

MOST EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER ACQUISITION STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHCARE E-COMMERCE STARTUP

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Abstract

In this research, the idea is to find what strategies can be used by the companies in the E-Commerce market to make sure that the healthcare products would attract more customers. A review of literature established the themes that are prominent in this research. Following on the literature review, a research activity was designed to gain more knowledge about the topic. The participants of the research activity are the people who have professional knowledge regarding the strategies of sale.

1. Introduction

In E-Commerce, the customer acquisition strategies would need to go to the core of the heart of the desires of the customers of the products. The company have to make sure that they appeal to the desires of the customers. For that, they would first of all, need to gain knowledge and assess the same knowledge about the needs of the customers. The product and its requirement in the lives of the customers are of utmost importance. However, in a consumerist world, the strategies have been altered to a large extent. Even the products that do not have a proper utility in the lives of people find a place in their minds and hearts. The attraction that the products draw in the minds of the customers can be manipulated by the makers and sellers of the products. In case of E-Commerce for healthcare products, however, these strategies do not apply in the least. The customers are not going to buy products solely based on the attraction that the products are able to derive. It is all about the effectiveness of the products and the satisfaction that the products would be able to instill in the minds of the customers. The strategies applied by the E-commerce companies would need to go to the basics of the customer needs and attention.

Research Questions

- i. How do the companies formulate the strategies of selling healthcare products?
- ii. How do the companies test the effectiveness of a strategy in the first place?

2. Literature Review

There are many strategies that the E-Commerce companies can think of employing. However, the area that they have to cover in the first place is that the products appeal to the hearts and minds of the customers. For non-healthcare products, appealing to the hearts and minds can mean something entirely different. In this case, it means that the company has to provide products that are dependable in the first place. the E-commerce companies sell products from various manufacturers and makers of the products. The area that they have to be careful about is

whether the products are failing to deliver the needs and requirements of the customers in the first place (Sambhanthan and Good, p. 603, 2016). For example, for germ free soaps, they have to take the initiative to find out if the product is living up to a good level of performance. If its is not, then the E-Commerce company has to make way to stop selling the type of products in the first place. Unless the manufacturers of the soap come up with an idea that effectively instills in minds of the customers that the product is efficient, it is important that the E-commerce outlet does not deal with the product in the near future again. The complains that would come from the customers hold key for the company. They have to make sure that the customers are satisfied at all times. If the company keeps going with the sell of the product, there is an inevitability that the bad reputation of the same would catch up with the company. There can be a situation where a number of customers would complain about the case of lack of effectiveness on part of the company (Hidayanto et al, p. 75, 2017). These are the situations

that the E-commerce companies should try to avoid as far as dealing with the customers is concerned. They would have to remove the product for the time and not include it in their list.

Satisfactions of the customers would also mean that the company would have to keep track of the type of products or brands that the customers are choosing for themselves. They have to find out the reasons they are choosing the same. They would be in need of data from the manufacturers about the performance of their products (Cui, Pan, Newell and Cui, p. 9, 2017). They would also have to apply their calculations and their individual expertise on the sale of the products. This is a crucial area that is indicative of the performance of the products. If the company is not able to make the most of the situation, they would remain unaware of the cause of the success or failure of the products and no company that sells materials to the customers are advised to do so. This would give them an advantage in the market. They would know what are the other type of products through which they can expect a higher level of success in the market. By indulging in the promotion and sale of the products, they would add to the performance indication in the market as well as make the most out of the situation (Aria and Fajriansyah, p. 32051, 2017).

They would also be able to replace the product for the customers by finding an alternative for them. In case a product is not available in the market, they would have to make sure that the closest thing would perform the expectations.

Another area that the company would have to address is to gain knowledge about the short term and long-term effects of the products. There are many factors that can play a role in this particular case. The sale of healthcare products increase or decrease according to the situation that arises in the places. The situation can be related to diseases that arise in a particular location during a particular time. It can also be related to some disaster that has befallen a group of people due to effects like excessive rain, flooding and other circumstances (Johansson and Kask, p. 329, 2017). The company has to make sure that they are on the edge planning strategies to provide the best remedies to the customers during these situations. They have to make extensive plans where the purpose is to make sure that the products reach the hands of the people in the first place. In such a case, they cannot be expecting that payment for the materials would be delivered in a short period of time. In many occasions, the healthcare companies are called up by the agencies in the government or other nonprofit organizations have to [provide relief as quickly as it is possible. The stakes are high in such a situation and it is important that the company is able to deliver. For that, however, the company has to make sure that it has abundance of materials in their possession in the first place. These are all short-term solutions that the E-commerce company has to strategize.

