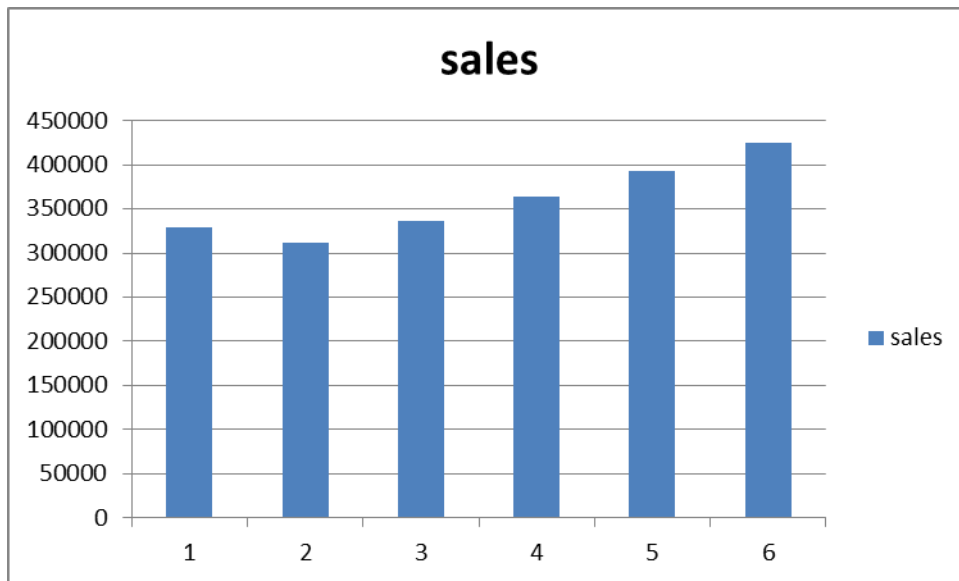


Chart 1.1 – Sales Forecast

6.3 Expenses Forecast

Expenses show an increasing trend due to the increased costs on research and development in order to protect the market share and the rise in oil prices and the expansion of the restaurants network.

The most significant expense is marketing expenses

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Marketing expenses	13716	16459	19751	23701	28442

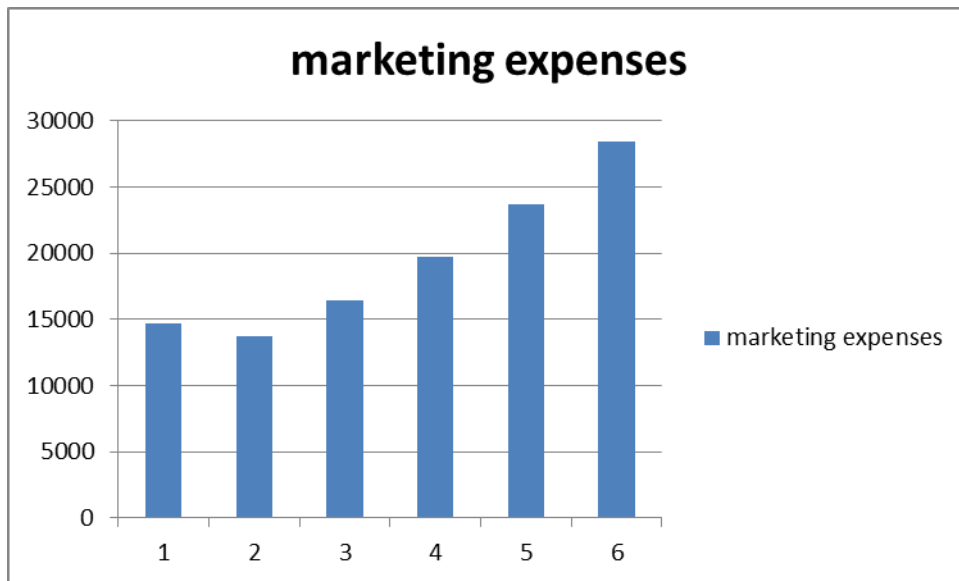


Chart 1.2 – Marketing Expenses

6.4 Marketing Budget

It can be recommended to use Bottom-Up budgeting approach because the lower level employees are the major part that involves with the customers and hence they possess a great deal of useful information. The types of marketing expenses incurred by ABC and are stated in the following table.