At the same time, they would also have to be distinguished about their knowledge regarding the products and situations that are expected to last long in terms of demand. They have to make sure that their supply chain is well provided and they do not run out of the same. Their supply chain would make sure that the needs and demands of the customers are fulfilled by the performance of the company in collaboration with the supply chain. These products are ones that do not run out of demand from the perspective of the common people (Hao, 2019). The company has to make sure that the performance is up to the standard. Their calculation regarding the demand and supply of such products would need to be of a high standard. A strategy that can be most effective for the company would be to make sure that the product is liked and is suitable for the target audience in the first place. If a new product is launched by a manufacturer, the company has to make sure that the sale of the products remains low in the first few months. During this time, what is required is for the company to judge whether the product is living up to the standards or not.

They would also need to make sure that the product is not a copycat of some different product in the first place. In such a case, the product would not see itself to be successful in the market despite the fact that the performance indicator of the product is at a high standard. When the audience would see that the product is copying some other product, they would not take to the same smoothly as would be expected by many players in the market (Yadav, p. 9, 2018). So, the E-commerce company would have to make sure that such copycat products are not promoted in the first place. Instead, the priority should be to include original products that would appeal to the hearts and minds of the customers. These products would need to be promoted at a small pace in the market in the beginning. In the meantime, the company would need to make sure that the research regarding the performance of the product is initiated in the market. The research would ensure that the company would know about the loopholes and the strengths of the product in the market. This would give them a better chance to make the most of the product if its features have the potential to be a success.

3. Study Design

It is important to conduct the research through a method where data is collected by the researcher through approved and valid steps. It gives the researcher with the availability of information. At the same time, it gives the opportunity to the researcher to bring more integrity to the research. A proper set of steps taken to ensure the collective information from the number of participants is important (Paradis et al, p. 263, 2016). For a proper research, the review of literature provides the theme for the researcher to gain knowledge and analyze that knowledge. However, the researcher would have to make sure that a research activity is conducted through which participants in the research process would contribute to the progressions of the knowledge (Mortensen and Hughes, p. 535, 2018). Without both the review of literature and research activity, the integrity of the research process is not maintained properly. What the research activity also does is that it reduces the chance of errors in the research. It gives information to the researcher about the topic of the research. However, the information would need to be assured from a number of other participants in the research process. For that, the researcher would have to go through an extensive process (Berthiaume et al, 2019). An extensive research activity would reduce the errors to the minimum level. A researcher doing a proper evaluation would make sure the same results are repeated with a different sample again. This would reduce the errors to the minimum level and make sure that the researcher is progressing on the correct path where the efficiency of the research would be maintained.

The researcher always has to make sure that the decision-making process in the research is always in the right direction. There are a number of decisions that the researcher has to make. Firstly, the review of Literature would be conducted based on the selection of the researcher (Assaad, Krafft and Yassin, p. 17, 2018). Proper measures have to be applied by the researcher to make sure that the journals that are not relevant to the research are not accepted. The screening process would be needed to be conducted with scrutiny. The researcher would also need to decide the philosophy of the research process and the analysis that would be conducted by the researcher. However, the whole requirements and commitment of the researcher to the process can be reduced if the research activity and data collection is conducted. Here, the decision- making process is at the beginning when the sample is selected. The activities from thereon in the research process would take its own course and make the decision-making process easy for the researcher.

The research activity would make it less costly for the researcher than if the course of the research is not properly planned. It is highly valuable for the researcher if the plans for the research are put in the place straightforward. However, the truth is, the research can take its own course and make the researcher omit an activity that was supposed to be performed. This happens on multiple occasions and on multiple levels (Loomis and Paterson, p. 137, 2018). The planning and executing of the research is a cumbersome process that has the potential to cost a lot of money. A major portion of the money can be invested for the wrong reasons without fetching any proper result for the researcher. The research activity saves time and money for the researcher and makes the research process take the course of a proper direction.