Marketing/promotion	2014	2015	2016	2017
Marketing agency	2469	2518	2569	2620
Radio advertising	132	134	137	140
Television advertising	263	269	274	279
Print advertising	82	84	86	87
Online advertising	247	252	257	262
Social media	1234	1259	1284	1310
Web search optimization	1481	1511	1541	1572
Mail outs	658	672	685	699
Events	165	168	171	175
Branding & artwork	1514	1545	1575	1607
Merchandising	1185	1209	1233	1258
Publications	82	84	86	87
Catalogues	49	50	51	52
More...	0	0	0	0
Marketing/ promotion total	9563	9754	9949	10148
Other	0			
Research	2469	2518	2569	2620
Travel	1481	1511	1541	1572

Postage		1152	1175	1199	1223
Administration		1646	1679	1712	1747
Incidentals		82	84	86	87
More...		66	67	68	70
Other total		6896	7034	7175	7318
Total		16459	19751	23701	28442

Table 1.1 – Marketing Budget

07. Implementation of the marketing plan

In order to implement the marketing plan, it is recommended to assign a marketing team comprising of specialists in each marketing function and headed by the marketing manager. They should be assigned with clear roles and responsibilities to perform.

ABC should use strategic tools like the Gant chart to evaluate and monitor the progress of the marketing plan and the controlling should be carefully done. The marketing crew should engage in discussions and constantly communicate with the other departments like the Finance department in order to get the necessary funding for the implementation of the marketing plan and also with IT department to get the necessary technology in gaining customer data and customer analysis etc.

08 Action Plan

It is recommended to follow the following actions in ABC's efforts on the new marketing plan.

Growing business revenues including revenue streams from new channels

Analyze the customers of each outlet with using market research methods and understand the exact needs and wants and the extent to which they are covered by the company. For example, the south Asian customers prefer food items associated with rice.

Then select the outlets that are suitable in terms of customer income and identify the profitable markets for each new product and service.

Do a product profitability analysis in each store and identify the products that need to be used to free up space to introduce the new product or service. If spare space and laborers are available, ABC can use it.

Carry out a introductory marketing campaign to introduce the product or service and then continuous promotions should be carried out to ensure the new product or service is profitable. (Sherlekar, 2007)

The e-commerce website should be further developed and the customers should be given the privilege to order via online from anywhere in the country and either got it delivered or collect by themselves.

It can also consider other sales platforms such as mobile phone ordering which can be useful for some customer categories that are less aware of the more sophisticated technologies.

Increase the profit contribution to boost shareholder dividends

In order to increase the profit contribution, both the revenue side and the cost side should be considered. ABC can use the above actions to enhance the revenues.

The outlet managers should be more concerned about the overhead costs which play a major role in the cost structure of supermarkets. And also the items that are close to be expired should be identified earlier and sold with promotions like discounts and avoid making losses.

Managers can appoint an employee as responsible for monitoring the other employees and always seek to reduce wastage of resources, save energy etc. The increased revenue along with the reduced costs will result in a boost in the profits and hence the share of profits or the dividends to shareholders will increase.

Improve customer retention through customer loyalty innovations and own brand products.

The proposed loyalty card system will be a major factor in developing customer loyalty which allows the customers to purchase goods and services at discounts and earn loyalty points which can be used to pay the bills once accumulated to a certain amount. Steps need to be taken to make the customers aware of the loyalty card system, its advantages etc. through boards and service agents within outlets.

Improve the awareness of the brand in other local markets

Comprehensive advertising and promotion plans can be designed to reach the maximum number of potential customers at the lowest cost. It is recommended to use online tools such as social media sites, website, online advertisements etc. in order to reach the maximum number of potential customers.

Company can use a special task force for the marketing activity in order to carry out the promotions in a focused manner so that it may ensure the success of the promotions.

09. Key Performance Indicators and performance management

The effectiveness of ABC marketing plan could be measured with assessing communication, Profits, Sales, Persuasion, and Attention as Key performance indicators. And the effectiveness of online campaigns are measured based on the number of views the web page gets. (Sherlekar, 2007)

ABC should have clear advertising goals such as improving overall business profitability, increasing market share, build up a loyal customer base, to build awareness of ABC, to spur volume during a certain time period, or to expand your business in a particular market etc. and those objectives should be more specific such as to increase sales of a specific new product or service. The performance management methods should be aligned to its goals.

To assess the effectiveness of the marketing, it can monitor sales, new customers, requests for information, phone inquiries, restaurant traffic, website traffic, or click-through rates. The Web host may log the hits on ABC site and should provide daily, weekly, or monthly reports. This would be easy if it maintain its own Web server, invest in software that generates easy-to-read traffic reports.

The effectiveness can easily be tracked with tracking the traffic by counting the people who enter to the ABC outlets .It should be monitored before starting the campaign, so there will be a basis for comparison. And ask new customers how they heard about your business. It should be kept in mind that advertising often has a cumulative or delayed effect, so advertising -driven sales may not materialize immediately.

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