In this particular research process, Interview Questions were chosen by the researcher. The reason behind the choice is that the interview questions would fetch detailed information about the topic. In this research, the detailing of information is necessary for the researcher. There are many areas of the topic that the researcher has to cover. Particularly, strategies that are used by the E-Commerce companies for normal products and its relation to the strategies that are developed by the companies that specialize in health care products have to be studied and analyzed carefully. That is not possible for the researcher without the presence of a research activity that would scrutinize the details and lays it on the table for the researcher. The interview would also fetch information that is accurate and detailed. The researcher would check the facts that are mentioned in the interview process before proceeding on to the next participant. For all of these reasons, it makes the interview process the suitable choice for the researcher.

4. Results and Discussions

The following questions were posed to the research participants for the interview process. The participants of this research process are professionals who work in the industry of E-Commerce for healthcare and also for other products.

S.No.	Question
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1.	What are the strategies for retaining and involving customers for the products?
2.	Have there been any set of customers who have been displeased with the strategies applied by the company? If so, why?
3.	How many times have the company promoted a new product in the market and achieved a level of success through the strategies?
4.	When it is the case of healthcare products, does the value of the customer change in relation to the value of the customer for other products?
5.	How does the company measure the value of the customer in the first place? How is it related to the amount of investment made in the first place to create a customer base?
6.	Have there been products that have been in sale in the market for a long time despite the fact that there were complaints from customers regarding its efficiency?
7.	Have there been any product that posed a serious level of harm for the customers?
8.	What is the strategy that is usually applied by the company for products of these types? Do other companies also follow the same strategy?

95 % of the participants of the research process mentioned that there have been many customers that have been dissatisfied by certain functions of the E-Commerce companies. This means that there is a need for strategy building for the E-commerce companies. On many occasions, it has been seen that the strategy applied by the company to include a new product in their arsenal would bring them a good level of success (Arrigo, p. 2064, 2016). They have managed to do so by following a detailed research of the product and its functions. It has also been seen that such a strategy would work for the healthcare products as well. Firstly, what the companies do is making sure that the promotion of the product does not go beyond a certain level. Once the gain more information on the product, they sell it in the market with more enthusiasm. This leads to a better performance of the product in the market (Nderitu, 2018). From the answers provided by the participants, it is clear that the product has to strike the hearts and minds of the customers with a firmer grip. The way to do that is by ensuring that the products maintain a high quality in the level of hygiene and effectiveness. If it is found that the product is not providing the required quality of the customers, it is generally limited in the market. At the same time, the company has to make sure that it has a wide variety of products in its arsenal. If that is compromised, it might lead to a situation where the audience would become unpleasant with the performance of the company (Wongpun and Rodprayoon, p. 9, 2020). This is a situation that the company can never afford to develop. This would further lead to other situations where a snowball effect would be created and the reputation of the company would become highly compromised. Another area that was touched by the answers provided by the participants is the fact that in general, the value of the customer to the company is of utmost importance. It is more important than the value that the company invests in building up a customer base for their products. In case of the healthcare companies, this would apply in an even more intense manner. This is because if the company loses a set of customers, it would lead to a loss of reputation for the company which non- healthcare brands do not have to experience.

5. Conclusion

Healthcare products are different from other products. The functions that these two sets of products serve in the first place are different to each other. Therefore, it is important to conduct a study that would scrutinize the behavior of customer and product relationship in case of healthcare products. What is the most important similarity in case of the healthcare product and others is the fact that healthcare products strategy is to strike the hearts of the customers. The customers would need to feel safe in the existence of the healthcare product. They would be if

the product assures them that the quality and the effectiveness is at a premier level. It is also worthy of noting that the sellers of the healthcare products would have to value the existence of the customers far more than the

price they had to invest in order to construct a customer base.

This is more prominent in case of the healthcare products than the other products. This is largely due to the facts that the parties involved in the sell of healthcare products are highly sensitive about losing the support of the customer base.

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